

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION
REPORT

discipline
summit

Discipline in schools revisited

Striking a balance between
Ethics and Legislation

7–8 March 2014

Birchwood Hotel, Boksburg,
Gauteng Province, South Africa

Every Child is a National Asset



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Key Outcomes

- Reaching a common understanding of the concept discipline underpinned by ethics and the rule of law;
- Sharing national and international best practice in promoting and sustaining discipline in schools;
- Developing a framework for clear and coherent implementation, monitoring and support strategy for combating ill-discipline in schools, with well defined roles of all stakeholders.

DAY ONE: FRIDAY 7 MARCH 2014

Programme Director: Mr P B Soobrayan, Director General, Department of Basic Education

1. WELCOME & PURPOSE OF SUMMIT

Mr P B Soobrayan, Director General, Department of Basic Education

The Director General welcomed all present to the meeting and conveyed the apologies and the good wishes of the Minister. A wide range of stakeholders in education was represented.

There had been, for some time, a number of disturbing reports in the media in relation to ill-discipline in schools which had often resulted in violence against both learners and teachers. This had captured the attention of the nation. Deep questions had been posed as to what had gone wrong. While such incidents are by no means representative of all schools, even when in the minority it is a cause for concern. Such ill-discipline leads to absenteeism, late-coming, neglect of work, stealing, and violence. While the attention is focused on the learners it must be recognised that parents cannot be excluded from the problem.

Teachers and parents need to accept responsibility along with school leadership. Schools are a microcosm of the society and the problems that society experiences manifest in schools.

It is important to draw on key stakeholders to assist in developing a strategy to deal with ill-discipline. While this remains primarily the responsibility of the Department of Basic Education, the importance of the matter cannot be ignored and the views of all stakeholders are valuable in attempting to address issues of ill-discipline in schools.

All approaches must be underpinned by ethics and the rule of law. The Summit aims to share international best practice and all proposals must strike a balance between ethics and legislation.

2. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Mr M E Surty, MP, Deputy Minister of Basic Education

All schools, whether public or independent, are required by law to provide a safe and caring environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. If this is not done, there will inevitably be challenges around the performance and achievement of learners.

A shared understanding is needed of what discipline means; a respect for authority, whether parents or teachers. A lack of discipline contributes to a lack of order and in extreme cases to anarchy.

There are certain expectations that children will behave in a disciplined manner and follow instructions; and that when parents send their children to school they will be in a safe and nurturing environment.

The Bill of Rights is the cornerstone of the Constitution and this is celebrated by the nation, but with rights come responsibilities and the intention is to revisit the concept of discipline in the context of our democracy. Key elements of the Bill of Rights include the values of human dignity, equality and

freedom. Dignity is central to what democracy should be – namely respect and the promotion of rights that the citizens of the country may not always have enjoyed.

The Constitution provides for the rights of children to be respected and this includes the prohibition of inhumane or degrading punishment. South Africa is a signatory to all international conventions on the rights of the child and these must be upheld in a constitutional democracy.

What alternatives can be put in place to promote discipline and who is responsible for the establishment of a discipline-driven environment? Principals have a professional responsibility to implement the curriculum and create an environment that is conducive to learning, but there are also external factors beyond the control of a principal.

Educators have a responsibility to be role models that learners are keen to emulate. Discipline is sometimes viewed as a peripheral rather than a central issue with respect to performance. Educators must conduct themselves as professionals with learners at the centre of what they do.

Learners must have respect for educators and their important role. Yet this respect for authority commences at home before the child starts at school. Parents often expect schools to sort out children's behavioural problems but it remains a parental responsibility to instil discipline.

Discipline must also be considered in a context of broad socio-economic challenges and the wider environment. The learner's environment influences conduct and behaviour. Schools are then in the position of dealing with challenges they can only mitigate. Educators should be acknowledged for meeting that responsibility and taking on the extra duty of care.

Recognition is due to religious leaders who encourage reciprocal rights and responsibilities for learners and for others, including teachers. The importance of meeting responsibilities is often overlooked in favour of meeting rights.

Minister Kader Asmal developed a manifesto of values which espoused human dignity, respect, accountability and responsibility. These values were not identified arbitrarily but as a result of a vibrant interaction with all stakeholders and remain as relevant now as they were ten years ago.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has a strong commitment to addressing all forms of negative behaviour. Learners need to manage themselves positively on the basis of rights. Much has been done and will continue to be done.

Many useful collaborative interventions are forming. For example, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the DBE have an initiative in 15 000 schools where the local SAPS station adopts a school and is involved in the safety sub-committee of the school management structure. All schools should have such a structure that includes the general well-being of the learners as well as safety issues.

The challenges in schools must be acknowledged, and include dangerous weapons; drug use; abusive behaviour towards educators and authority; violent behaviour; sexual abuse; and bullying, both physically and via social media.

The contribution of many educators must also be acknowledged, where it can be a challenge to teach in certain learning environments, requiring a level of dedication that goes beyond the call of duty.

Challenges include finding ways to enhance the ability of educators through training from the outset to manage discipline issues better. For example, teachers need to manage bullies, since at least 20% of learners are exposed to some form of bullying. This contributes significantly to undermining the performance of learners because of psychological damage.

It is important to find ways to enhance ability amongst learners to ensure they take responsibility – not only educator accountability – but that leadership is instilled amongst learners. Furthermore, since schools are a microcosm of the society, finding ways to deal with the broader socio-economic challenges cannot be avoided.

The Media has a responsibility to promote advocacy positively, to reduce levels of negativity, and to work together to identify solutions. Much good work has been done that can be drawn on to inform the national discourse. Education stakeholders should work collaboratively to review the methodologies and create better spaces for both learners and educators.

3. SETTING THE CONTEXT: NATIONAL SCHOOL VIOLENCE STUDY 2012

Mr Patrick Burton, Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention

The first NSVS in 2008 found that 22% of secondary school learners surveyed had experienced some form of violence in the 12 months preceding the study. In 2012, 22.2% of high school learners were found to have been threatened with violence or had been the victim of an assault, robbery and/or sexual assault at school in the past year. This figure suggests that the levels of violence in secondary schools had remained relatively constant over the past four years. In addition to exploring any changes and trends in violent victimisation at schools, the second study of 2012 also explored emerging forms of violence affecting young people, such as cyber violence. The study sample comprised 5,939 learners, 121 principals and 239 educators. In total, more than a fifth of learners had experienced violence at school: 12.2% had been threatened with violence by someone at school; 6.3% had been assaulted; 4.7% had been sexually assaulted or raped; and 4.5% had been robbed at school. However, UNESCO suggests that it is not the high profile incidents of violence that should cause concern but rather the less obvious but repeated acts of violence that occur, such as daily bullying.

There has been little change in levels of violence since 2008. Minor infringements have increased and can also contribute to learners not wanting to be at school, such as having personal property stolen. It is concerning to note that assault and sexual assault have increased considerably. Gender disaggregation is important. More girls in 2012 reported experiencing violence than boys. During the study learner responses showed that 20% of girls felt scared when travelling to and from school. Furthermore, educators perceived that over a quarter of learners feel scared at school. One in five learners has experienced violence in school with a large proportion of this being done online.

Sending explicit images via social media or phones without permission was lower than expected, but on the other hand the level of consensual explicit communication was very high.

Key messages from the research include:

- The data does not support a correlation between abolishing corporal punishment and an increase in violence.
- Potential violence can be identified in a child very early, and needs to be contextualised to the social context.
- Bullying correlated with other forms of violence – people who are victims of violence develop a greater susceptibility to other forms of violence and intimidation. It is thus important that ongoing repeated violence even where consider minor is strongly addressed.
- Classrooms are the most common site for violence – with and without the educator present. This should inform the way that resources are deployed.
- The second most common site of violence is sports fields. Toilets are linked to sexual assault.
- There is a perception that violence in schools emanates from outside but this is not correct. Most violence takes place between the learners in a school.
- Learners who report violence require assurance of protection. Reporting of sexual assault increased to 61% and threats to 68%. However, reporting robbery and common assault has come down.

Corporal punishment decreased in Gauteng from 61% to 22% and was accompanied by a similar decrease in violence in schools. More research is needed to better determine cause and effect and draw on this positive case study. Comparisons were undertaken with the 5 schools in Gauteng that had the highest level of violence and the 5 with the lowest level of violence. The schools with the most violence also had the highest use of corporal punishment, whereas the schools with the lowest levels of violence did not use corporal punishment.

A key concern about bullying, experienced by 13% of learners, is that it increases vulnerability to other forms of violence. It was further established that learners experience more assault at home than at school, as well as being a victim of theft or robbery. However, sexual assault is higher at school than at home. Regarding the home environment, 10% of learners reported seeing one family member hurt another and 9.4% had a family member in jail for criminal activity, considered a key predictor of violence.

In addressing school safety the three main elements are to harness the agency of all role-players; undertake prevention whether spatial, social or management; and develop appropriate responses in reporting, accountability and psychosocial support.

