

Title of session: Reducing Physical Violence and alternatives to Corporal Punishment

This episode goes into detail about commonly practiced physical violence against girls at home and school.

Length of recording: t.b.c.

Scene 1: Corporal punishment at home

Actors: Kemoh (father), Mami (mother) and Ami (daughter)

Scene 2: Corporal punishment in school

Actors: Mr. Alpha (teacher), Ami and Kadi (school girls)

Scene 3: Girls reporting physical violence to a female teacher mentor

Actors: Ami and Kadi (school girls), Mrs. Fatmata (teacher)

Scene 4: Teachers discussing alternatives to corporal punishment

Actors: Mrs. Fatmata, Mr. Alpha

Scene 1

Sfx: Heavy flogging and crying (brief, do not include long flogging/crying sound)

Mami: *A nɔ dɔn wɔn yu?* Haven't I warned you?

Ami (sobbing): *Mama a beg; na aksident.* I am sorry mum; it was an accident.

Mami: *Wel, we a go dɔn dɔn wit yu, den aksident ya nɔ go apin egen. A dɔn wɔn yu ova en ova se tek tem we yu de was plet. Luk wetin yu dɔn du naw. Dis na bin di wangren kelplet we a get, yu dɔn kan brok am.*

Well, when I am done with you, these accidents will not happen again. I have warned you over and over again to be careful when you are washing plates. Look what you have done. This is the only ceramic plate I have and you have broken it.

Sfx: Footsteps

Kemoh: *Wetin a de yeri so? Mami wetin mek yu de bit dis pikin so? Wetin de apin? Dis na ali ali mɔnin en di pikin get fɔ go lesin.*

What is getting to my hearing? Mami, why are you using the cane on the child like this? What is happening? It is early in the morning and the child has to go for lesson.

Mami: *I dɔn brok di wangren kleplet we a get*
She has broken the only ceramic plate we have

Kemoh: *Na dat mek yu de bit am so? A dɔn de yeri di bit frɔm we a de dɔŋ yanda. Lɛf am lɛ i go. Ami wɛp yu fes ɛn go.*

Is that why you beat her like this? I heard the sound of the beating from afar before I got here. Leave her and let her go. Ami, wipe your face and go.

Ami (sobbing): *Yes sa.* Yes, sir

Sfx: Footsteps

Kemoh: *Mami, wetin mek yu de bit dis pikin so?*
Mami, why are you beating the child like that?

Mami: *Na fɔ lɛ i nɔ du dat egen.*
So that she will not do it again.

Kemoh: *U tɛl yu so?* Who told you?

Mami: *Nɔnbɔdi nɔ get fɔ tɛl mi. Misɛf no dat gud gud wan.*
No one has to tell me. I know that very well

Kemoh: *Wɛn yu yon mami ɛn dadi dɛn bin de bit yu wɛn yu bin lili, dat bin cheng ɛnitiŋ? I bin cheng aw yu bin de bieŋ?*
Did it solve the problems when your parents beat you when you were young?
Did it change your behavior?

Mami: Mmmmm

Kemoh: *Nɔ, I tink a mɛmba we yu bin de se yu et dat. Yu se yu fil lɛk i nɔ fɛya atɔl.*
we dɛn bin de bit yu fɔ tin dɛn we nɔ to bin yu fɔlt.
No, I think I remember you saying that you hated it. That you felt like it was unfair because you were beaten for things that were not your fault.

Mami: *Dat na bikɔs mi Mama ɛn Papa dɛn nɔ bin de listin mi.*
That's because my parents wouldn't listen to me.

Kemoh: *... yu de listin to Ami naw?*
...and are you listening to Ami now?

Mami: *Wɛl...* well...

Kemoh: *Fɔ bit pikin wit ken sɛf de agens di lɔ.*

Using cane on children is even against the law.

Mami: *Uskayn lɔ dawande?*

What kind of law is that?

