



Exploring children's sense of safety at home and in school: What do they tell us and what should be done to address it?

**03 September 2015
ISCI 2015, Cape Town**

Outline

- Sense of safety in various settings**
- Exploring the environment**
- What needs to be done to curb the problem**



Sense of safety in various settings

- ❑ Children's sense of safety is an important component of their wellbeing, and well-becoming
- ❑ Individuals experience significantly more stress from considering safety issues and fear of crime than direct experience of crime.
- ❑ It affects their interaction and engagement in community activities
- ❑ When children feel secure, they are able to fully participate in daily routines, learn from it and experience joy and satisfaction.



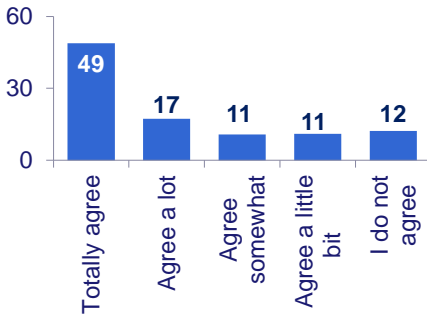
Sense of safety in various settings . . . (cont'd)

- ❑ Ensuring children's sense of safety is about:
 - ❑ Reducing stress, improving psychological wellbeing, enhancing their interaction and learning.
 - ❑ Helping them reach their full human potential
 - ❑ It is about equipping them to be resilient and
 - ❑ Maximising their contribution to community development.



The reality . . .

Safety at home - ISCWeB - 2014



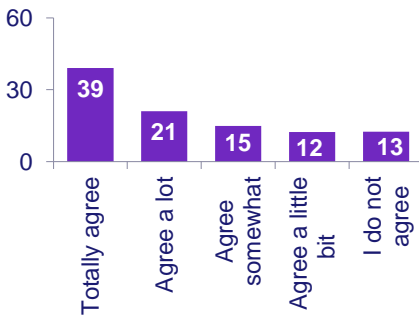
□ About half of children have safety concerns (of varying degree)

□ It is a concern that 23% have grave safety concern.

□ Indication on quality of life and wellbeing of significant proportion of children



Safety in community - ISCWeB - 2014



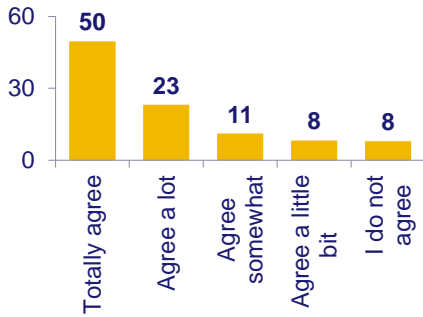
□ Safety concern higher in neighbourhoods

□ There was no difference by gender or age, signalling common threat for safety



Sense of safety in various settings . . . (cont'd)

**Safety in school -
ISCWeB - 2014**



Children feel more safe in school than their home or neighbourhoods

More than 90% said that they are happy to go to school

Sense of safety relatively lower for older children

A third of children were hit by other children in school

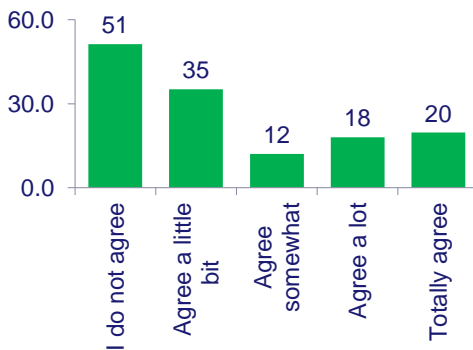
Of these, nearly half of them experienced frequent physical abuse.



The African Child Policy Forum

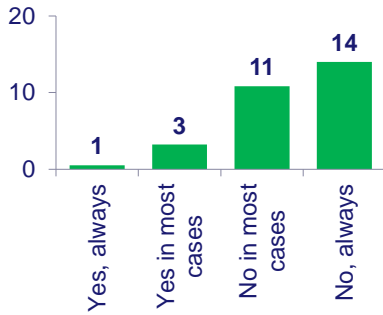
Sense of safety in various settings . . . (cont'd)

Children who do not feel safe at home by their agreement on "being listened to, and their views taken into account"



The African Child Policy Forum

Children who have bad relation with father by level of participation at home



Source: National study on violence against children 2012

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A clear pattern where children who do not participate at home, have sour relation with parents.

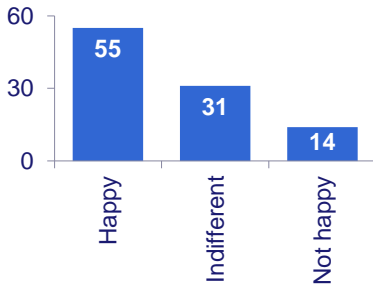
Further assessment required to identify the cause-and-effect relation.

Indicates importance of engaging children in household discussions and decision.



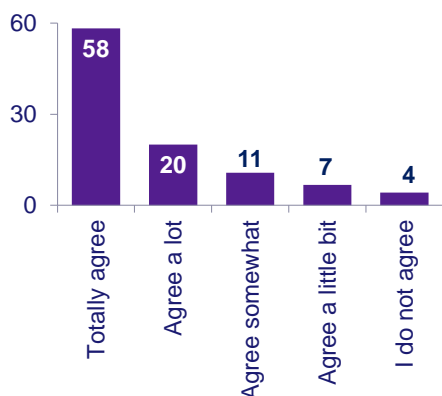
What the situation looked like some years back? . . .

