

# Expert comment available about making smacking children illegal

## What needs to be done to change the laws on smacking to discipline children in Australia?

Leading child protection expert Professor Daryl Higgins is available for expert comment about ending corporal punishment in Australia.

While some countries including Ireland, Wales, France and Canada have completely prohibited corporal punishment of children, smacking is permitted by law in Australia by a parent or carer.

On Friday, Professor Higgins will lead an online workshop with experts from Wales, Ireland, New Zealand and Canada to discuss lessons learned from their legislation banning corporal punishment of children.

Speakers will include National Children's Commissioner Anne Hollonds, Ambassador for Children and Young People in Western Australia Linda Savage, former Wales Children's Commissioner Sally Holland and leader of Irish campaign to ban corporal punishment Jillian van Turnhout.

Professor Higgins, director of ACU's Institute of Child Protection Studies, is one of the key researchers behind the Parenting and Family Research Alliance (PAFRA), which has organised the workshop.

It will look at law reform regarding the use of physical punishment to discipline children.

Topics to be addressed include:

- Current legal perspective on Australian state/territory laws on corporal punishment
- What law change would mean for Indigenous children
- Lessons learned from Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and Wales
- Key learnings and resources needed for change.

International Day to End Corporal Punishment of Children is on Saturday 30 April.

Please **note: Professor Higgins is available for interview from 1pm on Friday (after the workshop).**

**Media Contact:** Elisabeth Tarica, Australian Catholic University on 0418 756 941 or [elisabeth.tarica@acu.edu.au](mailto:elisabeth.tarica@acu.edu.au)