

# Inclusion and Exclusion

## Racism and Ethnicity in Research, Policy and Practice

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Black children and discipline:  
where does child discipline stop  
and child abuse start?

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# Objectives

- Set out theoretical basis of research
- Discuss methodology underpinning research
- Share research findings
- Discuss implications for practice
- Receive feedback from practitioners

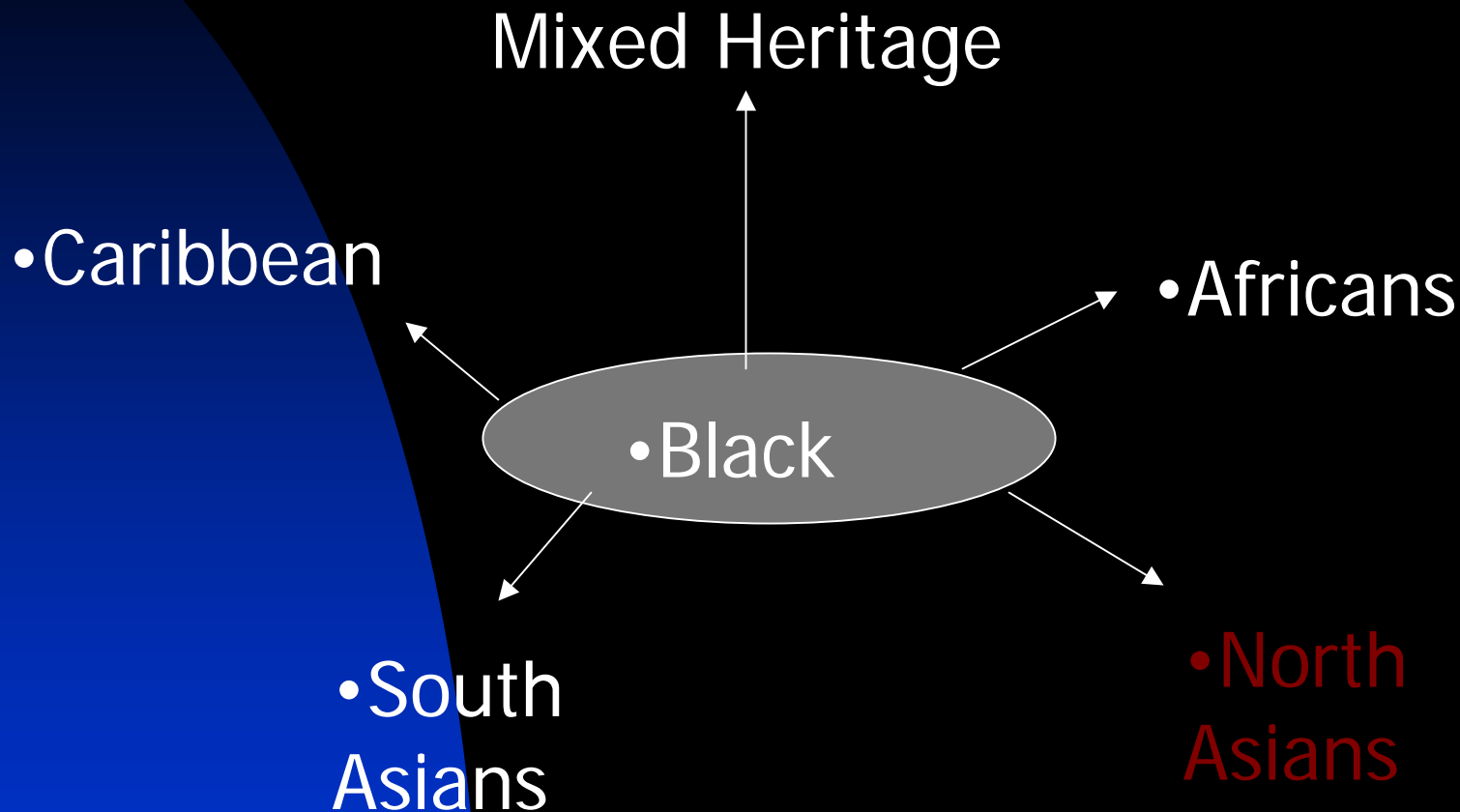
# Who is Black

- “The meaning of Black before the sixteen Century included ‘deeply stained, soiled, dirty, foul ... having dark or deadly purposes, malignant, pertaining to or involving death, deadly, baneful, disastrous, sinister ... foul, iniquitous, horrible, wicked, indicating disgrace, censure, liability to punishment etc. Black was an emotionally partisan colour, the handmaid and symbol of baseness and evil, a sign of danger and repulsion” (Jordan 1974:6)
- “Up to the 1970’s, the British classified other people as either white or coloured” (Banton 1988:2)
- “otherness that is not white, it is black, brown, yellow or purple even” (Bell 1990:54)
- Negating the negative (Sivanandan 1982)
- Racial definition is a fluctuating social construct whose boundaries are extended and contracted according to various interests.

“A coercive ideological fantasy”  
(Modood 1988, 1990)

**“The term is important because we use it in an inclusive and radical way. Inclusive because in an age of multiple identities, using the identity Black does not mean you have to relinquish other identities. Radically because it is obvious that Black is not descriptive: it does not literally relate to anyone’s true skin colour and was an exaggeration first used by white men. Therefore when it is used by black people now, it is a challenge, it is a rebellion, it is radical, and it symbolises the fight for change. We will not argue that is an automatically unifying term... (but) then, is a rallying call for radical action for those people who wish to stand behind it and who recognise its loaded historical meaning” (Chouhan et al 1996: 104 & 105)**

# Political definition of Black people in UK



# Social picture of Black people in the UK

- Constituting 6% of the population, 15% of the 1 million stop & searches 1998/9 were on Black people
