

PORTUGAL 2007



European Crime Prevention Award
and
EUCPN Best Practices Annual Conference 2007

Project Entry Form

The theme for this year's European Crime Prevention Award and EUCPN's Best Practices Annual Conference is **Prevention of Domestic Violence**.

The following are some areas that the projects may focus on:

- Role of the community and partnerships in the prevention of domestic violence;
- Role of the police in addressing domestic violence;
- Alcohol, drugs and domestic violence;
- Juvenile delinquency and domestic violence;
- Cultural/educational issues and domestic violence;
- Prevention of domestic violence against women, children and elderly people;
- Victim support, psychological rehabilitation and prevention of revictimization in domestic violence (both direct and indirect victims);
- Use of technologies in the prevention/deterrence of recidivist offenders in domestic violence;
- Prisons, community sanctions and rehabilitation of domestic violence offenders; and
- Alternatives to shelter programmes for victims of domestic violence.

The list is not exhaustive. The projects may address any question relevant to prevention of domestic violence.

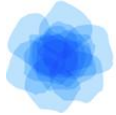
Please complete the attached form (the boxes are expandable). Note that the last page is for a one-page description of your project.

Entries should be in English, but may be accompanied by a version of the entry in the national language if wished. Each country may enter one project as its ECPA entry and up to two other projects to be presented at the conference. Projects should be submitted only through the National Representatives. The full ECPA rules may be found at www.eucpn.org

The deadline to send in your entries is **10 November 2007**.

Send your entry or entries to: eucpn.pt@gmail.com

If you have any questions, please contact us at the above email address or paulo.vgomes@gmail.com



PORTUGAL 2007



ECPA/BPC 2007

Please answer the following questions in English.

1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project? (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up to two other projects.)

This is the ECPA entry of Finland.

2. What is the title of the project?

Never Hit a Child media campaign

3. Please give a short general description of the project.

Never Hit a Child is a media campaign to change the attitudes of parents and general population against disciplinary violence towards children (also called "corporal punishment").

The campaign includes

1) a set of media activities consisting of:

- a) two press conferences at the launch of the campaign
- b) a TV-spot campaign, (including pre-testing of alternative proposals by two different marketing communication agencies.
- c) a print media advertising campaign ,
- d) an internet site and
- e) a free brochure giving advice to parents.

2) several surveys measuring the attitudes on disciplinary violence among the general population; these were conducted both before and after the campaign (to help measure the effects of the campaign but they were also used to generate more publicity for the campaign)

3) Hiring two independent researches to evaluate (different aspects of) the project (one to evaluate the organisation and media and public attention to the campaign, the other to evaluate the campaign's influence on the attitudes on the use of disciplinary violence).

4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project?

In Finland, the parent's right to use any corporal violence to discipline their children was removed from the penal code in 1979. The use of "corporal punishment" was banned from the beginning of 1984 in the Child Custody and Right of Access Act.

Despite these changes in legislation, the use corporally abusive acts against children is fairly common. The objective of the project was to change the attitudes of the population against the use of corporal violence. The ultimate goal is, via attitude change, to get rid of the crime of child abuse committed in the name of corporal punishment.

A Finnish survey among school-age children conducted in the early 1990s (Sariola, H. & Uutela, A. 1992. The Prevalence and Context of Family Violence against Children in Finland. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. Vol 16. pp 823-832.) suggested that the prevalence of parental violence against their children is a problem of about the same order of magnitude as violence against women by their male partners. Violence against children is even more seldom reported to the authorities than violence against women. Violence against children is also condoned by a far greater proportion of people than is violence in intimate partnerships. In survey polls carried out during the present project, 93 per cent of the respondents completely disapproved of the "use of moderate violence as a method of dealing with conflicts in an intimate partnership" while only 63 per cent rejected it with regard to conflicts between parents and children.

It is well known that being a victim of violence at one's childhood home is a risk factor for violence, both as a perpetrator and as a victim, in one's adult relationships. Thus, decreasing violence against children by their parents will decrease an important risk factor for adult domestic violence.

It is pointed out in criminology, that people who commit crimes and use violence try to justify and excuse their behaviour (in this case referring to child upbringing). The method of the project was, from the point of crime prevention theory, an application of the *removal of excuses strategy* in the framework of situational crime prevention approach.

5. How was the project implemented?

This was a media campaign and aimed to the general population, so the whole process was an attempt to implement non-violent ways of child upbringing. The more direct ways were of course the internet pages and the brochure to guide parents to non-violent behaviour with their children.

6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

The ground philosophy of the campaign was planned by the Central Union of Child Welfare. We wanted to tackle the everyday violence against children. Our focus was not on the exceptionally cruel and grave cases of child abuse, but on the more common types of violence which are often justified by referring to “corporal punishment”.

So we wanted a campaign to open the eyes of adults to see the everyday violence against children, rather than shocking or sensationalist material.

The TV spot, the print media campaign and the internet pages were designed by the advertising agency Evia (since then renamed Viherjuuri, see <http://www.viherjuuri.fi/>). The brochure was planned and produced by the Central Union of Child Welfare.

