

**How much does it hurt?
Only the children can tell**

HEF 2005 survey of corporal punishment in schools

Humanistic Education Foundation

June, 2005

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1. 2005 Survey Methodology

(1) Universe

The survey was conducted in 23 cities/counties (except Kinmen County and Matsu County) in Taiwan. In principle, the sample scale was determined by the student population proportion in each city/county. However, considering that the samples in some areas might not be enough to compile statistics and analyze, the sample scale in certain cities/counties was amplified. All of the samples were weighted in accordance with the population proportion to make the samples meaningful and representative in this survey. The total respondents are 3240, including 1164 junior high school students and 2076 primary school students.

© By May 2005, the total population in Taiwan is 22,715,030, with 954,532 junior high school students and 1,878,852 primary school students.

(2) Confidence intervals

This survey was based on a 95% confidence interval with a sampling error under the +/- 2% standard deviation.

(3) Survey conduct method

The systematic random sampling was used to averagely survey students of both sexes from each grade. The survey was carried out at the front door of the primary and junior high schools, and the students were interviewed with their consent.

(4) Definition of corporal punishment in this survey

The organization adopts the common consensus of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, American Pediatric Society, Global Pediatric Alliance, etc., for defining corporal punishment. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child also provides some insight. In this survey, corporal punishment refers to the infliction of physical pain, or the control of body, to cause mental suffering, as a means of punishment.

	Numbers of respondents		Total
	Junior high school	Primary school	
Penghu County	4	5	9
Taipei City	166	101	267
Taipei County	283	146	429
Taoyuan County	154	88	242
Yunlin County	59	33	92
Chiayi County	52	41	93
Chiayi City	51	31	82
Keelung City	65	25	90
Yilan County	48	32	80
Hualien County	68	30	98
Hsinchu County	69	49	118
Hsinchu City	77	35	112
Miaoli County	71	47	118
Taichung County	136	63	199
Taichung City	89	48	137
Changhua County	102	49	151
Nantou County	58	42	100
Tainan County	77	35	112
Tainan City	60	49	109
Kaohsiung City	106	62	168
Taitung County	95	63	158
Pingtung County	96	48	144
Kaohsiung County	90	42	132
	2076	1164	3240

Sexes	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Male	1611	49.7 %
Female	1561	48.2 %
Not specified	68	2.1 %
Valid samples	3240	100 %

© By May 2005, the total population in Taiwan is 22,715,030.

© The total population of the primary and junior high school students in each area are listed below.

City/County	Total population of primary school students	Total population of junior high school students
Penghu County	6,375	3,176
Taipei City	189,379	100,516
Taipei County	311,728	158,385
Taoyuan County	179,191	86,859
Yunlin County	54,217	28,445

Chiayi County	39,361	17,023
Chiayi City	25,436	13,813
Keelung City	32,112	17,269
Yilan County	38,979	20,348
Hualien County	28,584	14,586
Hsinchu County	43,473	20,695
Hsinchu City	35,895	17,558
Miaoli County	46,101	23,798
Taichung County	139,508	73,361
Taichung City	100,126	48,202
Changhua County	109,432	54,434
Nantou County	43,341	21,357
Tainan County	84,760	42,168
Tainan City	62,484	36,936
Kaohsiung City	120,442	64,392
Taitung County	18,775	9,284
Pingtung County	72,129	35,281
Kaohsiung County	97,024	46,646
Total	1,878,852	954,532

2. 2005 Result Analysis

2.1 Corporal punishment on primary and junior high school students in Taiwan

2.1.1 65.1% of the students received corporal punishment from their teachers.

65.1% of the primary and junior high school students indicated that they have received corporal punishment from their teachers since last semester. If applying this ratio to the total of 2,830,000 primary and junior high school students, there have been approximately 1,840,000 children receiving corporal punishment in schools during this academic year.

2.1.2 Forms of corporal punishment received

(1) Direct hitting by hand or stick has the highest rate at 47.7%.

There are 14 major methods of corporal punishment in school in Taiwan as listed below. Among them, direct hitting by hand or stick accounts for the highest percentage at 47.7%, which equals to about 1,350,000 students. That is, in a class of 35 students, 16 children were directly hit before. Noteworthy, “slapping”, which is one of the most humiliating punishments and which can easily result in hearing loss, accounts for 2.5%, equaling 70,000 students.