Kemoh: *Di lɔ na dis kɔntri.*

The law of this country.

Mami: *Dis na ɔda kɔntri den lɔ, nɔto fɔ mi. Na den kayn nɔnsens ya de pwel wi pikin dem.*

This is foreign culture and it does not apply to me. These are the types of nonsense that spoil our children.

Kemoh: *Mami, wetin mek yu de biev so? Di ed man dɔn wɔn wi di las tɛm. Gɔvment dɔn tɔk bɔt am. Di Child rayt act tok am.*

Mami, why are you behaving in this manner? The chief of this town warned us the last time. Government has spoken about it. The Child Rights Act stipulates it.

Mami: *Nɔnbɔdi nɔ go kan tɛl me aw fɔ mɛn mi pikin den. Na gɔvment ɔ ed man bɔn mi pikin dem? Na den kayn lɔ ya de mek i at fɔ mɛn ɛn kɔntrol wi pikin dem.*

No one will teach me how to bring up my children. Is it the government or chief who gave birth to my children? These are the laws that makes our children become unmanageable.

Kemoh: *We den bin de bit yu wen yu bin lili dat bin mek i izi fɔ mɛn ɛn kɔntrol yu? Yu bin tink se you Mama ɛn Papa den bin de pwel yu wen den bin de bit yu?*

When you were beaten as a child did that make you unmanageable? Did you think your parents were spoiling you when they weren't beating you?

Mami: *Jrayt, a tink se yu rayt. Bɔt wetin mek yu de tek Ami in pat?*

Okay, I guess you're right. But why are you taking Ami's side?

Kemoh: *A nɔ de tek ɛnibɔdi in pat. A jɛs de memba yu aw i bin fil lɛk wen wi na bin pikin. Misɛf nɔ bin lɛk we den bin de bit mi. Dat bin mek a bin de fred me Mama ɛn mi Papa den. Pikin nɔ fɔ de fred in mama, papa ɔ ticha. Tu mɔs bit kin mek pinkin den nɔ ebul tinap fɔ dɛnsɛf. Dis na tin we den dɔn fɛnɔt, ɛn na dat mek den se wi nɔ fɔ e bit pikin dem.*

I'm not taking sides. I'm just reminding you of how it felt when we were children. I hated being beaten too. And it made me afraid of my parents. A child should not be afraid of her mother, father or teacher. Beating makes children lose their confidence. That is what they have found out and that is why they say we should not beat children.

Mami: *Bɔt den de bit pikin dem na skul.* But they beat children in school.

Kemoh: *Na skul sef, ticha dem no get rayt fo gi pikin eni kayn punishmentwe go ambogin eni pat pan in bɔdi. If eni pikin ambug na skul, di ticha dem fo fen oda we fo punish dem bɔt den no fo bit dem.*

In school, teachers are forbidden to administer corporal punishment to students. If a child misbehaves in school teachers find alternative measures to discipline them but no corporal punishment.

Mami: *So aw den want mi fo tren mi pikin naw?*

So how am I supposed to discipline my child?

Kemoh: *Yu bin fo eksplen to am se i fo tek mo kia neks tem. Yu tink se we yu bit am dat go mek yu get nyu plet?*

You could have explained to her that she should be more careful. Do you think that beating her will give you a new plate?

Mami: *No, bɔt otem I kiales!*

No, but she is always so careless!

Kemoh: *...den yu fo tok to am en eksplen wetin i du rung so dat neks tem i go du in wok bete. Den no to in wan fo de du ol di wok na dis os yaso, Medo sef fo de du som pan di wok dem!*

Then you should talk to her and explain what she did wrong so that she can learn and do better next time. Also, she should not be the only one doing chores in this house, Medo should do some work as well!

Mami: *Eeee! Medo na boypikin, no to im fo de was plet!*

Eeeee! Medo is a boy, it's not his job to wash the dishes!