- 12% of the 1.3 million arrests for notifiable offences were against Black people.
- 18% of the male prison population & 24% of the female prison population are Black. (Home Office Section 95, 1999:V)
- Black children forming 3% of all 5 –15 year olds in 1995/6 accounted for 11% of all permanent exclusions. Black Caribbean pupils were 5 times more like to face permanent exclusion than white pupils (CRE, Education & training in Britain).
- “The unemployment rate among young black people was 35% compared with 13% among young white people in the Spring of 1997” (CRE fact sheet on young people in Britain)
- **Given Black people’s disproportionate representation in all facets of social ills; how do the parents influence this?**

# Why the present picture?

- “Structuralist” or “behaviouralist”?
- Construction of the British Welfare State and the exclusion of Black people: recruitment, restriction, repatriation and now community cohesion?

# Whose concept of reality?

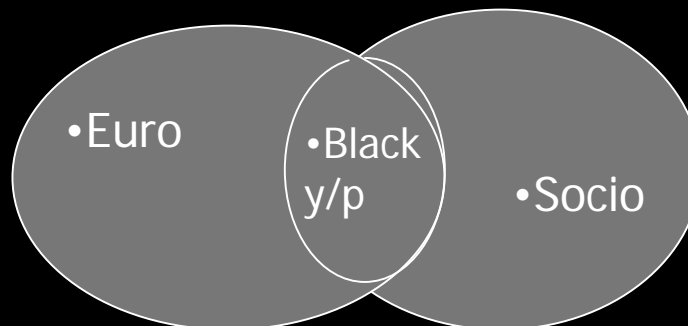
## •Eurocentric

- Self is emotional universe
- All actions towards self
- Self as basis of reference
- Primary- situation to self

## Sociocentric

- No omnipotent self in collective
- Individuals as indexes/jigsaws
- The self includes persons & forces
- Secondary - self changes to meet situation

- Landrine (1992)
- Gaines (1982)
- Owusu Bempah (1998)



# Lack of Empirical Research on Black Families and Discipline

- Dosanjh and Ghuman (1998) – centres around Punjabi children
- Hackett & Hackett (1994) childrearing comparison between British and Gujarati children in Greater Manchester.
- **Gibbons, Conroy and Bell (1995) found in their study that 58% of referrals from Black families compared to 42% of White families were for physical abuse. This compares sharply with 20% for Black families and 31% for White families with regards sexual abuse.**
- “We need much more detail information about the child rearing practices of particular groups which are subtle processes which cannot be viewed through a telescope as well as what lessons, difficulties or changes of behaviour (which) arise from living as a minority group within a majority culture” (Stevenson 1998:35).

