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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**31 OCTOBER 2018**

## **Save The Children Philippines Pushes Positive Discipline Bill amid Rise in Cases of Violence against Children**

Save the Children Philippines welcomes the passage on third and final reading in Congress of the Positive Discipline bill that helps build a safe environment for children amid the spike in cases of violence against children at home.

Atty. Albert Muyot, CEO of Save the Children Philippines said the National Children's Month celebration in November highlights the campaign to pass the Positive Discipline bill that eliminates corporal punishment against children.

Three out of five children in the Philippines suffer one or two forms of violence at home and often, parents, siblings and relatives are the perpetrators, according to the 2015 National Baseline Study on Violence against Children (NBS-VAC) of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC).

"Parents should realize that children are not their possessions, thus, hitting them is wrong and is never acceptable," said Muyot. He said parents are usually outraged when other people hurt their children, but many believe that when they hit their own child, it's a proof that they care for them.

He said physical and verbal punishments on children leave lifelong scars.

"Violence begets violence," said Muyot. "Young children who experience corporal punishment are left with feelings of fear, shame, rage, revenge and hostility."

The group joins the 26th year of the National Children's Month (NCM) celebration every November with the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and National Youth Commission (NYC) as the lead agencies.

This year's theme "ISULONG: TAMANG PAG-AARUGA PARA SA LAHAT NG BATA" highlights positive parenting- a non-violent approach to child rearing with focus on respect of the rights of children to live in a healthy and protected environment from infancy to adulthood.

Save the Children Philippines works with DSWD, Education-Network, Local Government Units (LGUs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) on training and capacity building programs that promote Positive Discipline at home and in schools.

"Positive Discipline focuses on open communication with children which guides them to understand that certain behaviors are acceptable but some others are not," he said.

Existing laws only prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools and alternative care settings but not at home, where majority of physical abuse cases occur but remain unreported, said Muyot.

Children who suffer corporal punishment face mental health issues such as depression and alcohol abuse, he added.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) cites the important role of parents in raising and disciplining their children. However, it does not allow corporal punishment and other forms of violence in carrying out this responsibility.

“Children must be treated with dignity and respect and not as property of their parents,” said Muyot.

The bill is now set for third and final reading in Congress by mid-November and expected to be ratified by December this year.

So far, there are 52 countries-both developing and rich countries that have stepped up legislation to ban corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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