Examples of what has worked and what has not worked include the following:

- Random searches do not work – this breeds fear in the police, has no positive long term results, and lends itself to high level profiling taking place.
- Using the police to deal with problem behaviour does not work.
- Armed security guards on school premises does not work.
- Taking learners out of the school system increases the potential for long term criminality.
- The Whole School approach works – this would include having SAPS represented on the school safety committee
- Peer mentoring works to promote a transparent approach built on trust with all stakeholders.
- Learners participating in positive school violence programmes is helpful.

The full Report may be accessed at:

<http://cjcp.skinthecat.co.za/articlesPDF/65/Monograph12-School-violence-in-South%20Africa.pdf>

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4. ROLE OF PARENTS & COMMUNITY IN PROMOTING & SUSTAINING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Professor I Gouws, University of South Africa

Given that all stakeholders agree on the importance of safe schools and the need to address violence in schools, it is remarkable that there is still a problem that must be tackled. Punishment is enforced when discipline fails, but punishment is after the fact. This equates to taking a car for service only once it has broken down. It is always preferable to pre-empt and mitigate such issues.

In South Africa in particular, it is important to speak of rights and responsibilities together. First complete the responsibilities and then expect the rights. If one draws on the cognitive sciences and metacognitive aspects, the approach would be to “Just do it ... But think while doing it!”

The metacognitive process of creating a positive discipline environment is Goal-Person-Task-Strategy. Discipline is a team effort – similar to a three-legged pot comprising learners–parents–educators. The link is an enabling system provided by the DBE.

The intention is to build learners to grow beyond school and into the community. Strategies must be constructive and not reactive. This is a key reason for why corporal punishment does not work. Children need to be kept busy enough to be fully engaged and if the relationships are good, the likelihood of bad behaviour is reduced. Disciplined educators will usually have a disciplined classroom. Good educators need to set a good example and be positive role models.

Many discipline problems are the result of a lack of understanding between people. Another important factor is that in some classrooms up to two-thirds of learners are in child-headed household. There are many parents absent for a range of reasons and many challenges to good parenting have emerged.

A Positive Five Point Plan to improve classroom discipline will encompass the principles of “I take responsibility; I Love; I Guide; I Share; I Assess”.

The role of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in school support is important. SGBs should not interfere with the role of the school management. The role of volunteers should be reviewed and will include parents contributing to the school community – conducting reading classes, checking homework, assisting with sport. All role-players should be called upon to become more involved in their children’s education.

NekNominations are the latest trend and can be used constructively – as a RAKNomination – Random Acts of Kindness. There is also DARE – Deliberate Act of Responsibility.

Three groups are thus being DARED:

1. *Faith Based Organisations (FBOs)* — to be convened by Archbishop Emeritus Tutu as a summit on discipline in schools and support for parents.
2. *Business Community* — this is where the parents work. Many parents are not involved and do not attend school meetings. Approach employers to assist – they have an interest if their employees are happy at home they are happy at work. It is in their own business interests to provide such support. Furthermore those children are their future employees. Mr C Sunter, Mr P Motsepe and Mr S Pennington should convene.

3. *Media* — be responsible in disseminating accurate and positive information. The SABC must take on greater responsibility as the public broadcaster. Mr G Mazarakis should televise information related to education and profile positive role models and good news stories. Mr van Dyk of Naspers should do the same.

NekNominations have a specific timeframe. The same problems in schools have been discussed for the past ten years with little change. This cannot be allowed to continue. We are all dared to support positive discipline in schools, for the sake of ourselves, our children, our country and the world.

5. SACE RESPONSE TO ILL-DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Mr R Brijraj, South African Council of Educators (SACE)

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) has statutory jurisdiction over all educators in the country, most of whom are teachers. SACE must register all educators in order to promote standards, oversee professional conduct of educators, encourage adherence to a code of ethics, and promote professional development of all educators. SACE is also responsible for managing the professional development system of educators.

South Africa has approximately 400 000 educators. Despite having a rights-based constitution, corporal punishment in schools remains an ongoing challenge. It is a tragedy to be regarded as one of the most violent countries in the world. This has a direct influence on levels of school violence.

The following steps need to be considered when addressing ill-discipline in schools:

1. Create a culture of caring, respect, patriotism and non-violence and shift attitudes and negative environments. This is of course difficult but it is not impossible. Children must be taught good judgement and morality. Education involves more than just getting good grades; it requires holistic development. The environment is filled with challenges but even so an ethos of caring can be instilled. The things that matter to learners and their families should also matter to the school and teacher.
2. Inculcate ethics of care. This is a basic need of all human beings and education is central to cultivating a caring society. This involves encounters that promote growth through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and appreciation. The good thing about ethical caring is that it guides action that will restore natural caring. Prioritise care ethics to assist in creating caring communities. As education stakeholders, in which direction do we lead our learners? Are we promoting material accumulation or are we promoting moral and ethical citizenship? We must ask ourselves these difficult questions. This links to a different emphasis on curriculum design. When practiced long enough, ethics of care will help to establish a culture of care across the whole education system.
3. Promote holistic education that includes values, good citizenship morals and social justice for all. Children don't only need the Three R's – while acknowledging that South Africa is seriously lagging in this regard – but also need to be taught to think and to behave. There is some degree of resistance and concern that schools should not deal with values in our schools, and that this should be left to religious structures or the home. This view is questionable. Educators have a

duty to constantly steer learners in the way of good citizenship. It is time to go back to the basics and to teach children to live good lives. This is also the business of good education.

4. Encourage inter-connectedness as a fundamental principle of education. The whole is more than the sum of its parts. Fully experience the present moment with inner peace and be authentic.
5. Research more on how to teach learners about making positive choices even after they have made wrong choices. It is possible to un-learn negative behaviour and make positive choices. Make expectations of the learners clear. Encourage positive classroom behaviour which is possible once a proper foundation is established. Educators have no choice but to be positive role models.
6. Manage realistic expectations. A set of circumstances that fuels negative behaviour is when learners are misguidedly led to have certain expectations and these expectations are not fulfilled. This is a contributor to levels of violence where people have high expectations that are not being addressed.
7. Move beyond only meeting curriculum demands, towards actively teaching good ethics and inculcating an ethics of care. While there are major challenges at the present time, the main concern should be to build a better tomorrow with a violence-free South Africa as the goal. This requires all educators to teach positive behaviour and unlearn negative behaviour.

6. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN RESTORING & SUSTAINING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

6.1 School Governing Body Associations

Mr P Colditz, Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools (FEDSAS)

The request from SGBs some years back to convene such a summit was heeded by the DBE and this is greatly appreciated. It is important that such a rare opportunity is used wisely to address issues that impact negatively on education as well as on the image of the country. There is a collective responsibility to make the education system work so as to contribute to a strong economy and a decent life for all citizens. Schools are everyone's issue. School communities reflect what happens in the broader community.

Why another initiative? There has been an increase in the past few years in disciplinary matters with reduced support from parents and provincial education authorities. Ill-discipline constitutes a major threat to quality education in schools and impacts negatively on all school communities: learners, teachers, principals, SGBs, departmental officials and the broader community.

Of the 12 million children in school, at least 2 million live in highly adverse circumstances. Schools can no longer rely on families to provide sound examples. Families are no longer where children obtain life skills and values but rather at churches and schools. A disciplined life is based on a values-driven society. All discipline is underpinned by the values of our constitution. A positive approach is needed – rather than talking about negatives espouse the positive values such as human dignity and equality and the implications thereof.

Corporal punishment is outlawed and any infringement must be dealt with accordingly. We should not discuss alternatives to corporal punishment since this assumes that punishment is the norm which is not acceptable. The focus must not be on what we do not want to have happening but rather focus energies on what we want, namely ethical values and exemplary behaviour. The two other imperatives are legality and legitimacy.

Central to the constitutional order is that the legislation in every sphere including SGBs and school management is constrained by principle and that no-one can exercise power beyond that conferred upon them by administrative justice. For example, when the SGB or principal or teacher does something not allowed in law they are in breach, but if a provincial head does not address an expulsion within 14 days as required then the department is also not compliant with the South African Schools Act. A successful society is one governed by laws that are upheld.

There is also the principle of legitimacy and the importance of setting positive examples based on three things – people must feel that if they speak they will be heard; the law must be predictable and applied with equality; and authority must be fair and not favour anyone. Learners can expect teachers to behave before they do. Teachers can expect the DBE to behave before they do. Everyone must comply with expectations of legitimacy and values and set an example of exemplary service and behaviour. This is the only way to ensure meaningful and sustainable change.

6.2 Combined Trade Union - Autonomous Trade Union (CTU - ATU)

Mr Basil Manual, National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA)

The Combined Trade Union (CTU) presents the shared views and values of a disparate number of educator unions. Every union holds the view that life has become more difficult and disciplinary issues present a greater challenge. The strain on teachers is limiting the time that young people want to spend in schools. Discipline is a two-way street – it is not only learner discipline but also teacher discipline as well as self-discipline from parents and governors. For example, some parents behave with aggression towards teachers if their child is not given a good grade or a position in the school.

