

Delivering Kosovo's First Parenting Program: Challenges, Strategies and Outcomes

Rudina Ademi Shala, Save the Children in Kosovo

Linda Hoxha, Save the Children in Kosovo

Christine Ateah, University of Manitoba

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Kosovo is still recovering from the war that raged there in the 1990s. Today, it is classified as a lower-middle-income country, but poverty and unemployment remain widespread. Two-thirds of children experience punitive violence; the rate is even higher among Roma children (Kosovo Agency of Statistics, 2014). As part of its child protection programme, Save the Children in Kosovo participated in a pilot study of Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting (PDEP) to explore its relevance, feasibility and impact on parents' attitudes toward physical punishment. PDEP is the only parenting programme that exists in Kosovo.

Due to a lack of infrastructure for delivery of parenting programs, 42 community professionals (teachers, psychologists, social workers, probation officers) were trained as PDEP facilitators. A subgroup of them delivered the program to 61 parents living in three cities. Of these, 55 completed standardized pre- and post-test questionnaires that assessed their attitudes toward physical punishment and perceptions of the program's impact on their parenting. Most were mothers (91.8%) over the age of 30 (71.7%) with one or two children (72.2%) and had at least completed a university/college program (62.2%). Parents' scores on the Attitudes toward Physical Punishment Scale indicated that their approval declined significantly over the course of the program ($p < .001$). Following the program, 88.9% of the sample believed more strongly that parents should not use physical punishment, and 85.7% agreed that PDEP would help them to reduce their own use of it. Large majorities agreed that PDEP would help them understand their children's development (94.3%), communicate better with their children (98.1%), and build stronger relationships with them (96.3%). Virtually all believed more strongly that parents should ask children for their point of view (96.4%). Delivery of PDEP via community professionals appears to be an effective method where parent support infrastructure is lacking.