Kemoh: *Wetin du? Udat se so? Luk wi neba dem, den boypikin dem de ep wit boku oswok.*

Why? Who said that? Look at our neighbours, their boys are always helping around.

Mami: *Dis na bikɔs den nɔ get sista dem we dɔn big fɔ wok; den wangren sista na lili lili bebi.*

This is because they don't have sisters that are old enough to do chores, their only sister is still a little baby.

Kemoh: *Yu rayt, bɔt dis min se wi bɔypikin densef go ebul du oswok lek di titi dem if wi tich dem. Sɔntem yu de fred se ple-ple Medo go ivin brok yu plastic plet dem!*

You are right, but this means that boys are able to do chores as girls if we teach them. Maybe you are just afraid because our Medo is so clumsy that he will manage to break even our plastic plates!

Mami: *E Kemoh! ɔltɛm yu de jok!* Eh Kemoh! You always want to joke!

SFX: Mami and Kemoh both laughing

Scene 2

Male Teacher: Okay, class. Today we will be discussing how to structure an essay. Who can tell me what an essay is?

SFX: Teacher's voice and student discussion fade into the background.

(Two girls at the back of the classroom are talking in Krio and are not paying attention to the teacher)

Kadi: *E! A kant biliv se a fɔget mi pen sef. Do ya yu get wan we a go lent?*

Hey, I can't believe I forgot my pen. Do you have one that I can borrow?

Ami: *Yes, shɔ. A tink se a get wan ɔda wan....le a luk na mi bag.*

Yes, sure. I think I have an extra one.... let me look in my bag.

SFX: Rummaging in her bag.

Ami: *A tink se na dis wan nɔmɔ a get o...* All I have is this one...

Kadi: (Laughing) *Usay yu pul dis pɔpul pen? Pɔpul pen!*

Where did you get this purple pen from? It's purple!

Teacher (shouting): Who is speaking back there? You! You are disrupting class!

Kadi: *A beg Sa, a bin jes de aks fɔ lent wan pen...*

Sorry sir, I was just asking for a pen...

Teacher (shouting): I don't care! You were not paying attention to the lesson!

- Ami: *A beg Sa, a bin jes de gi am wan pen fo yuz...*
 Sorry sir, I was just giving her a pen to use...
- Teacher (shouting): *Una lef fo tok we a de tok, wit una boku boku ekskyuz! Una tu de ambog di klas. Una de biev bad! Una tu – tritri kot. Kamon una grap. Naw!*
 Stop talking back to me and making excuses! You are both disrupting class and behaving badly! Both of you - three strokes. Get up now!
- SFX: Background noise of the teacher's first stroke, then fade out.

Scene 3

- Kadi: *Mista Alfa bin strikt wit wi bad bad wan dis monin o. En di bit at!*
 Mr. Alpha was very strict with us this morning. It was so painful!
- Ami: *Bot na wi fen am fo wisef, wi no fo de tok na klas.*
 We deserved it, we shouldn't be talking during class.
- Kadi: *No o Ami. Fo bit pikin de agens di lo. Den no sɔpoz fo bit wi at ɔl*
 No, Ami. Caning students is against the law. They should never beat us.
- Ami: *So wetin fo du naw? ɔItem Mista Alfa de flag skul-pikin dem ɔ mek den nildɔn na kona we den ambog.*
 So what can we do? Mr. Alpha is always caning pupils or making them kneel in the corner if they misbehave.
- Kadi: *A tink se wi fo tel Misis Fatmata bot dis. Da tem we di skul bin geda, prinsipul bin se eni pan wi we den de tek advantej pan fo tok bot dat to eni ticha we i biliv pan lek Mista Sine en Misis Fatmata so we na dem de fo gayd wi.*
 We should tell Mrs. Fatmata about this. During the school assembly, the principal said that pupils who are victims of violence should talk to a teacher they can trust, in particular Mr. Sinneh and Mrs. Fatmata.
- Ami: *Yu min am? Wel if Misis Fatmata tel Mista Alfa naw? Dis go mek I bit wi bak!*
 Really? What happens if Mrs. Fatmata tells Mr. Alpha? He could punish us again!
- Kadi: *Ami, yu no get fo fred. Wi skul no de alaw le den bit wi atɔl- atɔl. Sef dis kontri get lo we se no fo bit pikin..*
 You don't have to be scared Ami. Our school has zero tolerance for violence and there are laws in this country saying that children shouldn't be beaten.