There must be a balance between ethics and legislation – but surely legislation cannot be unethical, so the issue then becomes one of unethical behaviour and the negative values that many people espouse.

Teachers feel helpless and overwhelmed. Whose rights are considered first? The challenge is that in South Africa there is a strong trend of recourse to violence to resolve problems. A recent study from the South African Institute of Race Relations revealed that 23% of learners feel safe at school. This implies that 77% feel unsafe. This is a worrying indictment on our society.

The worst cases are not encountered in every school, but the media creates an impression that this is the norm. Where there is a problem with discipline in schools, communities must not ignore this. Adults often succumb to bribery and corruption ourselves, and behave badly in front of children. Children are being taught by example that it is acceptable to do wrong as long as one can escape the consequences.

Teachers feel abandoned and principals feel unsupported by the provincial education departments. Children are expelled from a school and then forced on to the next school to deal with. Provincial education departments are not accessible to their stakeholders. There are no special arrangements

to support children with problems. Teachers are not equipped to deal with the levels of psychosocial challenges that are being encountered in the classroom.

Most schools have effective ways of dealing with discipline, but the school cannot do this alone. There must be greater involvement of provincial education departments and parents, as well as the community at large. The real issue is about values and where the country will be twenty years hence. A commitment is needed to work with all stakeholders to put strategies in place to support teachers. This cannot wait for tomorrow.

6.3 National Education Collaboration Framework (NECF) **Mr Godwin Khosa, National Education Collaboration Trust**

The message that schools are hearing is that they are on their own and cannot look to the DBE to help them solve problems. The Education Collaboration Framework (ECF) comprises a range of social partners together with government, civil society, labour and business to support the national development plan in the education sector. The National Education Collaboration Trust implements the framework. Government is the anchor for all collaborative relationships and all partners need to understand their roles in the education space.

In implementing the education action plan, there is a team of 1 500 people working through schools to assess the situation on the ground. A range of interventions is undertaken on a daily basis with and in schools, but a balance is needed between the various technocratic interventions such as accountability, guidelines, curriculum requirements discipline. There are also the non-technocratic interventions that must be led by parents and communities in partnership with schools. The entire society needs to be involved in education. Raising children cannot be outsourced.

7. LEARNER PARTICIPATION IN RESTORING & SUSTAINING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Ms Z Khanyase, Congress of South African Students

There is a need to actively support positive behaviour. Learners need to be recognised as a stakeholder group at every school. Promoting supportive behaviour requires a whole-school approach which includes all aspects of the school environment. For example, student-led activities and organisations teach discipline and team work.

Progressive discipline is important. Discipline should lead to the learning of the appropriate behaviour. A range of disciplinary measures, early intervention strategies and prevention strategies are needed, such as constant communication with parents. The nature and severity of the behaviour and the individual learner's circumstances have to be taken into account when deciding on appropriate discipline.

Discipline should be flexible and learners have to be recognised as a stakeholder group who can make decisions about their own behaviour.

8. EDUCATORS AS ROLE MODELS OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Mr M Ehrenreich, South African Principals Association

In many respects education is in crisis, principals have lost control of classrooms, learners and schools. Some classrooms resemble battlefields.

One of the most important ways to achieve discipline is for the teacher to be as well prepared as possible. Creativity helps – such as instrumental or rhythmic music when children work on their own to fill the awkward silence that children will then fill themselves. There are many online supports now available to teachers, such as *Class Dojo* which provides a strong rewards focus.

The principal needs to ensure quality curriculum delivery daily. As the school leader it is an onerous responsibility and the outcomes are well known. The school and classroom that is able to deliver well on curriculum demands needs to look and feel very different from a class environment of 20 years ago, but in fact there has been little change in the teaching space and this is not conducive to discipline.

The curriculum is a progressive one but the delivery space has not evolved and must be critically assessed. The first challenge is thus to examine the classroom and how learners experience them every day.

Develop critical thinking – learners must participate fully and express views freely and challenge the educator on information being presented. Young people have become better informed and more confident than previous learners and teachers need to be up to the challenge.

Badly behaved learners usually push teachers to make more rules in an attempt to have order. Rules often seek to achieve the opposite to the ideals of the curriculum. All schools need rules but the number and content as well as the aim of those rules needs to be examined. Research shows that in schools where there is disorder there are often too many rules.

Schools should become values-driven as opposed to rules-driven. Rules must be policed, inconsistency renders them ineffective, and this also requires human resources. The alternative is to encourage learners and schools to be values-driven – this will bring greater possibilities for all to work in partnership. Rules-driven schools generally lead to negativity and lack of learning. Values-driven schools develop each learner's compass to self-control, based on positive relationships rather than on systems and rules.

Conditions have not improved over time in South African schools. Educators are ill-equipped to navigate this more challenging terrain. Research is needed to identify what is doable and possible. An image is needed of what a successful and high achieving educator's day looks like. All factors must be taken into account including external factors. An intervention strategy or programme is needed in our schools where further human resources may be required.

9. COMMISSIONS

Mr T Kojana, Acting Deputy Director-General, Department of Basic Education

The following were the most important issues emerging from the presentations:

1. The need for an inclusive approach involving all stakeholders including the learners.
2. Poor parenting skills and the need to educate parents.
3. Lack of consensus on who is responsible for training parents and society in general on morals and values.
4. Bullying leads to more violent behaviour by the perpetrator so has to be handled at the early stages. Learners who are bullied become more likely to experience further victimisation.
5. Teachers are not adequately trained to deal with disciplinary issues.
6. Discipline should fit the behaviour and should also be a learning opportunity.

Four commissions had been set up to consider the challenges and propose practical measures that will lead to sustainable solutions. It is clear that policy alone will not solve the problems. Parents and learners should also be involved. Progressive and innovative mechanisms are needed to provide positive discipline in schools.

DAY TWO: SATURDAY 8 MARCH 2014

Programme Director: Mr T Kojana, Acting Deputy Director-General, Department of Basic Education

10. POSITIVE DISCIPLINE: 7 STEPS TO PREVENT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND PROMOTE A FOCUS ON LEARNING

Ms Divya Naidoo, Save the Children South Africa

- *"I was late at school and then the teacher grabbed a stick and hit me. I was embarrassed. Then I felt angry that he hit me in front of the class." Boy 14*
- *"I did not come to school as I had attended a bursary interview, so was beaten six times on the buttocks. I felt depressed, humiliated, punished for no good reason" Boy 13-18 years*
- *"The teacher made me sit on an invisible chair for one hour. I was making noise in class." Girl 6-8 years*
- *"I came late to school and my teacher told me to touch the wall and he gave me six strokes on my buttocks. When he realised that I did not have the proper socks, he gave me another six. I felt angry." Boy 13-18 years*

The South African Schools Act is clear in precluding corporal punishment and educators who use corporal punishment are liable to conviction and sentence. The legislation is clear yet despite this in practice two-thirds of learners experience corporal punishment in the school. Extensive behaviour change is needed.

There is a clear difference between corporal punishment and positive discipline. Corporal punishment promotes the perception amongst learners that love and violence are interlinked which is clearly dangerous behaviour. Positive discipline, however, establishes the link between love and respect which is far more lasting and effective. There are many cases of young girls stating that they

felt if their boyfriends didn't hit them they did not care, because this is what they had internalised through corporal punishment.

Historically slavery and apartheid were considered acceptable and normal until decent people decided to oppose such injustice. The question now whether people will continue to hit their children and considered it normal. It is important that the people in this room become voices for change in the interests of all our children.

Save The Children partnered with the Department of Education in the Eastern Cape in 2013 to run a pilot in eight schools, and the outcome was a Seven Step Programme that can be used in schools to instil positive discipline. Parents workshops were run and were well supported by the Department and by SGBs. It is important to note that avoiding corporal punishment is not permissive parenting being condoned but rather shifting the focus to stronger guidance so that children can achieve their best in a positive way.

The Seven Steps

1. Get people involved - all stakeholders are important and necessary to the process.
2. Assess the current situation – draw on rules of schools, and highlight the good things being done.
3. Create a plan for positive self-discipline – all stakeholders should become involved. Ensure you get a few good steady results rather than trying to do everything. Deep change is preferable. List all issues but select not more than 3. Success encourages people so choose easy wins at first and demonstrate success. Who will be doing all of this? Clearly identify responsibilities and follow up.
4. Test strategies in practice - this is exciting, and motivates people because they can see good results. Maintain good records to show positive outcomes as well as challenges.
5. Keep people informed - there are many existing channels to draw on that will require no further resources. Have clear timeframes for updates.
6. Evaluate impact - what difference have I made? Include learner feedback and small groups of all stakeholders – raise concerns with people in private if they have not delivered. Keep the forum a positive space. Use this process to learn. Selecting strong leadership is thus very important to the success of the project.
7. Revise your plans - plans are inevitably fluid. Be conscious of resistance, and of egos getting in the way and manage this.