(2) As to general categories of corporal punishment, 56.8% (about 1,610,000 students) suffered the punishment of “physical pain”. Besides, 23.9% were punished before by the 4th to 10th forms, which involve “aggressive behavior, abetting attack, or public humiliation”. Some people do not take this type of punishment as corporal punishment. However, it is even worse and inappropriate than other common punishments. A slight pull of the collar, aside from the rudeness it represents, can convey a sense of domination and may pose a great mental impact to the threatened person. In a case where involved parties are both adults, conflicts will be triggered by this kind of behavior. We may well imagine how intimidating it would be for children.

General categories of corporal punishment	No.	Forms	Results	Percentage
Direct infliction of physical pain 56.8 %	1	Hitting on students' palms or bottoms with hand or stick.	1544	47.7%
	2	Prohibiting students from eating, drinking, having a recess and lunch break, having vacations, or going to restrooms (depriving of physical needs).	631	19.5%
	3	Asking students to be on their knees, (half) squat, or lift heavy objects (to keep holding a posture or repeating a physical movement).	620	19.1%
Acts that may constitute crimes: assault, subornation of assault, or public insults, etc.	4	Verbally humiliating students (using words like <i>junk</i> , <i>bitch</i> , <i>idiot</i> , <i>go to hell</i> , <i>pig</i> , etc.).	312	9.6%
	5	Pinching, twisting, poking, pushing, and hitting on other parts of the body not mentioned above.	298	9.2%

21.1%	6	Isolating students (such as relocating student to an isolated seat or asking other students not to talk to the misbehaved one).	232	7.2%
	7	Asking students to hit themselves or each other.	146	4.5%
	8	Making a fool of students in public (by putting a dog tag on students, shaving their heads, drawing on their faces, making them stay on the school stage, etc.).	91	2.8%
	9	Pulling students' collars.	88	2.7%
	10	Slapping across students' faces.	80	2.5%
	11	Making students stand still.	314	9.7%
	12	Physical training (such as running, push ups, sit ups, jump squats, etc.).	313	9.7%
	13	Assigning extra schoolwork (writing or reciting).	23	0.7%
	14	Labor activity.	286	8.8%

(3) Number of times of being physically punished within a single academic year.

Of the 56.8% students who received physical pain from punishment, such as from hitting or half squatting, 9.5% of them (estimated 153,000 students) were punished so over 10 times.

Selections	Results	Percentage	
Never	1401	43.2%	
1-5 times	1393	43.0%	56.8%
5-10 times	137	4.2%	
Over 10 times	309	9.5%	
Valid samples	3240	100%	

Of the 23.9% students who received punishment that may constitute crimes: assault, instigation of assault, or public insults, 2.8% (estimated over 20,000 students) were punished so over 10 times since last semester.

Selections	Results	Percentage	
Never	2465	76.1 %	
1-5 times	522	16.1%	23.9%
5-10 times	43	1.3%	
Over 10 times	92	2.8%	
Not specified	117	3.6%	

(4) Causes for corporal punishment

The survey clearly shows that “violating school regulations” and “failing to fulfill academic requirements” are the two major causes of receiving corporal punishment. However, these usually are not serious faults. They do not justify many teachers’ usual claim, “Don’t you know how mean our students are? Beating them up is the only way”. Such an account indicates that the high prevalence of corporal punishment on campus is due to many teachers’ lack of the skills and training in student counseling. In reality, only in very few cases are teachers left with nothing but corporal punishment to help solve discipline problems.

Causes (listed according to percentage ranking)	Results	Percentage
Violating school regulations (making noise, talking in class, dressing in an improper outfit, forgetting to bring required things.)	1492	46.1%
Failing to fulfill academic requirements (including failing to hand in homework)	1201	37.1%
Quarreling or fighting with classmates	560	17.3%
Being associated with others' misbehaviors	494	15.2%
Having an improper attitude toward teachers (such as refusing to accept advice or offending teachers)	323	10.0%
Other causes	188	5.8%

2.2 Corporal punishment on primary and junior high school students by locality

In terms of the results of different cities/counties, there is a huge gap between the lowest corporal punishment rate at 45% in Yilan County and the highest at 83.54% in Taitung County. The high ratio in Taitung County reminds us that back to 2004 when Taipei City Government demanded school principals to sign the “Convention of Zero Corporal Punishment”, the Education Bureau of Taitung County Government and the Taitung County Teachers’ Association took the lead to oppose the Convention and asserted that such action was unnecessary and would be a strike to teachers’ morale. This shows that the prevalence of corporal punishment is highly related to the connivance of the educational administrations and the conservative force from the teacher groups.