# and controversy

- “Reports into the deaths of Black children provide evidence of a lack of intervention in situations where Black children were at obvious risk of suffering significant harm from their parents...reports identify that stereotyping of Black families and a reluctance on the part of white professionals to intervene for fear of being accused of racism influenced practice” (Dutt & Philips 2000:40)
- **“Disagreements about the appropriateness of physical punishment features in a disproportionate number of cases involving black families ...the issue of punishment is one of the most controversial areas relating to black families, child abuse and social work intervention” (Chand 2000:72)**

# Research Aim

- To conduct an empirical piece of research that would improve the understanding of the reward and sanction system in Black households towards influencing policies to a more anti-oppressive stance

# Research objectives

- To distinguish between what is considered abuse and discipline from a Black perspective.
- To find out the predominant reward and sanction systems (methods) used in Black households.
- To highlight the differences, if any, between child discipline and abuse from a black and legal mainstream perspective.

# Research methodology

- Technique: 7 Semi-structured group interviews with young people according the political strands of the term Black as earlier postulated across locations in 5 Counties. Group interview and questionnaire. Total number of young people = 41
- Semi-structured individual interviews with 25 parents, five from each of the political strands
- Both qualitative and quantitative data generated
- Manual coding for data analysis
- Ethical issues, reliability and validity
- Issues in the field: matters arising

# Research findings

Are Black children rewarded for good behaviour?

## Young people

Rewarded	Not rewarded
23	18

Most young people however stated that, even if they are rewarded, it is not totally linked to good behaviour. There seems to be an expectation from their parents and the community to behave well

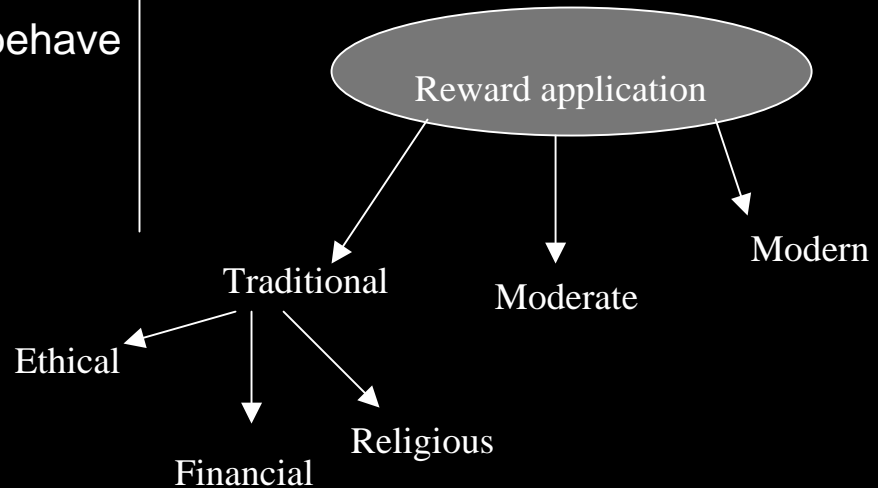
and not be “bribed” to do so.

## Young people

Present	Praises	Trips	Other
14	8	4	7

## Parents

Parents establish a clear difference between emotional and material reward. If we are to agree that reward covers both including praises, then the overwhelming majority reward their children in one way or the other.