The follow-up surveys were planned by the Central Union of Child Welfare and realized by two different market survey firms: Taloustutkimus Oy (Market research http://www.taloustutkimus.fi/in_english/) and Consumer Compass Finland (<http://www.consumercompass.fi/>). The National Council for Crime Prevention financed the surveys and the evaluation studies and was also involved in the planning of the follow-up schema.

7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project?

The attitudes concerning corporal punishment have earlier been measured in Finland in the 1980's by attitude surveys. As we wanted to have data comparable to earlier research we adapted the same question about the attitudes and used it as the main indicator of the development of the attitude trends.

The main idea was to survey the attitudes relating to corporal violence before and after the campaign. This was done with exactly the same main question: "Do you agree with the following claim: corporal punishment of children is acceptable at least as an exception in some cases?" In addition to this, data were collected about different conceptualizations relating to violence, attitudes on violence between spouses (for comparison) and about the possible ways of acting in a situation where people come across violence against children.

This was complicated by the fact that before the planning of the campaign the Central Union for Child Welfare had already in 2004 done a survey about the attitudes to violence against children, the first such survey in almost 20 years. The news reporting of the results of this early survey already resulted in a lively public discussion of violence against children. In this early phase there was no official campaign. So the Central Union had probably provoked an attitude change already before launching the campaign. This may in part actually seem to weaken the impact of the official campaign, because part of the change had occurred in 2004 and 2005. The trends shown in figures 1 and 2 in the answers to question 9.

8. Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

The Central Union has had follow up surveys. It has also made a contract with two independent researchers to evaluate the campaign.

Dr. Matti Piispa, a free lance researcher, specialized in media evaluation research, at present working for the National Public Health Institute, has evaluated the visibility and quality of press attention to the campaign and its impact on the newspaper and net discussions.

Dr. Piispa has analyzed the amount of news and comment coverage of the media follow-up. The material was collected by a commercial follow-up agency Cision. Finland (<http://www.observer.fi/en/>). The follow-up used the Finnish equivalents for the following words and concepts: Central Union for Child Welfare, Never hit a child, disciplinary violence, corporal punishment, violence against children, physical violence, human rights of children, child protection.

Dr. Piispa also analyzed the argumentation of the discussions provoked by the campaign.

Mr Teemu Vauhkonen, an undergraduate (6th year) student in political sciences at the Helsinki University has evaluated the changes in attitudes and the contribution of the campaign to those changes using the data from the opinion surveys conducted before and after the campaign.

9. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

The launching press conference of the campaign was on 28.9. 2006. The second press conference on the same theme was held again on 17.10.2006 at a national conference on child welfare. Both conferences got huge media attention, which started a lively discussion in the internet pages and in newspapers.

Following the two press conferences in September and October 2006 the newspapers published 70 news reports about the surveys and its themes. Five different news stories were broadcast in national TV news. All these during two months.

This incited a massive public discussion in the media (see table).

Attitudes about disciplinary violence against children in newspaper editorials, columns and readers' letters. The number of articles during 23.9.2006 - 19.6.2007.

	Against disciplinary violence	Defending or understanding
Editorials evoked by CUCW	15	4
Editorials referring to CUCW	12	-
Other editorials	17	-
Columns evoked by CUCW	8	-
Columns referring to CUCW	6	-
Other columns	12	2
Reader's letters	55	17

(Source: Piispa, 2007; CUCW = Central Union for Child Welfare)

The amount of publicity is remarkable considering that the Finnish population is only 5.3 million.

In the Omnibus survey of 2007, 65 percent of the respondents had noticed a campaign against the use of disciplinary violence against children. 52 % of those who had noticed news or articles or the TV-spot said that the campaign had evoked discussions about the issue in their proximity. So said especially respondents who were women or 35-64 of age or had children (Omnibus report, Taloustutkimus, 2007).

The attitudes relating to corporal violence were measured with this question: "Do you agree with the following claim: corporal punishment of children is acceptable at least as an exception in some cases?" This is the same question that several Finnish surveys have used since the beginning of the 1980's. The results show a decrease in the acceptance of corporal punishment among the respondents. Between 2006 and 2007, the proportion of those who agreed with the statement went down from 33 to 28 per cent