Hualien County, which is also located in a remote area as Taitung County, has the second lowest ratio in this survey. Taipei City already declared the zero corporal punishment policy for a period of time and now has the third lowest rate at 52.43%, compared to last year’s 59.5%. According to our surveys, the percentage in Taipei City declined year by year, and it is surely related to the higher autonomy parents are showing. The statistics of this year shows that the Education Department of Taipei City Government’s declaration of the policy and punishment for violation this policy have already taken certain effect.

Comparing this year’s statistics with last year’s, some obvious decreases can be noticed in Taichung City and in Kaohsiung City; Taichung County, however, had a huge increase.

Percentage of corporal punishment of primary and junior high school students in each city/county

	City/County	Percentage
1	Taitung County	83.54 %
2	Changhua County	77.48 %
3	Taichung County	74.37 %
4	Kaohsiung County	74.24 %
5	Pingtung County	73.61 %
6	Nantou County	72.00 %
7	Taoyuan County	70.66 %
8	Chiayi County	69.89 %
9	Tainan City	67.89 %
10	Tainan County	65.18 %
11	Taichung City	63.50 %
12	Taipei County	63.17 %
13	Kaohsiung City	63.10 %
14	Miaoli County	61.86 %
15	Hsinchu County	61.02 %
16	Chiayi City	60.98 %
17	Hsinchu City	58.04 %
18	Yunlin County	55.43 %
19	Keelung City	54.44 %
20	Taipei City	52.43 %
21	Hualien County	52.04 %
22	Yilan County	45.00 %
	Average	65.1%

Comparison of the percentage of corporal punishment of primary and junior high school students in 6 major cities/counties in 2004 and 2005

City/County	Percentage	
	2004	2005
Taipei City	59.5 %	52.4 %
Taipei County	66.7 %	63.2 %
Taichung City	73.2 %	63.5 %
Taichung County	67.6 %	74.5 %
Kaohsiung City	72.1 %	63.0 %
Kaohsiung County	78.1 %	74.4 %
Average	69.6%	63.9%

2.3 Comparison of corporal punishment on primary and junior high school students

Among the 2089 **primary** school students interviewed, **56.15%** indicated that they had received corporal punishment;

Among the 1151 **junior high** school students interviewed, **69.59%** indicated that they had received corporal punishment.

In terms of the differences in causes, junior high school students receive apparently more corporal punishment due to academic performance–related reasons than primary school students do, which is probably because the pressure of admission to senior high schools is more direct and intense. Moreover, being corporally punished due to taking an improper attitude toward teachers also happens more often in junior high schools. This may reflect that children start to have their own

opinions as they grow up. What they need at this stage is to be educated with more rational reasoning, instead of with demands and control.

Statistics also imply that the 6-years of education which allows corporal punishment, cannot guarantee that older children will have better self-control. There is corporal punishment on 1,050,000 children out of the total of 1,880,000 primary school students, and on 660,000 out of the total of 950,000 junior high school students. By grade, one single grade has the average of 170,000 students receiving corporal punishment in primary schools, and 220,000 students in junior high. That is, once entering junior high, there would be over 50,000 more students that undergo corporal punishment.

The following forms of corporal punishment are being given to junior high school students at a higher ratio compared to primary school students.

Forms of corporal punishment	Primary school	Junior high school
	Percentage	Percentage
Hitting on students' palms or bottoms with hand or stick.	40.83 %	60.03 %
Asking students to be on their knees, (half) squat, or lift heavy objects (to keep holding a posture or repeat an action).	14.94 %	26.76 %

By causes:

Causes	Primary school	Junior high school
	Percentage	Percentage
Failing to fulfill academic requirements (including failing to hand in homework)	45.95 %	63.30 %
Violating school regulations (making noise, talking in class, dressing in an improper outfit, forgetting to bring required things.)	63.34 %	68.29 %
Taking an improper attitude toward teachers (such as refusing to accept advise or offending teachers, etc.)	8.95 %	21.72 %
Quarreling or fighting with classmates	27.54 %	21.60 %
Being associated with others' misbehaviors	21.40 %	23.47 %
Other causes	7.50 %	7.62 %