# Research finding

## What are the sources of conflict?

### ■ Young People

■ Bedtimes	Education	Within law	sibling dis.
■ 5	16	12	21

■ Fashion	Defying parents	other
■ 18	6	6

- It is significant to note that the African and Bangladeshi groups have education as the biggest source of conflict, 7 and 6 respectively.

A significant number of parents recounted their negative experiences with Social Services coupled with a confusion about the law.

### ■ Parents

- **Fashion** – Parents consider it as a major source of conflict both for financial and religious reasons.
- “I don’t think its right for my daughter to wear tight trousers and tight clothes or showing belly buttons or anything like that, I would not allow that.” (IIPA2)
- **Sibling rivalry** – identity formation
- **Respect**
- **Bedtimes**
- **TV** – not following parents’ instructions
- **Conflict with the law**

# How are Black children sanctioned?

## ■ Young people

■ Physical	Cur. Pri.	Grounding	Shaming
■ 11	10	17	13
■ Verbal adm.	Pock. Money	other	
■ 19	15	5	

- There appears to be different cultural expectations from mainstream
- “For example, you are a father and you have got a daughter and you find out that your daughter is going out with another boy, you are meant, you are supposed to, you know basically kill her” (GIBA1)
- “That a society is OK to treat a community differently because of its culture, its faith or its language and say that you have to be culturally sensitive to the Sheikh community and the Muslim community because of these traditions that they have, so its ok to be culturally sensitive to them but when it comes to those communities wanting to extend their culture and pass on their cultural values to the next generation, then the sensitivity or the acknowledgement of their culture is curtailed by saying oh well you can only chastise in this way and not in any other way” (IIIN5)

## ■ Parents

- Physical - About half of the parents interviewed stated that they do physically sanction their children and this ranges from an occasional slap, ear pinching to some lashes. Most parents also stated that this is done in a controlled manner and as a last resort.
- Grounding – most parents use grounding
- Non – verbal discipline “dirty looks” & “silent treatment”
- Withdrawal of pocket money – however a significant number of parents do not give out pocket money
- Curtail privileges – computers, bicycles, TVs. Mobiles, CD players & social activity
- Verbal admonition
- Shame/asserting expectation

# Most effective sanction

## ■ Young people

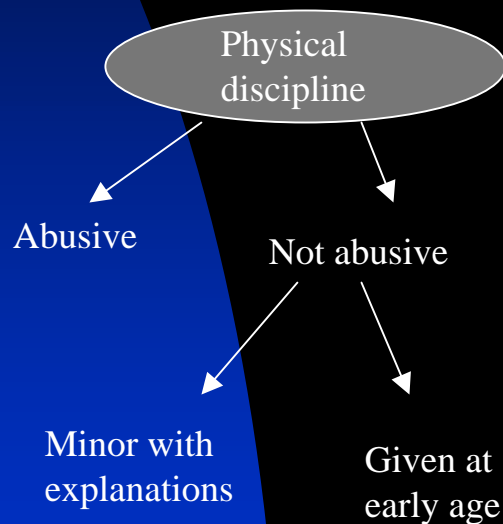
■	Shame	Grounding	Physical	Poc. Mo.
■	7	4	9	5
■	Cur. Pri.	Tak. Rela.	Verbal	other
■	3	2	7	2

## ■ Parents

- Verbal admonition – severe telling off to gentle explanation
- Grounding – restrict movement & social activity
- Non – verbal – a significant number find it effective
- Withdraw privileges
- Physical punishment
- Shame

# What punishments are considered abusive?

- Young people
- Physical shame tak. Rel. Others
- 32 6 6 5



- Parents
- Emotional – putting down a child to name calling
- Use of excessive force/out of control
- About half of parents stated that any hitting is abusive
- Denial of basic necessities
- Anything that has a detrimental effect on the child

# What is considered fair?

## ■ Young people

■	Cur. Pri.	Smack	Withdraw poc.	Grounding
■	4	2	14	15
■	Ver. Adm.	Other		
■	15	3		

- Verbal admonition covers “shouting”, “lecturing”, cussing to an outright ear bashing