Ami: *Fayn, so le wi tɔk to Misis Fatmata, luk am... tinap oba yanda!*

Fine, let's talk to Mrs. Fatmata, look... she's over there!

SFX: children running

Ami: *Gud aftanun Misis Fatmata* Good afternoon Mrs. Fatmata

Kadi: *Gud aftanun. Ma.* Good afternoon.

Fatmata: *Mi pikin dem una gud aftanun.* Good afternoon girls

Kadi: *Yes ma, wi kin tɔk to yu ma?*

Yes, ma'am, can we talk to you, please?

Fatmata: *O yes, una lɔ wi go sidɔm na di bench unda da tik de.*

Of course, let's go sit on the bench under that tree.

Sfx: steps, then birds chirping

Fatmata: *So wetin apin? Wetin una wan tɔk to mi bɔt?*

so, what happened? What do you want to talk about?

Kadi: *Yes ma, enn... na bɔt sɔntin we apin na klas dis mɔnin. A fɔget mi pen, so a bin want le Ami lent mi wan.*

Yes, ma'am. It's about something that happened in class this morning. I forgot my pen, so I wanted to borrow one from Ami.

Ami: *Wi bin de tɔk smɔl smɔl we Mista Alfa bin de tich.*

We were talking a bit during Mr. Alpha's class.

Kadi: *So Mista Alfa veks en gi wi tu tri tri kɔt.*

So Mr. Alpha got angry and gave us three strokes each.

Ami: *Di bit at bad, wi stil de fil am.*

It was so painful, it still hurts.

Fatmata: *OK.* I see.

Kadi: *Prinsipul bin dɔn se nɔn ticha nɔ fɔ bit pikin. Dis skul bin dɔn se nɔ fɔ bit ɛɔ skul pikin atɔl atɔl, nɔto so ma? So wetin wi fɔ du naw?*

The Principal said that teachers shouldn't beat the pupils. This school has zero tolerance for violence, is that right? What can we do?

Fatmata: *Yes Kadi, yu rayt' Nɔnbɔdi nɔ get rayt fɔ yuz pɔnishmentwe go mekpikin kray at ɔl. Nɔ fɔ flag, nɔ fɔ nak, nɔ fɔ mek pikin nildɛŋ na kɔna. Wen mi na bin skulpikin wi ticha den bin de flag wi bɔku bikɔs den bin fil se na di onli we dat fɔ tich wi. Bɔt, a tel yu sɔntin? Dat nɔ mek wi lan betɛ atɔl. A wish den nɔ bin bit wi so. Tɛn gɔd, naw tin dɔn difrɛn. A gladi we una biliv mi we mek una disayd fɔ kam tɔk to mi. A go tɔk to Mista Alfa den una fɔ prɔmis se una go kan tɔk to mi if una get ɛnikayn prɔblɛm lek dat egen, na skul ya ɔ na os sɛf, dat oke?*

You are right Kadi. No one is allowed to use corporal punishment. No caning, no beating, no kneeling against the corner. When I used to be a pupil, teachers used to cane us a lot because they thought that this was the only way to teach us. But to tell you the truth, I don't think it helped very much. I wish they did not beat us. Luckily, now it's different. I am glad that you trust me and that you decided to talk to me. I will talk to Mr. Alpha, and you have to promise that you will come to talk to me if you have any other problem here in school or at home, is that ok?