2.4 Survey indicates trend of CP transformation

In the comparison of the forms of corporal punishment in the surveys from this year and last year, direct hitting decreased (from 72.3% in 2004 to 60.9% in 2005, but it is still over 60%); however, the punishment of isolating students apparently boosted (from 16.3% in 2004 to 38.1% in 2005). Punishment, which can cause mental stress, is increasing, and it is likely caused by governmental departments continually taking action to prohibit corporal punishment, defined in a narrow way. This also explains why many parents are worried that once corporal punishment is banned, the teachers will not be able to discipline the children. The teachers may still not fully understand the

meaning and the methods of “Replacing punishment with inspiration” although this is an ability that the teacher’s training system should equip its trainees with.

Question: What are the forms of punishment you have seen in school?

Selections	2004		2005				
	Results	Percentage	Results	Percentage			
Never seen any before.	85	6.5%	Never seen any before.	385	11.9%		
Directly hitting on body (hitting on the palms, faces, heads, bottoms, or pinching and twisting).	947	72.3%	Hitting on students’ palms or bottoms with hand or stick.	1780	55%	1973	60.9%
			Pinching, twisting, poking, pushing, or hitting other parts of the body not mentioned before.	594	18.3%		
			Slapping across students’ faces.	366	11.3%		
Asking students to hold a posture or keep repeating a movement to exhaust them (such as to be on their knees, half squat, lift heavy objects, or run along the playground).	888	67.9%	Asking students to be on their knees, (half) squat, or lift heavy objects (to keep holding a posture or repeat an action).	1072	33.1%	2155	66.5%
			Making students stand still.	1644	50.7%		
			Physical training (such as running, push ups, sit ups, jump squats, etc.)	1003	31.0%		
Giving extra schoolwork (writing, transcribing, or reciting).	859	65.6%	Giving extra schoolwork (writing or reciting).	1457	45%		
Depriving of physical needs (no eating / drinking, no going to restrooms, no lunch break, etc.).	117	8.9%	Prohibiting students from eating, drinking, having recess/lunch break, having vacations, and going to restrooms (depriving of physical needs).	989	30.5%		
Restricting activities (no recess break, no joining school/graduation trips or clubs).	544	41.5%					
Labor activity (e.g. toilet cleaning).	386	29.5%	Labor activity.	1230	38%		
Verbally humiliating students (using words like <i>junk, bitch, idiot, go to hell, pig</i> , etc.)	293	22.4%	Verbally humiliating students (using words like <i>junk, bitch, idiot, go to hell, pig</i> , etc.).	733	22.6%		
Isolating students (making them stand alone, or prohibiting them from talking to others)	213	16.3%	Isolating students (such as relocating student to an isolated seat or asking others not to talk to the misbehaved student).	1235	38.1%		
Asking students to hit	163	12.4%	Asking students to hit	463	14.3%		

themselves or each other.			themselves or each other.		
Making a fool of students (by putting a dog tag on students, shaving their heads, drawing their faces, making them stay on the stage, etc.)	125	9.5%	Making a fool of students (by putting a dog tag on students, shaving their heads, drawing their faces, making them stay on the stage, etc.)	424	13.1%
Paying a fine (not for compensation)	133	10.2%	Pulling student's collars	352	10.8%
Other	44	3.4%	Received or seen other punishment	182	5.6%

2.5 Students' awareness of the protection policy

Nearly 50% of children, which is a lot more than last year's statistics, know that the government prohibits teachers from corporal punishment. But surprisingly, even if much related information appears quite often in media, there are still about 50% of the children who are not aware of this policy.

This fact reflects that the school is a closed environment not only to the teachers, but especially to the students. Children's minds have been sealed by the unified operation of the schools, so that the information related to their rights and benefits is not easily accessible to them.

Besides, there is little doubt that many teachers keep brainwashing the students with the idea that "hitting you is for your own good". In view of this, the authorities should inform CP victims and potential victims of this policy if they really intend to forbid and stop corporal punishment.

	2004		2005	
	Q: Do you know it is illegal for teachers to use corporal punishment?		Q: Do you know the government prohibits teachers from using corporal punishment?	
Selections	Results	Percentage	Results	Percentage
Yes	353	27.2%	1513	46.7%
No	947	72.8%	1521	46.9%
Valid Samples	1300	100%	3033	100%

2.6 Students' feelings and perceptions of corporal punishment

2.6.1 How do you feel when receiving corporal punishment?

Only **33.5%** of the respondents agree with the teachers' use of corporal punishment.

