

A school-based intervention reduces physical violence against children in Albania

BACKGROUND

In Albania, certain forms of violence against children are commonly accepted by teachers, parents, and children themselves. For example, **74.8% of parents and 68.5% of teachers report that smacking is an acceptable way to teach respect.** Additionally, **one in three children report having been forcibly pulled or pushed, hit with an object, and shouted at by teachers.** Teachers often lack the training and skills needed to replace physical or psychological violence with more positive classroom and behavior management strategies. Given this environment, coupled with the absence of formal reporting systems, these high rates of physical and psychological violence against children are likely to persist.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

A combination of school-based violence prevention interventions at three different sites led to a number of encouraging outcomes, including reduced use of physical discipline by teachers and parents, decrease in peer-to-peer violence, and changes in children's knowledge and attitudes towards violence.



VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL

The combined interventions led to a significant increase in teachers' awareness and understanding of negative consequences of violence against children. **At two sites, the use of hitting as discipline decreased by nearly 20%.** Additionally, a reduction in peer-to-peer violence was an unintended positive outcome of the intervention.



VIOLENCE AT HOME

The combined interventions modestly improved attitudes about physical punishment by parents. **The number of parents who totally agreed with the statement that "hitting is best for the child" decreased by 20-30% across three sites.**



CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

The intervention significantly increased children's awareness of and response to different forms of violence and their **rights to protection.**

INSPIRE STRATEGIES

Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children ([read more](#))



Norms and values



Parent and caregiver support



Education and life skills

ISSUES ADDRESSED

Violence Against Children (VAC)
Corporal Punishment
School-based Violence
Community Engagement

PROJECT TIMELINE

January, 2009 – June, 2012



Jan 2009

Jun 2012

LOCATION

Berat, Durrës, and Elbasan Districts, Albania



LEARN MORE

Read more about this project and its findings at theevaluationfund.org

KEY LESSONS



Reducing violence and changing norms in school settings is time-intensive and requires a long-term commitment and funding. **Teachers required additional training on cultural sensitivity toward minority and marginalized populations.**



Further development of the parenting component of the program as well as efforts to reduce **the barriers to parental participation** are needed.



Results of the program on the reduction of psychological violence were mixed and varied across sites. Greater understanding of **culturally appropriate strategies to reduce psychological violence** is needed.



Further study of the use and extent of **violent discipline in kindergartens** is needed.

PROGRAM DETAILS

The program, **Violence against Children in Schools and Families**, was implemented by Save the Children in three districts in Albania: Durrës, Elbasan, and Berat.

The primary goal was to reduce school based adult-to-child violence by raising awareness on children's rights and the benefits of growing and learning in a safe and caring environment. This comprehensive holistic intervention included knowledge and skills focused on social and emotional learning, non-discrimination, and conflict resolution. Additional components addressed strategies for safe reporting procedures and community derived school rules as well as teacher capacity building and parent trainings.

PARTNERS

Role	Organization
Implementing partner	Save the Children
Implementing partner	Ministry of Education and Regional Education Authorities in Durrës, Elbasan, and Berat
Researcher	Independent evaluator

STUDY DETAILS/METHODOLOGY

A one group pre-test – post-test design was used to understand trends in parents', teachers' and children's attitudes and behavior towards violence. Data was collected through focus groups, individual interviews, surveys, and desk-research related reports and documents.

BENEFICIARIES/TARGET POPULATION

Children 3-15 years old in kindergarten and grades 1-9, and their teachers, families, and community members

CONTACT

Besnik Kadesha

Program Manager
Save the Children Albania

besnik.kadesha@savethechildren.org

scalbania.org

LEARN MORE

Read more about this project and its findings at theevaluationfund.org

STRENGTHEN THE FIELD

Visit this project on our website where you can easily share it with your networks and partners.



The Evaluation Fund
Reducing Violence Against Children