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Ending Violence Against Children in Belize

National Communication & Communication for Development Strategy

Belize's response to Ending Violence Against Children has largely been guided by the Government's commitment to the National Road Map to End Violence Against Children. Over the past decade, Belize has enacted several policies and legislative and programmatic interventions to protect children from violence, yet, challenges persist and Belizean children remain vulnerable to many forms of violence and abuse.

As part of the Road Map, UNICEF has developed a 2-year Communication for Development strategy to End Violence Against Children in Belize. The strategy has several components developed jointly with national partners, and uses Communication for Development approaches such as community outreach, participation and capacity building of teachers, parents and key stakeholders to inspire lasting changes in behaviours and attitudes.

The strategy also has a classic communication and public information component – **TIME OUT**. The messaging in the strategy urges adults to take a moment, a TIME OUT, before using violence against children - and instead choose to use positive methods to communicate and solve conflict.

Basing our relationships on Understanding, Respect and Love.

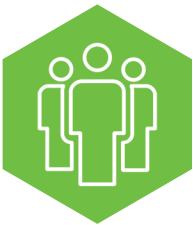
Understanding the context

The current strategy has been developed in close collaboration with national partners as well as through focus group discussions with children in all of Belize's districts.

Early on, it was identified that key among the challenges in understanding violence is the lack of comprehensive data on the situation of child abuse in Belize. One of the cornerstones of the strategy will therefore be the establishment of a baseline on the situation of violence and abuse through a nationwide survey measuring the Knowledge, Attitudes, Perceptions and Behaviours.



Working with partners and communities



The strategy uses Communication for Development (C4D) which is based on listening to and interacting with partners and communities to encourage dialogue on the issues that affect them. This helps us understand why certain social norms and violent behaviours are in place and how we can work together to address them.

The implementation is based on the cooperation with our partners, and incorporates community level initiatives such as training of teachers and parents on positive discipline and non-violent communication, and strengthening of the child justice system.

Communicating to change behaviours

TIME OUT also has a classic communication and outreach component including six Public Service Announcement videos for Television and Social Media, online messaging and advocacy.

The content of the videos has been inspired by stories shared by children across the country. Among many things, we learnt that while some parents don't deem it necessary to use violence, very few know of alternatives to violent discipline. The aim of the TIME OUT videos and messaging is to share positive alternatives to violence and affect behaviour change.



The videos are being aired on National TV and can also be seen on [YouTube.com/UNICEFBelize](https://www.youtube.com/UNICEFBelize)



Verbal Violence



Physical Violence



Sexual Violence



Neglect



Gang Violence



In all videos, the TIME OUT wristband is seen on the parent. The wristband is a symbol for the initiative and serves to remind us to take a TIME OUT when necessary, instead of using violence. The wearer of the wristband commits to promoting communication and alternative ways of discipline and building positive relationships with children.

Contact UNICEF Belize for more information:

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