Selections	Results	Percentage
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I deserved to be punished for my own fault. (Agree with punishment)	1085	33.5%
How can the teacher hit students like this? (It is not a reasonable treatment)	463	14.3%
The teacher is losing control of himself/herself again. (I'm just unlucky that the teacher uses me to work off his/her anger)	472	14.6%
I feel scared, ashamed, and degraded. (Inverted negative emotions)	736	22.7%
I feel angry and want revenge. (Extroverted negative emotions)	610	18.8%
I don't know.	214	6.6%
Other	95	2.9%

2.6.2 How do you feel when witnessing corporal punishment of others?

Selections	Results	Percentage
I feel sympathetic for the classmate who is being punished.	1343	41.5%
It is right for the teacher to punish the misbehaved student. (Agree with the teachers)	1041	32.1%
I'm glad the victim is not me. (Worry about self)	811	25.0%
Feeling sick of it, the teacher has no right to hit students. (Disagree with corporal punishment)	602	18.6%
I don't know.	489	15.1%
Other	121	3.7%

2.6.3 What kind of corporal punishment will you use if you become a teacher in the future?

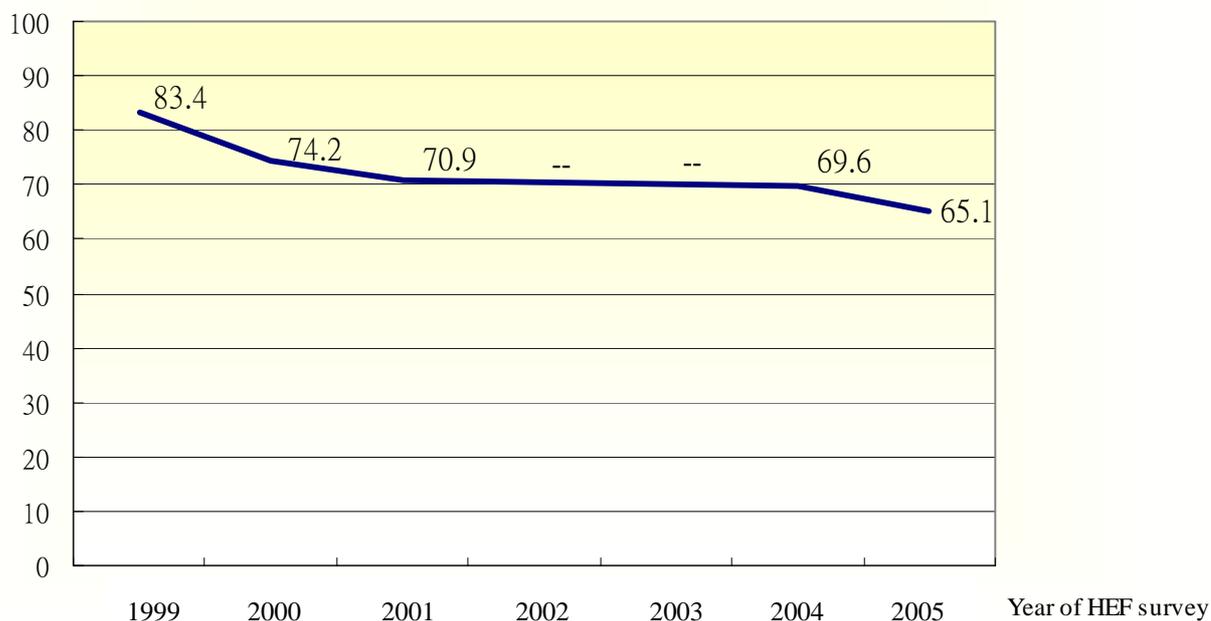
Selections	Results	Percentage
None of the following methods should be used as a punishment.	1042	32.2%
Hitting students' palms or bottoms with hand or stick.	652	20.1%
Asking students to be on their knees, half/jump squat, or lift heavy objects.	230	7.1%
Prohibiting students from eating, drinking, having recess/lunch break, having vacation, or going to restrooms.	222	6.9%
Making students stand still.	1662	51.3%

The statistics reveal that corporal punishment has a strong “pass-on” effect on the children. Even though only 30% of the students agree with the teachers' use of corporal punishment, nearly 70% said they will still use it if they become teachers. Since teachers used to be students, we can well imagine the fact that nowadays many teachers depend on corporal punishment in education because they experienced it when they were children. Therefore, to end this vicious circle of corporal punishment, we must act now!