Further research taking the Seven Step Plan forward is being undertaken at the University of Cape Town. A key research question relates to how project-based learning had contributed to school improvement. The findings showed that tasks must be simple and doable; a discipline policy must be agreed and implemented; the use of reflective practice is important; there must be a highly visible leadership that knows the learners; a values-based approach works much better than a punitive approach; learners from a range of poor circumstances felt comfortable in the school and felt they belonged; collective decision-making was standard and discipline was always on the agenda for meetings; interventions were learner-driven and campaigns were undertaken by learners such as “stop a bully”; information sharing was regular including with parents.

Important points to remember included that schools should not be given complex extra work. The culture within any context is critical – if the culture is not conducive then change is unlikely. Most children came from a politicised context, with few good role models and poor teaching, so improving

the culture in schools was important. This hinges on one factor only – the professionalism of the teaching corp – and speaks to the need to work with unions more closely. Work from the inside out and from the outside in.

11. REPORTBACKS FROM COMMISSIONS

Many different perspectives were raised in the various commissions. It was encouraging to see the passion people felt for the subject. The facilitators managed the processes well and much valuable information was shared. This is only the start of the process, and it must be taken forward by the various stakeholders and the SGBs in particular.

11.1 Commission 1: Activating & Monitoring Practical Strategies towards addressing Violence in Schools

Facilitator: Mr P Burton, Centre for Justice & Crime Prevention

The group produced two pages of challenges to school safety and only half a page on good practice. The challenges include:

- Policies that are difficult to align and implemented in an inequitable manner.
- Educators not trained to implement discipline tools that are non-corporal.
- Inconsistencies around policy and process – where district officials may undermine a school management team.
- Parents reluctant to assume an active role and take responsibility – this is a key factor.
- Policies must be generic and standardised and be flexible enough for different schools. Policies should also be responsive to the realities.
- Principals, educators and learners all need greater psychosocial support, especially to the whole school structure. Finding the necessary resources and managing children with serious issues is a key need. Parenting training is also needed.
- Leveraging the resources and human capital that exists – for example, matriculants from a particular school could return as volunteer peer mentors. NGOs are providing some good interventions in this regard.
- How to actively involve all stakeholders in creating safe schools using an integrated approach to violence prevention.
- Incorporating the voice of the learners who need to share their experiences. NGOs could assist with this.

Recommendations include:

- Make policy accessible – must be easy for all to understand
- Contractual agreements between learners and parents
- Life skills play a strong role in violence prevention – but not taken seriously as a subject
- Provide targets for teachers and hold them accountable - also for principals

Stakeholders include civil society organisations such as LoveLife, Soul City, sport and youth clubs; traditional authorities; external service providers for specific groups such as grandmothers or child-headed households; the media to promote positive messages; and psychosocial service providers.

11.2 Commission 2: Empowering Teachers to cope with Disciplinary Challenges in Schools

Facilitator: Mr D Chetty, South African Principals' Association

Many strong points were made regarding the systemic aspects of discipline at different levels and input levels. Relationships are a key factor – relationship building between teachers and learners and the whole school is an important starting point.

Important factors to keep in mind include:

- Fairness is key – this is what children judge.
- Keep interruptions to the minimum.
- Avoid confrontations in front of students.
- Use humour – a key aspect for teachers – always be positive and bubbly.
- Keep high expectations – talk it up!
- Overplan – always overplan – and include mini-lessons for the faster learners.
- Rules must be consistent and understandable – not more than five.
- Every day is a new day – don't carry baggage.
- Preventative discipline is always preferable.
- Have high behaviour expectations of students.
- Have clear and broad-based rules – the different tiers of the school must understand all the rules.

Recommendations include:

- A warm and positive school climate is the starting point and the first issue is to instil respect for all. Administration staff should treat the children as their own. A good principal will be seen everywhere.
- Delegate to teachers the authority to discipline – this is vested in the teacher who should not feel disempowered in the classroom.
- When considering current good practice and challenges, principals remain the driving force in a school. The DBE has the responsibility to provide leadership training. Teachers should be empowered to deal with a changing environment of children having access to more information.
- Good infrastructure is essential and includes timely delivery of textbooks. Principals should ensure that resources are used optimally.
- SACE must play a bigger role in our schools and be more involved in teacher development programmes.
- Nutrition programmes are impacted by corruption. Food is sent to schools but not given to the learners. A hungry child cannot learn.
- Learners should participate in drawing up the code of conduct.
- There are many creative incentives that can be used – it does not have to be money.
- Extra murals are essential – most schools with major discipline problems do not have extra-murals or other activities. Children must be fully occupied and all stakeholders must help to improve infrastructure so there is space for the creativity that children naturally have.
- Value-driven teachers are needed – there are too few role models in our society. No child wants to enter the teaching profession because there are no role models and the discipline is very poor.
- People should be screened before being accepted for teaching courses. Many teachers do not like children yet become teachers.

- Internships should be considered, and current DBE internships should be extended. Best practice schools must be encouraged to partner with less effective schools.
- There is a serious lack of management experience in schools and training is needed.
- Succession planning is key – good principals leave and the school deteriorates; this should be managed well in advance.
- Competency evaluation of principals should be done so as to get the right people for the right job. It should not be permissible for a Level 1 educator to become a principal and current policy allows for this. People are then placed in positions they are not capable of filling.
- Key partnerships must be promoted so as to upgrade technology for greater impact.

Rita Pierson: Every Kid Needs A Champion
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFnMTHhKdkw>

11.3 Commission 3: Mobilising Learners to play an Active Role in Promoting and Sustaining Discipline in Schools

Facilitator: Professor Marius Smit, North West University

The main aspects of best practice include:

- Leadership of learners.
- Participation.
- Mentorship.
- Respectful communication by and with learners.
- Role modelling by learners.
- Embedded discipline.
- Leadership, including RCLs and informal leaders.
- Use of peer mediation for minor disputes.
- Uniformity of the youth leadership .
- Rotation of leadership roles to allow for more learners to grow.

In promoting stronger participation:

- Involve learners in generating the code of conduct.
- The restorative justice process provides an innovative way to deal with serious misconduct.
- Active Citizenship is key – this also takes the focus off oneself and helps with learner discipline.
- Empowerment and responsibilities support leadership among learners.
- Project and service activities keep learners busy with positive progressive activities and help to reduce poor discipline.

Mentorship is a tool that can be widely used. For example, a top sports player among the learners could become assistant coach. Academic achievers could be peer tutors after school. Tutoring in small groups helps with discipline. A learner suggestion box or hotline could be set up for incidents to be reported and to ensure that whistleblowers are safe. Where there are good role models in place, these must be supported.

The single most important factor to improve learner discipline in schools relates to having trained teachers in the classrooms, well prepared, ready to teach, empathetic towards the learners, and sharing a good relationship with them.

University of the North West is conducting a five-year study with a random sampling of 200 educators across provinces. The hypothesis is that with corporal punishment removed, what can be put in its place, and why are some schools disciplined and others not. Educators were asked what the most important factor is and they responded that:

1. Excellent and thorough preparation by educators is the most important factor. Learner discipline is in the hands of the educator and is more manageable where there is good preparation that keeps learners busy.
2. Where educators have good subject knowledge they can hold the interest of learners but where the educator is unsure this has a negative impact.
3. The ordinary and minor misconduct every day must be dealt with by the teacher. Graver misconduct such as theft or violence occurs infrequently. Many schools experience low grade misconduct.

Sweden was the first country to abolish corporal punishment in 1975, and it was soon noticed that parents became less involved, because they were unsure of how to parent without using corporal punishment. The government then trained parents through a twenty-year parental training campaign. This paid dividends. Therefore the suggestion is that parent training is conducted.

Place large visible clocks in schools, such as is done in Switzerland where there are clocks everywhere, and increase the learners' awareness of time. This will promote a stronger work ethic and discipline.

SGBs are tasked with maintaining a good environment and this does not need money but rather parental and other commitment. A well kept space will promote better discipline.

Education law is an important area and educators need further training.

Mobilise learners in leadership roles to participate as mentors and in role modelling.

11.4 Commission 4: Stakeholder Participation in Combating Ill-Discipline in Schools **Facilitator: Ms Carol Bower, LINALI Consulting**

Across government departments the policies are very good. The problem is located at school level. The national and provincial departments should provide good monitoring, evaluation and oversight and hold teachers accountable. Teachers are all too often not prepared, not present, and do not know their subject, even where there has been extensive support and training for teachers.

SGB members should not be political appointments but should be selected on the basis of skills and commitment. Making political appointments at the SGB level reflects a very concerning national issue that must be addressed.

Training people in civic duties and human rights is needed in order to shift attitudes and behaviour. Think about children as people with rights.

Children learn from example always and good role models are limited. Parents appear to have abrogated their responsibilities for discipline to teachers – many parents are not interested and do not become involved. There are deep divides and extensive poverty in the country. Violence in the home is endemic, including violence against children. This links to violence in schools.

Educators need to be made aware of the importance of human rights and children's rights. The role of the principal is critical and influences the school ethos. School districts are also responsible to hold people accountable.

Research is needed to provide a solid evidence base. This is required to improve monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the interventions being made. South Africa struggles across all sectors with baseline information and data management. Comparisons are necessary to inform better interventions.