Results of the Children's Poll - 2006



Exploring the environment

Children's perception of parents' fairness . . .



- Most feel parents are fair in their treatment
- About 20% do not see them as fair
- Fairness key to good relationship

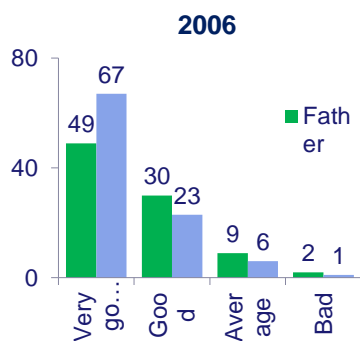
Source: 2010 Global Initiative for Ending Corporal Punishment (2011)



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Exploring the environment . . . (cont'd)

Children's relationship with parents. . .



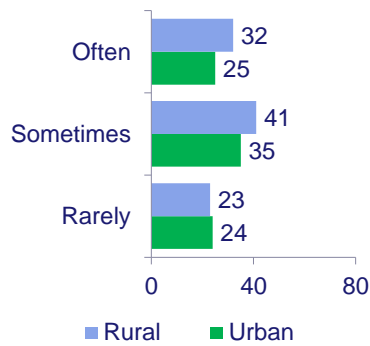
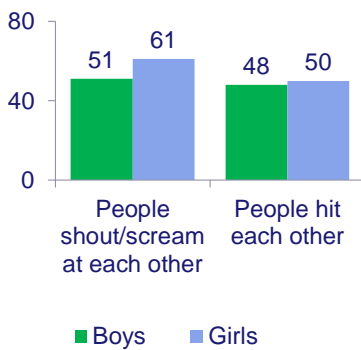
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Causes for the bad relationship with parents . . .

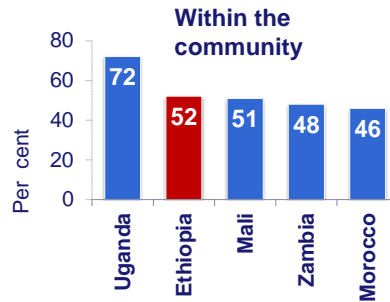
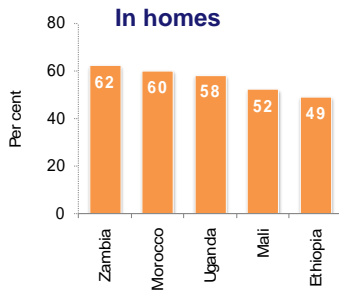
- Beating
- Scolding
- Bad temper
- Misunderstanding
- Absence of good communication
- Unfairness



Exposure to violent acts at home. . .



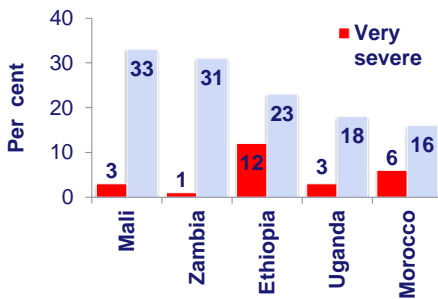
Prevalence of physical violence in the home and community



Source: ACPF's VAC Surveys of Children aged 11-17



Severity of physical punishment . . .

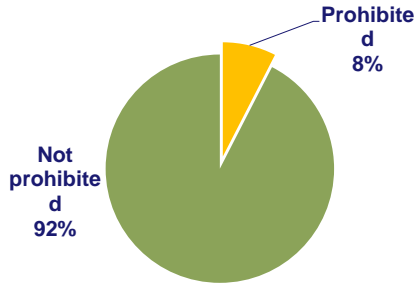


- Main perpetrators of physical violence at home are parents
- Followed by older siblings
- At school, teachers are the main ones
- Classmates and peers in the community are the other perpetrators



Corporal punishment is legal in home and school in many countries

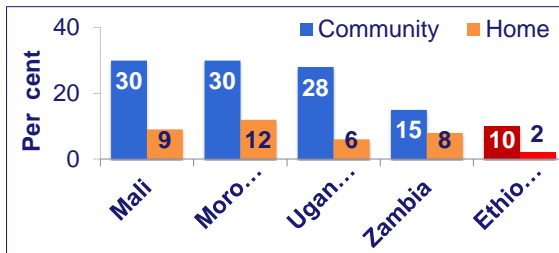
- Only 6 countries have prohibited corporal punishment in Africa
 - Corporal punishment is not prohibited in school in
- Percentage of African countries where s prohibited



Source: 2010 Global Initiative for Ending Corporal Punishment (2011)



Percentage of children who experienced at least one form of sexual violence



Bullying, insults and threats are common forms of psychological abuse



What Needs to be Done?

- Promote child participation at all levels and create mechanisms to ensure their involvement in decisions that affect them.
- Recognize the family as central to promoting safety and put in place policies and programmes to enhance the care and protection capacities of families
- Promoting better parenting.
- Building awareness about the consequences of harsh physical punishment on the well-being of children.



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What Needs to be Done? . . . (cont'd)

- Promotion of non-violent and positive disciplining method
- Promote community-based child protection activities. Through:
 - establishing special committees in schools and neighbourhoods
 - Strengthening kinship groups, church groups local chapters of NGOs and community-based organizations
- Promote child protective social norms
- Reinforcing legal and policy frameworks at national level to establish the norm and facilitate the development of effective child protection systems
- Strengthen data collection, research and surveillance system on safety and protection issues at all levels



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Thank you!

