



## Non Violent Childhoods

### Moving on from corporal punishment in the Baltic Sea Region

*Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat, March 2017*

The Baltic Sea Region is fast becoming a no-corporal-punishment zone for children as 10 out of 11 countries have prohibited corporal punishment by law. Sweden was the first country in the world to enact a legal ban in 1979; Finland achieved prohibition in 1983 and Norway in 1987. The other Nordic and Baltic countries followed; Denmark in 1997, Latvia in 1998, Germany in 2000, Iceland in 2003, Poland in 2010, Estonia in 2015 and Lithuania adopted a legal ban in February 2017. While the law reform was a milestone achievement, it marked also the starting point of a seminal process to bring the ban from law into practice. The region combines countries with over 30 years of experience with implementing the legal ban and countries just embarking on this route to ensure childhoods free from violence.

The Non Violent Childhoods initiative draws on the outstanding commitment and leadership of policy makers and change makers in the Baltic Sea Region. They include public officials, service providers and practitioners, researchers, advocates, independent institutions and citizens, including children and young people as well as parents, guardians and caretakers, faith-based organisations and the media. The initiative engages them all to share, discuss and systematise the experiences in the region.

The full implementation of the legal ban of corporal punishment is promoted through collaborative, multi-stakeholder planning and action in the Baltic Sea Region. The initiative raises awareness of the harmful impact of corporal punishment and highlights good practices in changing attitudes and behaviour for children to grow up free from violence. The learning from the countries in the region is reviewed in national consultations and expert meetings. The combined learning informs the development of a set of guidance materials for parents, children, practitioners, advocates and policy makers. The guidance material will inform the implementation of the legal ban in the countries in the Baltic Sea Region and will be relevant globally.

The Non Violent Childhoods initiative is coordinated by the Children at Risk Unit at the Council of the Baltic Sea States in collaboration with the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. The project partners are the Ministry of Social Affairs in Estonia, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland, the Ministry of Welfare in Latvia and the Ombudsman for Children's Rights in Poland as well as the Coordination on the Rights of the Child in the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Sweden. The project is implemented with the expertise of a reference group with the participation of the Council of Europe, Save the Children Sweden and the Swedish Institute alongside national experts, Ombudsoffices for Children, Chancellors of Justice and other human rights structures. Representatives and experts from all the countries in the Baltic Sea Region, including children, will be involved in the project.

The outcomes of the initiative will be presented at a European conference at the end of 2018.

<http://www.childcentre.info/moving-on-from-corporal-punishment-in-the-baltic-sea-region/>



This project is co-funded by the European Union under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use, which may be made of the information contained therein.