There are many best practice stories to tell and these should be widely shared. What is working and why? Discipline and punishment should not be confused. Corporal punishment is prohibited in law yet 60% of schools still use corporal punishment. Teachers need to be role models for learners and should be able to demonstrate self-discipline and maturity.

Recommendations include:

- Media influence – work with young people to teach them to filter what they see and learn – watch programmes with them.
- Corporates and business should offer parenting classes to their employees and provide support for schools of parents in their employ.
- Give more recognition and respect to the profession of teaching, since our children spent most of their time in that environment.
- Children who engage in sexual activity need support and training if they become parents themselves.

12. SUMMATION

Professor I Gous, University of South Africa

Discipline is not the problem, it is the solution. We should have a positive approach to discipline and its contribution to our lives, schools, communities, country and the world. That should be our goal.

Presentations were highly informative, and much expertise has been shared. But the question is if all of this is known and available – why do the problems continue? It is important to identify the blockages to good practice.

Important factors that should be taken into account include:

- Ideas are not known to the stakeholders – there is a wide range of expertise and the DBE should be conduit to ensure ideas go out to those who must implement.
- In individual instances of discipline many other agendas come in to play – personal and political - but this is not correct.
- Education is a shared goal. Nothing should come in the way of good education for all since education is what will make or break South Africa.

- If a person is not committed to this goal and stands in the way of our national future, they must be removed – that is a crime against humanity.
- Escalate the importance of committing to education for the national good.
- Share the dream of a good education for every child. Communicate the dream and how it will be realised.
- Take the Meta stance on everything – this is a powerful way of looking at every issue in the world – encompassing Goal, who is involved, Tasks, and Strategies to perform the tasks.
- Good preparation is key, including time spent on a task and depth of knowledge. The majority of learners want to be educated – create a wave of good learning and teaching that inspires all and marginalises the negative.
- A focus on troublemakers teaches them that it gets attention. Train people to marginalise the negative and focus on the majority who want to learn.
- Create a tsunami culture of learning. Create in learners internal motivation, recognising that children love learning. The primary focus is on quality teaching and the secondary focus is on problems.
- Parents should be informed and supportive and take responsibility.
- Aim high and focus on the achievement – this will motivate learners to be up early and take responsibility, avoiding a culture of entitlement.

Way Forward

- Focused interventions by knowledgeable partners are required – there are many programmes but what is the impact?
- People must become fired up about discipline and the DBE should become the broker that is also responsible for M&E – this will bring about change in less than a generation.
- Parents are at home or work and not at school – a strong communication system is necessary and telecommunications providers can use their social responsibility budgets to send out positive parenting messages.
- Parents can approach their own employers to draw on social responsibility budgets to support education.
- At all sports events positive parenting messages can be shared, or good role models of parenting profiled. These are huge captive audiences.
- New parents should be provided with basic parenting advice before they take their baby home in the same way that feeding advice is given at present. Train the parents where they are.
- Educators should have not only subject knowledge, since this is only a small part of the work and much of it will be obsolete in a few years. Educators should be taught to learn and question and study. The MindWise programme is a good example of teaching self-knowledge, listening and reading skills, and equally importantly daydreaming skills. This helps to pull together all personal learning and then using it in the classroom.
- Conduct training in small segments and not a large course. For example, share information on the principles of learning in small pieces. All teachers will regularly receive small bites of wisdom which over time becomes embedded.
- The schools that do perform well should be supported. There is a tendency to be negative and critical about success. Rather draw on those good schools to become mentors and help to develop positive case studies.
- Learners follow role models whether positive or negative – this is why gangs do well in communities because young people lack good role models but are keen to belong.
- Move away from excuses to positive action – be a hero not a zero.

- Give learners a chance to lead. Make the troublemakers the leaders and watch them thrive.
- The subject of life skills or life orientation is often viewed as an irrelevant subject but it is in fact the most important subject if being taught well. Professionalise the teaching of life orientation.

How can this be implemented?

- Small task teams of experts should be set up to co-ordinate interventions; these should have a high level of knowledge and awareness and include business and media representation. Then share the message widely of what needs to be done.
- The Report of the Summit should provide the basis for the NCF to begin to develop highly practical interventions for all stakeholders that is substantiated by strong current research.
- Explore innovative ways of reaching parents, educators and learners with positive messaging.
- NCF should be responsible for guiding aspects of policy implementation and M&E.
- Commence with a fresh focus on a new generation of learners from grades 1 to 12 that is premised on only the positive.
- Simultaneously establish provincial proto teams (similar to the rescue teams used in the mining sector) with 3 to 4 crack teams per province that will visit every school and community to evaluate the current status and develop highly targeted training interventions.
- These “proto team” interventions must be supported by media training programmes in collaboration with the SABC as the public broadcaster. Partnerships with the print and electronic media must be established.
- The learners of today will, in ten years time, be the employees and public servants of tomorrow and it is in the country’s national interest to commit to immediately making a real difference.

13. CLOSURE

Mr T Kojana, Acting Deputy Director-General, Department of Basic Education

Strong direction has been provided based on the many valuable contributions made to the programme. A report and presentations will be made available and a team of experts appointed to pull the many good suggestions together to take forward. A presentation will be made to the National Consultative Forum. SGBs will be asked to take the work forward through the provinces.

A professional community of practice has been initiated, and will be supported through the creation of an IT community to promote communication and take forward the valuable experiences from this summit.

It is important to acknowledge the dedicated work that has been done by the members of the National Consultative Forum of SGBs who were outstanding in ensuring that this summit takes place.

Thanks is due to Mr Ndlebe and the team at the DBE who gave unstintingly of their time to ensure a successful event. The dedicated participation of all stakeholders including the unions is greatly valued.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONS

COMMISSION 1: ACTIVATING AND MONITORING PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TOWARDS ADDRESSING VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Facilitator: Mr Patrick Burton, Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention

The three topics to be discussed:

1. Current state of the situation. Good practice and challenges.
2. Proposals to improve the situation. The roles and responsibilities of the various role-players.
3. A proposed DBE strategy to correct the situations at all levels.

The context:

High violence levels, poor discipline, schools often resource-constrained. React to media reports being caught up on the wave of emotion. Lack of psycho-social support for educators and learners.

Aspects that should be considered are:

- What preventative measures can be put in place?
- How to manage ill-discipline when it occurs?
- How to respond after the violence has occurred so that the well-being of the perpetrator, victim and others involved is managed?

ISSUES:

1. The current state of the situation: good practice and challenges.

Good practice:

- A school has a problem with parents drinking and not being effective parents. They arrange a concert. Children perform, then leave. The parents are then divided into groups with a teacher leading each discussion about individual children with problems. A surrogate father is appointed for each child.
- Ex-learners are excellent mentors.
- The solution to gangs and drugs is to combat gangs.
- The Department of Children and Women, with the Department of Social Services and faith groups run workshops on parenting in Diepsloot.
- Gauteng had programmes where men 'adopted' young men for weekends to provide a good example.

Challenges:

- All schools are well aware of the necessary structures and procedure and most schools have these in place. However educators frequently feel helpless. Parents and the faith community need to take responsibility for discipline. It should not be up to the school.
- Politics is prevalent in education, particularly learners who use their COSAS membership as a reason for poor behaviour.

- Learners control the principal and teachers.
- Learners are sometimes under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Implementation of the law, especially being fair and consistent, is difficult. E.g. a learner who is absent from school for ten consecutive days, he can be deregistered. The issue is what happens in the interim.
- Licences for the sale of alcohol are issued for premises in close proximity to schools and learners drink during break times.
- Differences in the context of township and suburban schools.
- There are school governing bodies that do not know the laws governing schools.
- Parents have abdicated their responsibilities.
- There are schools without disciplinary policies and where the procedures of disciplining are not known.
- School should be a continuation of the home environment but the messages are often conflicting so the learners are confused. Messages from the national and provincial levels add to the confusion.
- The Department of Basic Education has to clear up the confusion. For example officials misinterpret the laws and give incorrect guidance.
- There is a reason for violent behaviour. Often it is due to the parents. Unfortunately parents do not get involved when invited by the schools to discuss issues.
- Numerous children are without parents or have a single parent. If the learner is asked to bring the parents to a meeting, they bring any adult. It is a social problem needing a multi-faceted approach. Disciplinary measures alone will not make a difference.
- Suburban schools have different issues to township schools. Research has indicated that the issues are similar but are manifest differently.
- Political interference, for example Ward Councillors interfere with schools and timekeeping.
- Badly-behaved children in primary schools are those who have learning issues.
- Many primary school children live with single mothers and rebel against female teachers.
- Each child has a unique background but there is a single policy e.g. the School Code of Conduct. It should relate to the learners.
- Is the role of the educator a job or a calling?
- At suburban schools where there are support professionals they are not fully utilised as the learners feel they are judged by the professionals.
- The role of departmental officials is that of mediator between educators and parents.
- Learners who are expelled from one school transfer the problems to another school.
- Politics on governing bodies results in the duties not being fulfilled.
- Political leaders in general are not getting involved and are not respected in the way they were in the past.
- The Department may be contributing to the discipline issue by focussing on the curriculum only.
- Officials do not know the policies or how to implement them.
- Is there a correlation between the size of the classrooms and the amount of violence as teachers cannot provide the attention required? Research has shown that class size can be a factor.
- Media only provide coverage of extreme instances of violence and do not cover the successes.
- Teachers drink with learners.
- Principals grapple with issues for which they are not trained.

