More than half of the children in a four-month study have corporal punishment inflicted on them by their parents, a children's rights group has revealed.

The survey, by Against Child Abuse, interviewed 1,562 children aged from six to 13. It found 847, or 54 per cent, of the children had experienced corporal punishment by their parents.

Hong Kong introduced a law in 1991 banning corporal punishment in schools. The legislation does not include homes.

Dr Jessica Ho Oi-chu, director of Against Child Abuse, urged the government to bring in a total ban on corporal punishment.

Conducted between November and February, the study found 75 per cent of the children were hit with hands, and objects such as hangers or rulers were also used.

Almost 70 per cent of the children said they received punishment occasionally, while 5 per cent were punished daily.

Children were punished due to unsatisfactory academic performance, daily habits such as playing computer games, and refusal to obey parents.

Ms Li, a mother of two who came to Hong Kong from the mainland in 2012, used to spank her child at least once a month. She said she often got irritated by her eldest daughter who did not listen to her and did her homework slowly.

"I always scolded her and beat her with hangers ... she never held my hand when going out. It was always either she or I at the back," Li said.

The study, in which 608 parents were also polled, found more than half understood that corporal punishment worsened parent-child relationships. But the parents were not aware of a proper way to teach children.

Li said she became less angry with her daughter after visiting a child protection home as part of a scheme in which volunteers shared positive teaching methods. "I now encourage and praise her more when she has homework problems … she is more willing to hold my hand," Li said.
1. What do you think?

2. Vocabulary

*Fill in the blanks in the sentences below using words from the box.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporal punishment</th>
<th>Revealed</th>
<th>Abuse</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hangers</td>
<td>Obey</td>
<td>Spank</td>
<td>Irritated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scolded</td>
<td>Praise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. We need ___________ (laws). If we didn’t have any, many bad things would happen.
2. When the teacher asks you to do something, you should ___________ him or her.
3. Spiderman took off his mask and ___________ his face.
4. Students really like it when teachers ___________ them.
5. When I was at school ___________ was legal. That meant teachers could hit us with their hands and also with special sticks called canes.
6. The child felt deeply unhappy because her parents always ___________ her.
7. You find these in wardrobes. ___________.
8. Many parents ___________ (hit) their children.
9. I got very ___________ because the person sitting behind me kept talking really loudly on their mobile phone.
10. The little boy suffered many different types of ___________ from his parents. They often hit him and also called him bad words. Sometimes they didn’t feed him and a few times they even locked him in a cupboard for long periods of time.

**BREAKING NEWS!**

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**Where:** The English Corner (Room B001B by the basketball court)

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