

My right to a non-violent education



Work assignments

Either at school or within the family, in Germany all children enjoy a right to a non-violent upbringing and education.

- Describe exactly what you see in the photo and write down why you think the girl in the photo is carrying such a picture on her back.
- Design two other symbols representing “my right to a non-violent upbringing”, one to be shown to your family and the other one to be exhibited and used at school. Explain your symbols.

Recommendation for further studies

- In accordance with The German Civil Code legislation section 1631 (part 2): “Children have a right to non-violent upbringing. Physical punishments, psychological injuries and other degrading measures are inadmissible.”
- Write down three concrete examples for each of the three above mentioned practices of exercising violence against children. According to your experience when dealing with violence against children, which form has shown the most devastating effects and why? In your opinion, what can be done in order to fight it back?

Violence has many faces

Violence can adopt different forms and can occur not only in the family but also at school. People perceive it differently. There are three actors: aggressor, victim and observer and each has a different point of view. Therefore a constructive confrontation of different opinions and experiences has proved to be relevant when living together.



Violence in the family and at school is, ...

... when a teacher shouts at a pupil because it is the third time that the pupil did not learn the vocabulary.

... when a father beats his child because he/she did not follow his instructions.

... when pupils make nasty remarks about others, take unauthorized photos and publish them.

... when pupils disturb the class constantly by chatting.

... when a schoolmate is returned to his country of origin.

... when no one wants to sit next to the new schoolmate.

... when parents do not allow their child to leave the house.

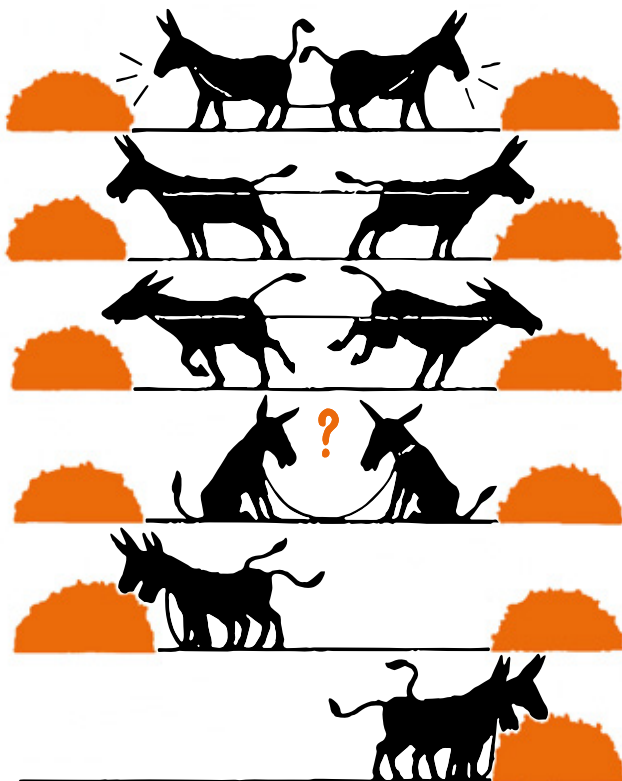
... when a pupil is expelled from school for repeatedly bullying teachers and pupils.

Work assignments

- According to your point of view, decide if the following situations manifest a certain degree of violence or not. Give reasons for it. In every circle enter a number between 1 to 5 according to the degree of violence. (1 for non-violent, 5 for extreme violent). Who plays the aggressor, victim or observer?
- Add another situation that makes you think it would score a 5.
- Describe the feelings that these situations might have evoked.

Solving conflicts without violence

Conflicts and disputes are part of life. They often cause suffering and dissatisfaction sometimes triggering violence. But they could also lead to new agreements that can produce mutual acceptance.



Recommendation for further studies Non-violent education and armament exports

Germany is the third world ranking armament exporter. Machineguns, tanks and warships are exported to other countries that do not respect human rights. Many politicians justify this action. This is also a conflict.

Work assignments

After so many years, the story of the two donkeys has proved to be very effective in order to encourage people to solve conflicts.

- Describe what the two donkeys in the pictures do and how both manage to solve their conflict at the end.
- Draw in five pictures a story of a personal conflict you had in the past and how you solved it. Alternatively you may utilize the photo above and create a similar story with a satisfactory solution at the end.
- Mention five features that can help people to solve conflicts. In relation to this, describe your own weaknesses and strengths.

Work assignments

- Research the practice and measures of German armament exporters. Write down which reasons they argue in order to justify or reject them.
- Write down your own position on armament export policies.

Parents information sheet

In Germany children have a right to a non-violent upbringing. This right is established in the German Civil Code (Section 1631 part 2) (see the box below) and also in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Corporal punishment is not permitted. Psychological injuries are also forbidden as well as any form of degradation.

What does violence mean?

Violent upbringing includes corporal punishment and hurting the dignity of the child.

Violence in upbringing does not only mean being beaten. Violence begins by making children feel afraid, for example when parents say: "if you don't obey, God will punish you" or "we won't love you anymore". Violence is found where children may not express their own needs or assume the role of an adult.

What does non-violent upbringing mean?

Non-violent upbringing means provide protection, security and support for children.

It is important to avoid violence and punishment. Non-violent upbringing means to take children and their needs seriously. Limits should be established clearly so that children can be given direction and learn where boundaries lie. This is valid not only for parents, but also for teachers and caretakers.



"Children have a right to non-violent upbringing. Physical punishments, psychological injuries and other degrading measures are inadmissible."

(German Civil Code legislation section 1631 (part 2))

What are the consequences of violence?

Violence in upbringing harms children and makes it more difficult for them to learn how to cope with life.

Children who often experienced violence show difficulties in learning and concentrating. They have a lack of self esteem and tend to reproduce patterns of violence on others. Later when they become adults they show syndromes of physical diseases or psychological restrictions and fear syndromes.

Where can you find support?

Non-violent upbringing demands patience. Many parents themselves are sometimes overstressed and need help.

That is why there are some advisory offices offering support. In every city you can find a Jugendamt office that offers advice or can direct you to an alternative advisory point. Besides, all top welfare organizations (AWO, Caritas, Der Paritätische, DRK, Diakonie) offer upbringing advisory points where children themselves can also go and get help. Additionally, there is a phone assistance service where either children or parents can get anonymous assistance. Nationwide you can also get assistance in "Nummer-gegen Kummer" at:

<https://www.nummergegenkummer.de/kinder-und-jugendtelefon.html>