Three broad themes emerging in the challenges:

- Parents and what happens in the home
- Policy needs to be responsive, accessible to learners, parents and educators
- Psycho-social support

Recommendations:

- Hold workshops on discipline for parents.
- Need social workers, nurses and psychologists to provide support to the learners, teachers and parents.
- Provide parents with a circular on what disciplinary measures are in place and the process of managing ill-discipline.
- Teach communities what good parenting practices are. For example parents drink with the children. Parents fighting with one another is accepted as the norm by the children.
- Change the terminology and use it to change attitudes.
- The school Code of Conduct and Safety Policy have to be relevant and accommodate the local context to be meaningful.
- Educators need to be skilled by private sector specialists in inter personal skills which are needed to interact with learners effectively.
- Teacher training has to include discipline and psychology as subjects.
- Improve the conditions of service of teachers. For example long leave has been stopped.
- The important aspects of the relevant legislation should be summarised and framed for each school by the provincial departments.
- Volunteerism, especially by elderly women, who assist with the children in the afternoons.
- Teacher and principal organisations should take up issues such as taverns. There is free legal advice available to all departments and legal NGOs.
- Officials have to include comments on education when writing speeches for politicians.
- Use the boys and girls clubs at schools to discuss discipline.
- Involve government departments to ensure there are a sufficient number of teachers by providing bursaries.
- There should be sufficient number of police in each region.
- Use technology such as surveillance cameras at schools. Involve the private sector.

2. Proposals to improve the situation. Roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders.

Stakeholders include, *inter alia*, parents, learners, business leaders, faith-based organisations, NGOs.

- An NGO establishes Peace Service Clubs in the schools where learners learn to interact correctly.
- Run successful programmes nationally, not only in a single locality
- Include all stakeholders such as tribal authorities and municipal officials.
- A holistic approach should look beyond the school and include outside organisations.
- The young mothers and the elderly women who provide the learners with support have different training needs e.g. on cell phones.
- Use the existing girls' and boys' organisations such as Love Life as a platform to approach discipline and violence.
- Accept that learners are the foundation of any approach. They need to provide input on a

draft strategy.

- Government departments have to find ways of working together and overcoming the silo approach.
- Acknowledge that the elderly have a wealth of knowledge on morals and values that can be drawn on.
- Use the majority of teachers who are committed, prepared, know more than the learners and are respected as a positive example of learners wanting to learn and being disciplined.
- Teachers have to accept responsibility for their role in the lack of discipline and for violence by not being positive role models. A change in attitude is required.
- The Department has to rethink the training of teachers. The teachers who were trained at teacher training colleges see through challenges but the university trained teachers do not.
- Teachers are very influential in the lives of learners and the majority of teachers are very good.
- The primary role of schools is education, not discipline. So discipline and the social issues should be strengthened outside the education system.
- Principals should be given the option of teaching.
- The teacher-learner ratio has to be revisited to have smaller classes and have an impact on discipline.
- Learner self-discipline is essential.
- Teachers can be mentors, role models and parental figures for many learners.
- Skilling of teachers is required. They are perfectly positioned to assist learners with their life crises but they lack the skills to intervene. There is budget for teacher development.
- Build learner resilience by working with them to provide life skills. Include NGOs in the programmes on teaching a culture of non-violence.
- The Standard for Principals is being drafted and principals can input.
- The curricula need to be adjusted to the specific situations. A general curriculum does not suit all classes as they are designed for the top learners, not the average. The available funds should be utilised to provide in-service training of teachers.
- In-service trainers may only have theoretical knowledge, not classroom experience. Experienced teachers can train student teachers better.
- The teacher – pupil ratio may not be the issue. It is rather factors such as absenteeism, disciplinary hearings etc.
- Principals are frequently afraid of reprisals by the unions which results in inaction.
- Teachers should have targets to meet to keep them accountable.
- Life Skills is not regarded by teachers as being a core subject.
- Bullying is overlooked in many schools where there are no preventative measures and where bullying is not reported as the learners may not understand what bullying is.
- Peer education and mediation should be encouraged as it puts the learner at the centre of the issues.
- Attitudes and behaviour towards violence have to change. It will result in a change in terminology.
- Prevention requires a structured approach.
- The legal environment exists, but educators frequently do not have rules in the classroom.
- Need to discipline teachers who transgress the code of ethics and transgress the law e.g. rape.
- Schools could introduce a Children's Charter which includes their rights and responsibilities.

3. A proposed DBE strategy to correct the situations at all levels.

COMMISSION 2: EMPOWERING TEACHERS TO COPE WITH DISCIPLINARY CHALLENGES IN SCHOOLS

Facilitator: Mr Daya Chetty, South African Principals' Association

This Commission was tasked with addressing the following matters:

- Current state of affairs: good practice and challenges
- Proposed strategy the DBE can implement in order to improve discipline in schools at a national, provincial and district level.

As an introduction, the facilitator noted the following with respect to discipline in schools:

- The stakeholders include the Parents, the Child, the School as an Organisation, the State, the Organised Teaching Profession and the public in general.
- The influencers of discipline are the Government, Education Officials, the School Community, the Principle, SMT, the classroom, the learners themselves and their peers.
- It is important to focus on the classroom - the teacher, the learner, the teaching content and last, but not least, the relationship.
- There might be a need for counsellors and/or psychologists in schools in order to prevent wrong conclusions when dealing with ill-disciplined children.
- There are various options to consider, which include pro-active options, accountability options, learning choice options and environmental options.
- Another perspective to consider is the caring approach - what do effective teachers do to encourage appropriate behaviour and how do they respond to inappropriate behaviour?
- There is a need to consider whether leaders/principles have the necessary leadership skills to deal with discipline in their schools.
- Important to note the two teacher believes: those living on the edge of anger and those less likely to be caught with emotion.
- Reasons for learners misbehaving include their need to belong, need to have power and control over their lives, need to experience fun in school, need to be free, need to feel safe, protected, and cared for, need to be respected for who they are.
- The four goals of misbehaviour are attention, power, revenge and assumed disability.
- The overarching themes in this discussion are ethics and legislation.

CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS: GOOD PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES

The Commission brainstormed the current state of affairs, good practice and challenges, noting the following in particular:

- There has to be an increased focus on building relationships between teachers, students and other stakeholders. Learners pick up values from their environment and therefore the school should focus on creating a value driven environment rather than a rule driven environment. Focusing on values (values of the learners, teachers and parents) vs punishment (rules and pledges).

- Parents play a significant role in the discipline of the learner. There is a need to strike a balance between parent involvement, educators and the leadership of management. Parents are still very much involved in setting examples for their children and the situation at home affects the discipline of the learner. The DBE should play a part in building this partnership and assisting schools in getting parents more involved.
- Principals are the driving force of discipline in schools and they are the custodians of the learners. It was suggested that the Principal should know the names of all the learners and meet with each parent personally. A question was raised with respect to whether Principals should also teach. It was further noted that the DBE has a responsibility to empower Principals to become leaders through training initiatives.
- Teachers are currently dealing with the Y-Generation: these learners have a different outlook with increased access to information. As a result, teachers' knowledge of content and methods of delivering content have become undermining factors. A question was raised around whether teachers are empowered and equipped to handle the changing environment.
- It was noted that the provision of good infrastructure (such as on-time delivery of textbooks) goes a long way in allowing the teacher to maintain discipline in the classroom. In this respect, effective usage of learning materials is crucial.
- A request was made for SACE to play a bigger role in schools, as SACE is currently not visible enough in all schools and there is a responsibility to assist teachers in effectively dealing with discipline. It was noted that it is the intention of SACE to increase its visibility in schools and to encourage more teacher development. Even though it does not currently provide any training programmes, SACE manages and endorses teacher development programmes.
- Caring for the children in the school is imperative as it was noted that schools who focus on caring for its children (both from an emotional and nutritional point of view) showed improved discipline.
- From a policy point of view, it was suggested that schools encourage its learners to "own" the school rules. Even though there are guidelines from the constitution, it is advised that schools consult with its learners (and all stakeholders), and through a collective and collaborative effort develop its code of conduct in the best interest of everyone.
- Teachers must focus on the positive aspects rather than the negatives by recognising and encouraging learners, even using methods such as rewards and incentives.
- Extra-mural activities are essential in order to recognise learners both from an academic and extra-mural point of view. By recognising talents such as athletics, choir, etc. learners who might not be academically strong, will feel included and part of the school.
- Corporal punishment was highlighted as a concern and there are questions around the alternatives. It was noted that SACE will not tolerate any corporal punishment and that there are no mitigating circumstances in this regard.
- Key to improving discipline at school is the appointment of value-driven teachers. Teachers should be role models as children emulate society. Principals must be clear on their expectation on teachers to be role models.
- There is a general lack of passion and commitment shown from teachers. It must be understood that teaching is not just a job - it's a calling. To be a teacher, one has to have a

passion for dealing with children and working with people. There was a suggestion that teacher training programmes should include internship opportunities (before becoming a teacher, one has to be exposed to a teaching institution in order to ascertain whether a good fit exists).