3. Graph of CP Prevalence in Taiwan over the Years

CP Prevalence in Taiwan

Percentage of students who received CP



© In 2002 and 2003, HEF conducted surveys in illegal ability grouping instead.

4. Publication of Survey Results and Responses of Government Policies

- September, 1999 The Humanistic Education Foundation (HEF) released the survey results of corporal punishment in schools, which showed over 80% of primary and junior high students received corporal punishment during that academic year.
- July, 2000 The Ministry of Education (MOE) held a press conference and declared the goal to eliminate corporal punishment and to establish an education environment without personal invasion.
- May, 2001 HEF surveyed the primary and junior high students in 3 major metropolitan areas (Taipei City, Taichung City, and Kaohsiung City) on corporal punishment in schools. The results showed that 70% of students received corporal punishment during the academic year at that time.
- August, 2001 The meeting of the principals of the public and private high schools in Taipei City included “the promotion of zero corporal punishment” into the agenda.

- May, 2002 The Education Department of Taipei City Government reasserted to enforce the policy of zero corporal punishment.
- March, 2004 HEF released the survey results of corporal punishment on campus, which showed over 69% of the primary and junior high students received corporal punishment in schools. HEF also vowed to make Taiwan the 36th country in the world to ban corporal punishment through legislation.
- December, 2004 The Education Department of Taipei City Government summoned all of the Taipei City high school principals to openly sign the Convention of Zero Corporal Punishment. The Education Bureau of Taitung County Government, however, thought that the policy of zero corporal punishment is “immoderate”.
- February, 2005 The MOE demanded every city/county government to follow Taipei City Government to enforce the policy of zero corporal punishment in the National Meeting of the Commissioners of the Education Administrations.
- March, 2005 The Education Bureau of Changhua County Government summoned the representatives of local principals and teachers to vow to sign the Convention of Zero Corporal Punishment.
- May, 2005 The Education Bureau of Taitung County Government announced to promote the policy of zero corporal punishment.
- June 14th, 2005 The Taipei City Teachers’ Association announced that 83% of the teachers do not consider corporal punishment serious in schools. Besides, 77% of the teachers and 65% of the parents do not support the policy of zero corporal punishment.
- June 15th, 2005 The Education Department of Taipei City Government announced to maintain the policy of zero corporal punishment.
- June 16th, 2005 HEF released 2005 survey results of corporal punishment on campus. The survey showed 65.1% of the primary and junior high school students had received corporal punishment since last September. In other words, 1,840,000 out of the total of 2,830,000 primary and junior high school students in Taiwan had experienced corporal punishment in schools since the last academic year started.

5. HEF's Appeals and Actions

Our appeals:

- (1) The MOE should include the article of “The use of corporal punishment is forbidden” into the Teachers Employment Guidelines as a code of conduct for the teachers in each city/county.
- (2) The MOE should demand the schools to report cases of corporal punishment (or improper disciplinary practice) to the Campus Security Report Center, and regular follow-ups should be done and announced.
- (3) The MOE should urge the local governments to propose a concrete project to implement the “zero corporal punishment” policy and offer rewards to the representative government body or body’s which effectively enforce the policy.
- (4) The MOE should demand all of the teacher training institutions to provide courses on disciplinary methods that respect human rights. Furthermore, the courses should become required for the on-the-job training and the practical training, and also be included in the evaluation index of the teacher training institutions.
- (5) The requirement of “Corporal punishment cannot be carried out on students under any reason” should be included in the Fundamental Law of Education. The MOE needs to amend the Teachers Law as soon as possible to eliminate teachers failing to employ this professional requirement in education.

Our future actions:

- (1) Establish a national supervision network, which will have “observers” in each city/county to monitor how the local governments enforce the policy of zero corporal punishment.
- (2) Provide the local governments, which actively and effectively enforce the policy, with professional assistance.
- (3) Open up a helpline (+886-2-23670151 ext.111) for corporal punishment on campus, and assist in filing for state compensation for serious cases.
- (4) Continue to carry out surveys of corporal punishment in schools.
- (5) Urge the amendment of Laws to “establish a country without corporal punishment on children”.