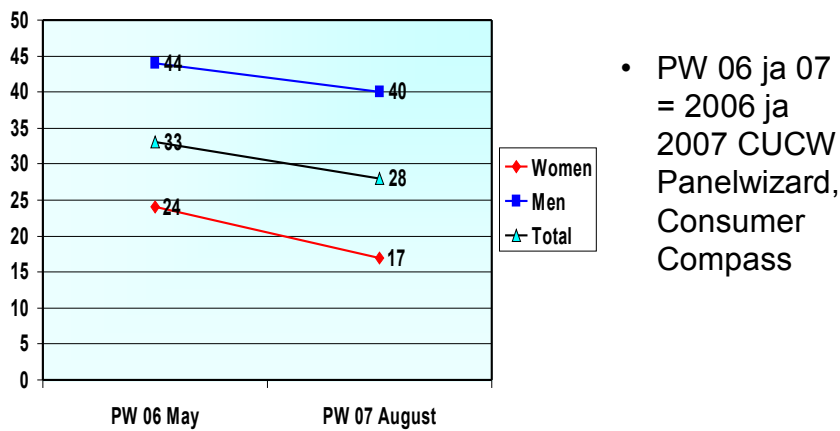
according to one pair of surveys and from 29 to 26 per cent according to the other surveys. While the first change does not reach statistical significance, the second one does and if the surveys are pooled together, then significance is clear. The drop between 2006 and 2007 is also steeper than the downward trend from 2004 (although, compared to that trend, it may not be statistically significant). However, the drop from 2004 on is steeper than the slow downward change since the 1980s surveys and the acceleration may well have been prompted by the 2004 survey and the publicity around it.

If we then compare the results in a much longer perspective, from the 1980s, the impact of the campaign is quite clear. The same question was used in two surveys in the 1980s (Peltoniemi, T. 1988. Familjevåld – omfattning och attityder i Finland 1981 och 1985. *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Kriminalvidenskab*). In 1985, 43 percent of the population accepted the use of corporal punishment. By 2004 the acceptance had decreased to 34 percent, i.e., the by about 0.5 percentage points a year during 19 years. From the first CUCW Survey in 2004 and its publicity, the decrease was 5 percentage points to 2006 (2,5 % points/year), and then before and after the campaign (2006 to 2007) the decrease was 3 percentage points in one year. With the publicity and the campaign the decrease was a total of 8 percentage points in three years.

Conclusion: The results show a decrease in the acceptance of corporal punishment among the respondents. So, if the attitudes reflect actual parental behavior, we can expect a decrease also in the actual use of parental violence against children.



Figure 2. Acceptance of corporal punishment in Finland in 2006 and 2007 % of the respondents, measured with Panelwizard survey, n = 563 (2006) and 624 (2007).



10. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web? Please, give references to the most relevant ones.

There are three reports about the campaign; two of them were directly done to evaluate it.

The first is an article written by an undergraduate student in political sciences (at the University of Helsinki), Mr. Teemu Vauhkonen, analysing the surveys done before, during and after the campaign. This article is still underway, but will be published in near future. A version in English will also be available in as soon as possible.

The second report is done by Mr. Matti Piispa, Ph.D. in Political Sciences, and is cited earlier in this formula.

The third is representing the process to the audience in a more general way (In Finnish: Let's not hit children – a historic change in attitudes is moving ahead) <http://www.haaste.om.fi/37212.htm>.

Please, write here a one page description of the project:

The “Never Hit a Child” (in Finnish: Älä lyö lasta) media campaign was a small budget (240 000 euros) project aiming to change the attitudes of adult population against the use of disciplinary violence against children.

Planning started in 2005 and the campaign was carried out during 2006 and (the first half of) 2007. In 2005 a memorandum of the principles of the campaign was produced by the Central Union of Child Welfare. The memo was also intended as a framework and guidance for the advertisement agency and other possible partners. The campaign itself was planned in co-operation with the advertisement company Evia.

The campaign included two press conferences (28.9.2006 and 17.10.2006), TV-spots (1.-10.11.2006), print media advertisements (9.10.2006 – 31.3.2007), an internet site (<http://www.alalyolasta.fi/>) and a brochure of child upbringing to parents (over 22 000 free copies have been distributed to parents and to family counselling centres).

Before and after survey follow-ups have been done to follow the impact of the campaign. The surveys were ordered from two different commercial survey companies and were done using two different survey methods, a home interview and an internet questionnaire. Both samples were representative of the Finnish adult population.

Both a qualitative (about media coverage) and a quantitative research report have been prepared by independent researchers.

The campaign fills the criteria of the contest.

1) The Never Hit a Child project focuses on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the specified theme, which is disciplinary violence in the NHC campaign.

2) The Never Hit a Child -project has been evaluated and have achieved its objectives, a large discussion and critique of violence against children and a decline in the acceptance of violence.

3) The Never Hit a Child -project was innovative, involving new methods and new approaches. It focused on everyday violence without diverting the discussion to extreme and shocking violence, which often makes it possible to defend more moderate violence. A special innovation was to stop to speak of corporal punishment, a term that has an in-built quality of justifying violence as education or upbringing. Instead we coined a new term, **disciplinary violence**, that, at least in its Finnish form (kuritusväkivalta) is not an euphemism, but tells directly that we are dealing with violence. The meaning is something between punishment v. and disciplinary violence. The new term has been adopted quite well in the Finnish publicity.

4) The Never Hit a Child project was based on co-operation between the Advertisement bureau and the CUCW. In the planning phase CUCW had contacts with the National council for crime prevention, which also financed the evaluation surveys and reports.

5) The Never Hit a Child project schema can as such easily be replicated by organisations and groups in other Member States. Such a replication would also help the Council of Europe campaign to ban corporal punishment of children in all European countries.