- It was noted that senior management, especially Principals and HOD's don't always have the management experience required to effectively manage the school. There is a need for training and succession planning in this respect.
- School, classroom size and pupil-teacher ratio is an important factor to consider when looking at discipline in school.
- It was noted that the community at large is compounding the problem of discipline in school, and there is a need to look at how this problem can be addressed going forward.
- It must be remembered that all schools are different and there is a need to analyse each school separately in order to ascertain their individual discipline problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Commission focused on recommendations for Principals, SMTs and Teachers based on the following themes:

- **Relationships and Values**

There should be an increased focus on building relationships between teachers and learners. It would be better to focus on improving these relationships rather than appoint counsellors/therapists in schools.

Rules must be aligned to the constitution. Schools that send their codes of conduct to the Departments expect to receive checked copies back. In addition it is suggested that learners and other stakeholders be included in writing of the codes of conduct.

- **Employment and Training of Teachers**

There is a need for preparing teachers for the Y-Generation with respect to content delivery and technology. Teacher training programmes should also include internship opportunities to ascertain whether teaching is a good fit for the relevant individual.

It has to be ascertained whether the constitution is empowering the teacher and whether the teachers come to school equipped and fully understanding the constitution.

Teachers must have the right attitude and low morale must be addressed.

- **The Principal**

The appointment of the Principal is important and it is suggested that competency-based testing and the possession of a management degree form part of the election process. The SGB should recommend to the District two or three candidates for the appointment of the Principal.

Principals should factor in extra-mural activities, as these will have an effect on the discipline of the school.

Principals should know the names of all learners in the school.

- **Partnership between school and parents**

There is a need for parenting skills workshops, to empower the parents to understand that they are role models to their children and how the situation at home can assist in improving the discipline of learners.

- **SACE**

There is a need for SACE to be more visible and do more to equip teachers in dealing with discipline in schools.

- **Alternatives to corporal punishment**

Principles must ensure that teachers understand and are aware of the alternatives to corporal punishment. Some of these include detention and community service.

- **Partnerships between governing bodies and other community stakeholders**

These include:

- SAPS
- Social work
- NGOs
- QLTC
- Clinics
- Counsellors

COMMISSION 3: MOBILISING LEARNERS TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PROMOTING AND SUSTAINING DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Facilitator: Professor Marius Smit, NWU

The discussion of Expectations brought out that contributors wanted the following:

- Mechanisms to deal with learner discipline
- Make a positive contribution finding solutions
- Gain insight into the best practise at schools
- Obtain guidance and learn more on how to deal with discipline.
- Share information and help develop
- Plan
- Collaboration

Participants:

- Principals
- FEDSAS (SGB's), Governors Alliance
- Educators
- SACE
- Social Workers
- Department of Education (National and Provincial)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unions • Life Skills (NGO's) • SAPA • Learners 	
Strategy to be used:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Best Practices (Current State of Affairs) B. Proposals to Improve Practices C. Proposed DBE Strategy
<p>Topic 1: Current state of affairs: Best practices Theme: Learners Active Role in promoting Discipline</p>	
	<p>What do learners do in order to actively contribute to discipline? The initial list was drawn up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders • Learners being recognised by teachers for the different contributions they can make. • Learners play a role in the class. • Participation in extracurricular activities. The discussion centered around sport, culture, arts, excursions, projects and debate • Acting as tutors in academic subjects. • Peer mediation in minor disputes • Active citizenship – being part of girls' and boys' education movement, specifically designed to stimulate policy dialogue and community outreach. • Advocacy – Speaking out. • Participation in organisations • Learners responding to empowerment opportunities. • Projects and service activities. • Learners participating in the developing, adopting and updating the code of conduct. • Participating in the setting up of classroom rules. • Rotation of leadership roles. • Establish a system of trust between learners and educators. • Suggestion box: Report anonymously • A system of structured and informed participation by learners with regards to issues affecting the code of conduct and problems prevalent in their school. • Active promoters of values. • Participate in restorative justice process. • Learners are responsible for induction and welcoming of new students.
Issue:	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefects/Leaders – including the rotation of leadership roles. Instilling leadership in learners is what is working now. The prefect system should only be an element of building leadership in learners. Representative Council of Leaders – learners elect these leaders, they mobilise the learners in the school, and they become the voice for

	<p>these learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does formalised leadership help with discipline?
Recommendation:	This type of leadership is necessary
Issue:	<p>North West University surveyed educators with regards to discipline in schools. The provinces all confirmed the same thing. A list was drawn up of the types of misconduct, the frequency of offences. Educators were asked what the most effective method was for learner discipline.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The number one most effective measure to deal with learner discipline was proper preparation by educators. A well prepared educator would have less discipline problems. The discipline is in the hands of the teacher. The educators with good content knowledge of their subjects have less discipline problems. Positive discipline. Meeting with parents. <p>Different transgressions are categorized from Category 1, 2, 3 based on how serious in nature the transgression is.</p> <p>The question was raised as to what the role of learners would be in dealing with day-to-day misconduct, level 2 misconduct and serious misconduct.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that using Restorative Justice should be considered. This is where the learner would go through a process where the victim would have support, and the perpetrator would be put in a situation where he has to listen and try and understand from the victim's perspective as to how the act affected them. The perpetrator has to actively participate. Making reparation without retribution – doing something that will enable the victim and the offender to be placed on equal footing.</p> <p>What would the role of a learner be in identifying serious misconduct in the school?</p>
Recommendation:	There should be a system of trust in the classroom so that learners are able to identify problems that are prevalent in a school, and report it to a teacher they trust.
Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The learner in the session pointed out that none of the points on the board are relevant for their school. They are 700 students, they have 6 classrooms, 4 teachers arrive for the entire week. The student pointed out that they don't have ownership, their teachers are not asking for their opinions, decisions are taken without any participation from students.
Recommendation:	Learners should be given a voice and input in the decisions that are taken on their behalf at the school.
Issues:	Leadership

	Extended management teams. All stakeholders in the school are involved. The learners are empowered to hold meetings with their peers, and they give their input at the meetings where they are included.
Recommendation:	Leadership should be broader than just your elected students, and should include all areas of leadership, including sports mentoring and Elected student councils.
Issues:	<p>Mentorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring, coaching in sport. • Kids learn by example, if someone on their level shows them how to do it better, they will be engaged, and discipline will follow.
Recommendation:	That it is extended from just Academic subjects to mentorship at sporting activities.
Issues:	<p>Peer Mediation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders involved in minor misunderstandings before they develop into conflicts.
Recommendation:	Mediation will be placed under the broader context of leadership.
Issue:	<p>A learner was asked their opinion on what would work in a school, and she felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good behaviour should be rewarded just as much as bad behaviour is punished. • You need to make bad behaviour a taboo amongst your peers, which will make learners manage themselves. • You cannot have an outside person coming in to discipline students as they don't have all of the information pertaining to the situation.
Recommendation:	Mechanisms for peer discipline within the school should be explored. Positive reinforcement for good behaviour.
Issue:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Resources. Learners are not the only ones who have to be involved - there has to be initial support and structures before we can expect learners to be able to be disciplined. • Who is responsible for creating the culture at the school? The teachers, the management of the schools. • Values is the alternative to a code of conduct, respect, accountability, integrity. It should become part of the lifestyle, and the values need to be instilled in our learners. • We have communities that lack values, which results in poor discipline.
Recommendation:	Resources: The systems, structures and resources must be in place and be functional.
Issue:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you get learners to understand why they are attending an educational institution? If they don't understand why they are there,

	<p>they are not going to be motivated to attend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the teacher cannot be taken out of this, without a teacher to motivate the learners, there is no way any of these things will be happening. • Learners copy the conduct of their educators. • Learners will always need teachers, they are not going to motivate and mobilise themselves.
Recommendation:	You need a professional, motivated teacher to make learners see the value of education.
Issue:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be a well-planned campaign to make learners understand the importance of education, and their role in education. • The QLTC should be strengthened • Social Media should be used to mobilize the learners' involvement in discipline. • This should be used as a platform for learners to be mobilized to be disciplined.
Recommendation:	A Campaign to create consciousness by incorporating constructive use of social media.
	Main Categories were identified: and the issues that have been raised will be categorised under these headings.
MAIN LIST:	<p>1. Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership that mediates towards discipline that works, must always be managed and improved continuously. • Regulations needed for uniform selection for Learner Representative Councils (LRC). • Peer Mediation in Minor Disputes • Rotation of leadership roles
	<p>2. Participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners should be allowed to participate at different levels and areas of the school including amongst others the following: in Activities, in Leadership, in Communication. • Participate in Restorative Justice Process • Advocacy – Speaking out • Participation in organisations • Active Citizenship • Learners responding to Empowerment opportunities and Responsibilities • Projects and Service Activities • Participating in adopting and updating school code of conduct and classroom rules • Structured and informed participation by learners re: code of conduct.

