

Peru Seeks Remedies to Entrenched Violence against Children



Lima, February 24 (NNN-EFE) — Beatings and other forms of mistreatment to discipline children are widely accepted in Peru and activists say it is vital to amend current law that effectively condones violent punishment.

It is common to see parents yell at their children on the bus or drag them out violently if they misbehave at a restaurant, and bystanders are generally unwilling to intervene in what is considered a family problem.

An Ipsos survey published by El Comercio newspaper found that 73 percent of respondents had been beaten by their parents or another adult, while 57 percent had witnessed violence against children within their families.

“We need to raise awareness about this problem,” according to Matilde Cobeña, an assistant director in the national ombudsman’s office for children and adolescents. The official said the United Nations Committee for the Rights of the Child has asked Peru to ban “physical and humiliating punishment of children and adolescents everywhere.”

Cobeña said current Peruvian law establishes the right of parents to use “moderate correction” with their children. Five bills have been introduced in Congress seeking to eliminate violence against children.

Currently 44 countries – eight of them in Latin America – have legislation banning corporal punishment of children.

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