## Parents

- Slap/smack
- Explaining/verbal admonition
- Grounding
- Curtail privileges

# Have you ever heard of the 1989 Children's Act?

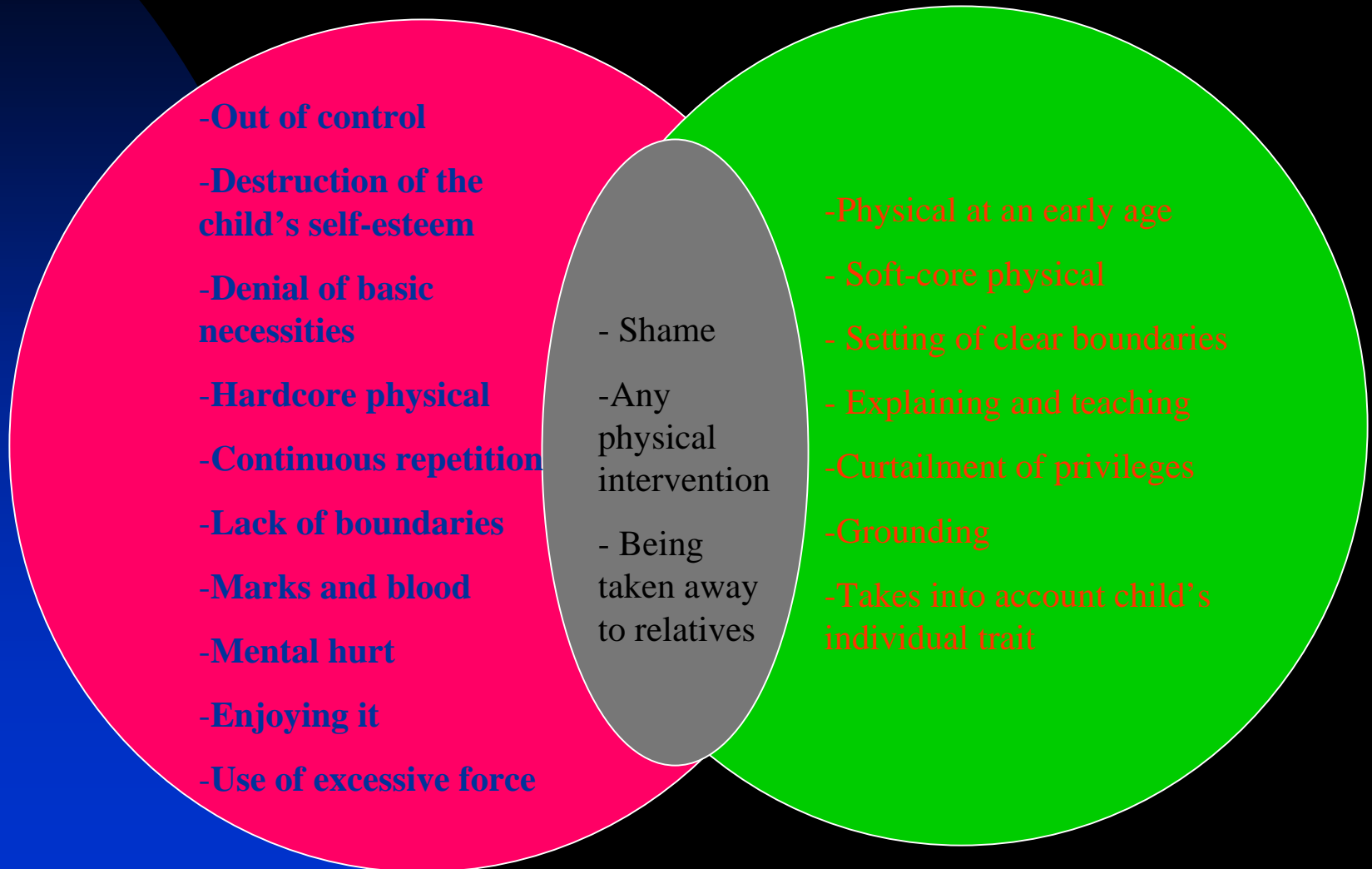
- Young people

■ Yes	No
■ 4	37

## Parents

- The overwhelming majority have never heard of it, however most are aware that their children can call 999, report to school or the child help line.