	<p>3. Mentorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners mentoring each other in sports activities, • Tutoring in Academic Subjects. • Participation in Restorative Justice Process
	<p>4. Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a system of trust between educator and learner • Suggestion Box: Report Anonymously • Structured and Informed participation by learners • Learners are responsible for induction and welcoming. • Partnership with Parents, DBE, management, educators, civil society.
	<p>5. Role Modelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners Discipline Themselves • Active promoters of values
	<p>6. Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures, resources must be in place and be functional
	<p>7. Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conscientising all stakeholders with a well-planned campaign. • Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign is already running, but needs to be supported and improved.
	<p>8. Educator Professionalism</p>
	<p>SUMMARY:</p> <p>During discussion the UNICEF SA breakaway group decided that in order to mobilise learners to play an active role in promotion and sustaining discipline in schools, there would have to be 8 key areas that would have to be addressed.</p> <p>They are:</p> <p>Leadership – and challenging our traditional view of what that term means, Participation – how do we get our learners to participate in the discipline of their schools, Mentorship, Communication, Role Modelling – they emulate what they see, Systems (structures, and resources that need to be in place), Campaigns to make stakeholders more conscious of why education is necessary, as well as Educator Professionalism.</p> <p>There is a much discussion that still needs to happen surrounding these points in order to come up with an action plan in order to mobilise the learners into becoming active participants in the promotion and sustaining of discipline in their schools.</p>

COMMISSION 4: STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN COMBATING

ILL-DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Facilitator: Carol Bower, LINALI Consulting

ISSUES:

- A broad range of stakeholders were identified on all levels. On a national level: media, NGOs, FBOs, corporate sector, unions, SACE (South African council of educators), Educator associations, COSAS, and the various government departments, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, Social development, Safety and Security, Justice, Public Works and Correctional Services. On a provincial level were training providers of educators. On a community level: the school, educators, local police, churches, the home, parents, the school governing body, the principal, local unions, learner councils and student bodies, with the child in the centre.
- A review of the current situation of the country listed the following: extra high levels of violence, the highest recording of rapes, the highest recording of domestic violence, the highest recording of baby rape, the highest recording of intimate femicide, the highest recording of family murders, violence due to conditions caused by the history of the country, and problems in implementing the constitution and legal frameworks.
- Violence occurs in different forms: learners against learners, learners against educators, educators against learners, and educators against educators.
- The violence that occurs in schools cannot be isolated from what is happening in the community. The immediate environment, such as violence at home, is important
- Reported figures of violence recorded the following: 13% of children experience bullying, 14% of children have suffered harassment, 13.3% of children were forced to do something they didn't want to do, 6.3% were physically assaulted, 4.7% were sexually assaulted and 50% were corporally punished. The highest level of corporal punishment at 75 to 80% was noted in KZN.
- The fact that corporal punishment is illegal is not stopping teachers from hitting children, and is still happening on a large scale.
- In schools most violence was reported to have occurred in the classroom.
- A new phenomenon is online violence.
- It was agreed that the stakeholders in the immediate school environment, i.e. the learner, educators and parents were the most key in being able to reduce violence in schools, in conjunction with the Department of Education.
- The stakeholders in the immediate environment were listed as the following: learners, parents, educators, school governing bodies (consisting of representatives from learners, educators and parents), educator unions, the school management team, the representative council of learners, the disciplinary council made up of educators.
- A human rights culture or ethos needs to be created in schools involving the three key stakeholders: pupils, parents, and educators.
- Legislation defines the roles of all stakeholders however the problem lies in implementation.
- The following applicable legislation was listed: the Constitution, the Schools Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the Employment of Education Act, NEPA (National Education Policy Act), SACE Act, ELRC Act, the Children's act, the Child Justice Act. The legislation prohibits corporal punishment but none specifically say how discipline should be implemented.

- There is no fixed discipline structure in legislation.
- Part of the problem of implementing the law is that a lot of schools do not have a code of conduct in place.
- The right culture is needed before policies and codes of conduct can be implemented. Creating the right culture is a collective effort.
- To prevent corporal punishment, everyone needs to be on board or the movement won't succeed.
- The levels of violence and the attitude of the communities determine the level of violence in schools.
- Violence in society needs to be addressed and the mindset of the community changed.
- Perceptions and attitudes need to be changed through collaboration.
- The perception of the status of teachers in the community is important. If parents don't prepare children for a discipline system then children won't respect teachers.
- In order to reduce violence, the school governing bodies and educators need to be proactive instead of reactive.
- The fact that parents don't have basic life skills is a critical issue.
- Children are raising children. Children in high school have kids in primary school.
- The concept that no hitting does not mean no discipline needs to be understood or communicated. Non-violent discipline has been implemented successfully in schools because of a collaborative effort.
- Some religions teach messages contradictory to non-violent discipline, a lot of people believe spare the rod spoil the child.
- Many stakeholders are afraid to report incidents, and many cases of ill-discipline go unnoticed. Those who do report need to take accountability after reporting.
- Parents need to be more involved in other areas of the school, i.e. sports, extra classes. This will be easier to do once an environment for collaboration has been created.
- Discipline flows from the principal to the educators to the children. The principal sets the tone and drives the processes. Schools that work have principals who are strongly principled.
- Teachers also need to be supported and their contribution recognised.
- Curriculum for training parents already exists but collaboration is needed to ensure implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In order to create cultures of excellence and performance the right leadership needs to be put in place.
- The right leadership needs to be identified, recruitment is important and parents need to be involved in the recruitment of principals in particular.
- Teachers need to be registered with SACE before they can be employed. Educators are removed from the SACE list if they have been reported. The system needs to be used more often before employing educators.
- Good behaviour should be rewarded.
- The issues of the majority of a school's learners should be heard, not only the few representatives on a learner council.
- Educators should be trained on human rights and discipline based on legislation.
- Educators need to be aware of their influence on children and remember that children learn by observation of the example set by adults.

- As learners spend the majority of their time at school, teachers must also be parents.
- The issues on why teachers resort to violence needs to be addressed.
- The department of education needs to exert a much stronger monitoring and evaluation role.
- The department of education needs to monitor and support the school governing bodies.
- School governing bodies are trained on a quarterly basis, but need to specifically be trained on ill-discipline.
- The school governing body needs to familiarise themselves with legislation and draw up an implementable code of conduct for their school.
- The code of conduct should be based on a set of values.
- Schools shouldn't only focus on the academic results but need to focus on the quality of people that they are putting out into the community. Schools should be value or character driven, implemented from the inside. Training of teachers and parents in this regard is a long term project. When the children from these schools become parents, they will have been educated on discipline properly.
- The principal needs to monitor the implementation of a code of conduct in the school.
- On establishing the code of conduct, decisions should be made on what kind of environment is wanted, and what the rules and sanctions are when rules are broken.
- Implementation of the code of conduct needs to take place on the ground, but monitored by higher levels.
- Schools may have a code of conduct but implementation needs to be monitored and assistance and support provided in implementing policies.
- Many parents don't have basic life skills. Information needs to be disseminated to them and they need to be trained. A curriculum needs to be established.
- The faith community could become involved by recommending what parents should be taught.
- Companies can train staff on correct child discipline as part of their social investment responsibilities.
- Some parents can't read and write and work ad hoc jobs that make it difficult for them to attend meetings. Ongoing training and monitoring processes are need for parents.
- Training needs to be simplified for parents who are illiterate and they must be taught in a language that they understand.
- Parents need to be empowered as well as trained.
- Parents should be trained before they elect representatives for the school governing body so that suitable representatives are put in place.
- The department of education should choose what training for parents and school governing bodies is going to be used, who is going to implement it and what channels will be used. Some form of certification will have to be used.
- Training does not determine implementation, monitoring and control by the school management team, then on district, provincial and national levels.
- The media could report on what can go right, by focusing on schools that have been successful.
- Violence in the media needs to be reduced, it needs to be relayed that everyone has a responsibility on creating good citizens. Music videos and lyrics that glorify abuse of women should be censored.
- Government needs to encourage positive journalism.
- Where possible, technology should be used for monitoring, safety and communication.
- Community platforms should be created whereby schools that have successfully implemented a good culture can share their ideas and show what's working.

- Best practice needs to be shared on all levels.
- An evidence base from programs that work should be established.

MOST IMPORTANT POINTS:

- A human rights culture or ethos needs to be created in schools involving the three key stakeholders: pupils, parents, and educators.
- The school governing body needs to familiarise themselves with legislation and draw up an implementable code of conduct for their school.
- The department of education needs to exert a much stronger monitoring and evaluation role.
- An evidence base from programs that work should be established. Best practice should be shared on all levels.
- Parents need to be trained on discipline. Training needs to be simplified for parents who are illiterate and they must be taught in a language that they understand.
- In order to create cultures of excellence and performance the right leadership needs to be put in place. Parents need to be involved in the recruitment of principals in particular.



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