Kadi: *Yes ma* Yes, ma'am.

Ami: *Yes ma* Yes, ma'am.

Fatmata: *Naw lɛ wi tɔk bɔt wetin una du na klas. Una tink se i fayn fɔ de tɔk wen tich de ɛksplen in lesin?*

Now, let's talk about your behaviour in class. Do you think is fine to talk while the teacher is explaining the lesson?

Ami: *Nɔ dat nɔ rayt.* No, it's not ok.

Kadi: *Bɔt a bin jɛs de aks Ami if i kin lɛn mi wan pɛn.*

I was just asking Ami if she could give me a pen.

Ami: *Yes Kadi, bɔt wi bigin tɔk wi yon tɔk ɛn dat ambɔg di ticha ɛn di wanɔl klas.*

Yes, Kadi, but then we started chatting and this disturbed the teacher and the rest of the class.

Fatmata: *So wetin una fɔ du nekstem we nɔ go ambɔg di klas?*

So what can you do next time instead of disturbing the class?

Ami: *Wel, if ɛni ɔda pɔsin aks fɔ pɛn we wi de na klas, a nɔ go se ɛnitin a go jɛs gi am.*

Well, if another pupil asks me for a pen, I can just give her without talking back.

Fatmata: *We yu Kadi?* What about you, Kadi?

Kadi: *mmm...Nekstem a go chek fɔ ɔl wetin a get fɔ yuz bifo di ticha bigin fɔ eksplen di lesin.*

mmm... next time I will check that I have everything I need for the class before the teacher starts explaining the lesson.

Fatmata: *Dat go gud. I fayn fɔ pe atenshɔn na klas so i go izi fɔ ɔndastand di lesin. Dis go ep yu fɔ pas yu egzam sef.*

Very well. It is important to be attentive in class so that it's easier to understand the lessons. This will help you pass your exams.

Kadi: *Misis Fatmata tenki ma.* Thank you Mrs. Fatmata.

Ami: *Yes ma, tenki ma.* Yes, thank you, ma'am.

Scene 4

Fatmata: *Gud aftanun Mista Alfa.* Good afternoon Mr. Alpha

Alpha: *Gud aftanun Misis Fatmata, awyudu?*

Good afternoon Mrs. Fatmata, how are you?

Fatmata: *A wɛl, aw yu?* I am fine, thank you. What about you?

Alpha: *Misef ɔrayt, tel god tenki.* I am fine, thank God.

Fatmata: *Aw yu klas den tide? Yu pikin den dɔn redi fɔ di egzam?*

How was your class today? Are your pupils ready for the exams?

Alpha: *Di klas den fayn. Bɔku pan dem dɔn redi bɔt wi stil get sɔm mɔ wok fɔ du. A wish ɔl di pikin den bin de pe atenshɔn pan di skul wok, bɔt we den pikin ya dɔn bigin big so den biznes kin tranga.*

It's fine. Most of them are ready but we still have some work to do. I wish all of them would focus on their studies, but adolescents can be so difficult!

Fatmata: *Wetin yu min?* What do you mean?

Alpha: *A nɔ lek we pikin den de kam let na mi klas, ɔ de tɔk we a de tich en ambɔg di klas.*

I always have late-comers, or pupils chatting while I explain the lesson and disturbing the class.

Fatmata: *Ye dat nɔ gud o. So wetin yu kin du we dat apin?*

Oh, that's not good. So what do you do in that case?

Alpha: *E dat simpul, a de mek den nildɔŋ na kɔna ɔ gi dem tu-tri kɔt.*

Simple, I make them kneel in the corner or I give them a few strokes.

Fatmata: *E, fɔ tru? Yu nɔ de fred se den go pot yu fɔ dat?*

Oh, really? Aren't you afraid of being reported for this?