# Boundary between abuse and discipline



# Analysis and implications for practice

## Data analysis codes

Code	Meaning
ABUCH	Children's definition of abuse
ABUPA	Parents definition of abuse

## Table of data analysis

<u>Code</u>	<i>Quote</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Par</i>	<i>Theme</i>
ABUCH	ear pinching... is a very serious punishment in Bangladesh, it's not hard but is very offensive" (IIBA1)	104	Shameful in a cultural context but not painful	2	Culturally offensive punishments

### - Reward and sanction methods

- The way Black parents were brought up vs. the way they have to bring up their children
- Black people's perception and experiences with Social services
- Boundary between abuse and discipline

# Reward and sanctions

1. If reward is not given, how does it affect the parental toolbox?

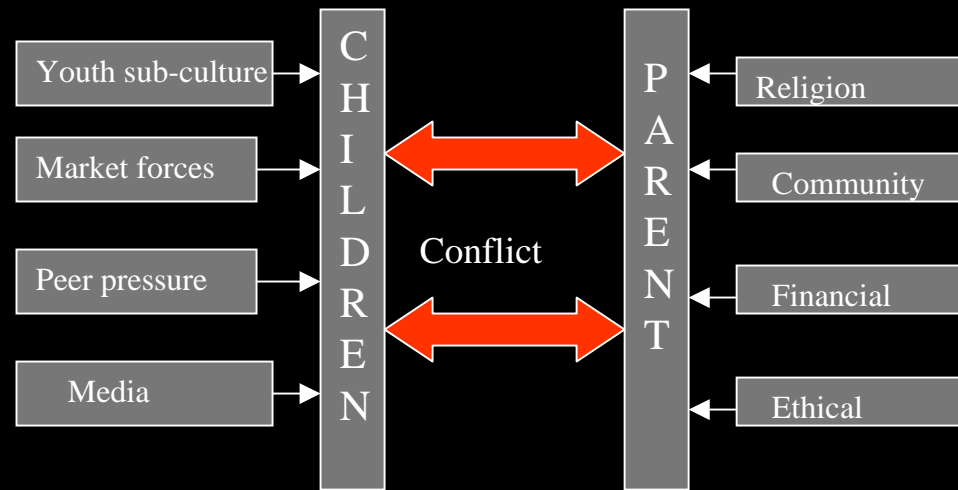
2. Diagram showing parental expectation on Black children

Parents have high expectations resulting in tighter discipline

Taking care of one's parents

Success to be shared by extended family

3. Diagram showing the intergenerational conflict on the basis of fashion



4. 25% of young people and 50% of parents use physical sanctions, how does this affect the concept of significant harm?
5. Over half of parents of up to 12yrs are reported to use physical punishment (Ghate et al 2004)

# The way Black parents were brought up against the way they have to bring up their children

- Parents had much stricter upbringing
- The strongest influences in the formation of parents' concept of reality appears to be religion and culture and these appear different from mainstream; here dogmatism and relativism must be watched.
- \* Place of the child in upbringing – individual or extension of oneself?

# Black people's perception and experiences with Social services

- There is a demonstrable ignorance and lack of clarity about child protection legislation
- Black child rearing practices are not respected
- Eurocentric model of parenting is not the best
- Deep suspicion of Social Services

# Boundary between abuse and discipline

- Physical
- Shame
- Being taken away to relatives

# Conclusion

- A recognisable dearth of research on Black families
- Insight of reward and sanction methods
- Considered dogmatic and relativist perspectives
- A lot of work needs to be done to make child protection legislation accessible
- Parent abuse needs researching

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