POSITIVE PARENTING DOES NOT USE PUNISHMENT, BUT SUPPORTS DISCIPLINE
A fact sheet about the difference between discipline and punishment

Discipline:
- From the Latin disciplinare – which means ‘to teach’
- Part of an ongoing educative process that encourages the development of self-control and respect for others
- Builds a culture of respect, tolerance and dignity

Punishment:
- From the Latin punier – which means ‘pain’
- Part of an authoritarian approach that uses hitting, shouting and sarcasm to make children ‘toe the line’
- Used to punish and humiliate rather than correct behaviour and nurture

Positive discipline:
- Promotes children’s self-control
- Adults and children decide together on rules and consequences
- Uses incentives and modelling to motivate good behaviour
- Teaches children how to ‘get it right’
- Builds on strengths

Corporal punishment:
- Uses force to make children obedient
- Rules and consequences decided by adults only
- Focuses on punishing bad behaviour
- Makes children ‘pay’ for their mistakes
- Focuses on weaknesses

THE MYTH
“I have to discipline my child – and that means to punish them physically.”

THE FACTS

SONKE GENDER JUSTICE
Sonke Gender Justice is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation, established in 2006. Today, Sonke has established a growing presence on the African continent and plays an active role internationally. Sonke works to create the change necessary for men, women, young people and children to enjoy equitable, healthy and happy relationships that contribute to the development of just and democratic societies. Sonke pursues this goal across Southern Africa by using a human rights framework to build the capacity of government, civil society organisations and citizens to achieve gender equality, prevent gender-based violence and reduce the spread of HIV and the impact of AIDS.

MENCARE
MenCare – A Global Fatherhood Campaign – is coordinated by Promundo, Sonke Gender Justice (Sonke) and the MenEngage Alliance, as an effort to promote men’s involvement as fathers and as caregivers. It seeks to provide support materials, messages, policy recommendations and research to encourage local MenEngage partners, NGOs, women’s rights organizations, governments and UN partners to implement campaign activities in their settings.

MenCare is conceived as a complement to global and local efforts to engage men and boys in ending violence against women and girls. Together with efforts like the White Ribbon Campaign, it is part of the MenEngage Alliance’s global vision to achieve equitable, non-violent relationships and caring visions of what it means to be men.

From a MenCare perspective, the prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings, including the home, is integral to efforts to create change of this nature.