Alpha: *Yes a no. Di Ticha kod ɔf praktis se a nɔ fɔ bit eni pikin na skul, en dis skul nɔ de alaw dat atɔl atɔl, bɔt dis na di onli we fɔ kip den pikin ya ɔnda kontrol.*

Yes, I know. The Teachers' Code of Conduct says that I should not beat the children and this school has Zero Tolerance for teachers hitting students, but this is the only way to discipline these children!

Fatmata: *Oke. So den kin stop fɔ ambɔg afta yu pɔnish dem?*

I see. So, do they stop misbehaving after you punish them?

Alpha: *Wel nɔto ɔtem. Sɔm pikin den at fɔ tek kontrol, bɔt a tink se yusef no dat. A shɔ se dat de apin na yusef yon klas.*

Well, not always. Some children are very hard to discipline, but I think you know that. I am sure that the same happens in your class.

Fatmata: *Wel fɔ ɔk tru, mi dɔn lef fɔ flag den en yuz pɔnishment we go mek den bɔdi at. Mi pikin den sef na os a nɔ de bit.*

Actually, I have stopped caning children or using any other form of corporal punishment, even with my own children at home.

Alpha: *Fɔ tru? En na yu klas pikin den get di best rizɔlt las ia! Aw yu manej?*

Really? But your pupils had the best results at the exams last year! How did you do that?

Fatmata: *Wel, a memba aw a bin de fil wen mi mama, papa ɔ ticha den bin de bit mi we a bin de go skul. A bin so de fred sɔm ticha dem dat a nɔ bin de ebul pe atenshɔn na klas. We den kin aks kweshɔn a kin shem fɔ ansa mek a nɔ gi di rɔng ansa. I nɔ bin izi atɔl. A memba wan English ticha, Mr. Kamara we bin get pashent wit wi. I go tek tem eksplen tin to wi saful wan, en i nɔ bin de bit wi. ɔlman bin lek Mista Kamara, en wiɔl bin de pas di egzam den wit gud gud mak. So misef dɔn disayd se a wan bi leke am. A nɔ want le di pikin den de fred mi.*

Well, I remember how it made me feel when my parents and teacher beat me as a child. I would feel really bad. I was so scared of some teachers that I could not concentrate in class. If they asked me question, I would be too shy to answer for the fear of giving a wrong answer. It was not easy at all. Then there was one English teacher, Mr. Kamara, who was always very patient with us. He would explain things calmly and he would never beat us. Everyone loved Mr. Kamara and we all had passed our exams with the best marks! So I have decided that I want to be like him. I don't want my pupils to fear me.

Alpha: *Eeeee Misis Fatmata, di we we yu tɔk am i luk so izi!*

Eeeee Mrs. Fatmata, you made it look so easy!

Fatmata: *Wel i kin bi izi! Le wi se sɔm pikin den bigin tɔk en ambɔg yu lesin, yu kin jes waka go tinap nia dem, a sho se dat go mek den stop fɔ tɔk wantem wantem!*

It can be easy! For example, if some pupils start chatting and disturb your lesson, you can walk and go stand near them, I am sure that they will stop immediately!

Alpha: *O Misis Fatmata yu na kleva uman! A go kam wach yu klas wande we yu de tich!*

Oh, you're a smart woman! I shall come to watch your class while you teach!

Fatmata: *Yu kin kam enitem yu want Mista Alfa. So yu go lef fɔ bit yu pikin den naw?*

You are the most welcome, Mr. Alpha, come whenever you want! So, are you going to try to avoid beating your pupils?

Alpha: *A go tray Misis Fatmata, i nɔ go izi fɔ chenj, bɔt a go du mi best.*

I will try Ms. Fatmata, it's not easy to change but I will do my best.

Female Voice to give details on the hotlines to report violence.

Radio Discussions – Discussants to focus on:

- The negative effects of physical violence on the development of children
- Teachers to uphold teacher code of conduct
- Alternative strategies to corporal punishment

Open Phone Lines – LWL team to document feedback