

**The Association between Emotional Expression and the Type of Information  
Children Report about intra-familial Abuse: The Role of Emotional Support  
during a Forensic Interview**

Yael Karni – Visel, PhD, Irit Hershkowitz, PhD

University of Haifa, Faculty of Social Welfare & Health Sciences, School of Social  
Work. Key words: forensic interviewing, intra-familial abuse, emotion, support.

**Abstract**

Children who are alleged victims of abuse are required to provide a rich testimony to initiate legal procedures and treatment. To date, no previous research has focused on the association between emotional expression and the amount of information they provide in investigation. Cognitive research indicates that memory for emotional event is superior to this of non-emotional event, especially when negative emotions are involved. The current study seeks to examine the association between emotion expression and reports of abuse and to explore the effects of support on emotion expression.

**Methods**

The sample included 217 interviews of children alleged victims of intra-familial physical abuse. All allegations were substantiated with independent evidence. Interviews were conducted by child interviewers from the Ministry of Welfare and Social Services using the Revised NICHD interview guide. Transcripts were micro-analyzed for each conversational turn.

**Results**

Emotional expressions in general were associated with an overall increased amount of forensic details. Negative emotions were differentially associated with the type of details produced, namely, with increased production of central, peripheral and specific details, and decreased production of generic details. Interviewer's support

predicted the subsequent expression of emotions and the association between support and detail production was fully mediated by the expression of emotions.

### **Discussion**

Although children provided little emotional expression, emotions predicted the production of different types of details. Interviewer's support did facilitate emotions, which in turn associated with details production. This field research points to the beneficial effects of emotion expression and suggests that supportive interviewing should be considered best practice.

*Psycho-social Court Assistance in child maltreatment proceedings –*

*a new field of work for Social Pedagogists and Social Workers?*

Victims of crime, especially those of child maltreatment, need advice and support. In our formalized judiciary system, there is barely a lack of legal advice or of professional support by psychotherapists. But the victims feel themselves often enough not supported in relation to general questions concerning criminal proceedings and alone in appointments with the police, the own lawyer, the public prosecutor's office, or the court.

In order to guarantee art. 12 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), German legislation created now a new procedural figure, the so called Psycho-social Court Assistant for children and teenager. The offered assistance is granted free of charge, it is voluntary and confidential. The person offering psycho-social assistance is available to victims for example as contact persons for general questions concerning the proceedings, and, upon request, will accompany the victim to the before mentioned appointments and to the court. Psycho-social Court Assistance can only be exercised by qualified, tested and registered professionals.

The paper shows the legal framework of this new field of work, the innovations in relation to the situation of the victims, similar procedural figures in other proceedings and countries, and discusses the perspectives for professionals in the social economy, especially the opportunities for trained Social Pedagogists and Social Workers.

**KEYWORDS:** child maltreatment, criminal justice, victim protection, rights of the child

Author: Dr. Friso Ross is Professor of Law at the Erfurt Faculty of Applied Social Sciences

Contact: [friso.ross@fh-erfurt.de](mailto:friso.ross@fh-erfurt.de) Tel.: ++493616700551

Co-authors:

Dr. Paulo Delgado is Professor at the Porto School of Education – Polytechnic of Porto

Inkje Sachau, M.A., is Lecturer at the Erfurt Faculty of Applied Social Sciences

## **ABOLISHING DEFENCES FOR THE USE OF PARENTAL CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

### **WHAT ENABLED THE CHANGE IN ISRAEL? WHAT DELAYS IT IN OTHER COUNTRIES?**

Tamar Morag [Tamar.morag99@gmail.com](mailto:Tamar.morag99@gmail.com)

Legal protections for parental corporal punishment were eliminated in recent decades in over fifty countries worldwide. As part of this process, Israeli law underwent radical transformation during the 1990s when it abolished preexisting, common-law-based, criminal and tort law defenses for parental corporal punishment. This lecture will examine the factors behind this change from a historical and comparative perspective. In particular my focus will be on the comparison between developments in Israel and in the U.S. where, in contrast to global trends, common-law-derived defenses, similar to those that prevailed in Israel until the 1980s, have by and large remained in place.

A broad international perspective of the change process in this regard reveals an intriguing picture: change is much slower in most common law countries, meaning countries where Anglo-American law prevails, such as England, Australia, and Canada. Through a comparison of the legal and social factors that shaped the law in Israel and in the United States, I will point to elements that propelled and enabled the change in Israeli law on the one hand and, on the other, attempt to shed light on elements that, up to the present, delay a similar process of change in common law countries.

## Access to justice for children at risk in Israel

Lidia Rabinovich, Head of Child Representation Unit, Legal Aid, Ministry of Justice

Email: [lidiaara@justice.gov.il](mailto:lidiaara@justice.gov.il); Phone: 050-7460777

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### Abstract

The right of **access to justice** for adults is a well established, defined and recognized right in the international and national human rights law and practice.

However, when we turn to address the right of children in accessing justice, we are faced, at best, with normative and practical confusion and in many cases – with an echoing void.

The issue is particularly pressing for children at risk, who are often (involuntarily) involved in legal proceedings or need legal assistance in order to pursue or defend their rights, and cannot turn to their natural guardians (their parents) for assistance in approaching the justice hall.

These children face a myriad of unique obstacles in exercising their right to access justice, when of the main challenges being the absence of a clear understanding and consensus on the content and implications of this right for children.

My presentation will try to present both a new framework for understanding children's right to access justice in the Israeli context, as well as a practical tool for the promotion and implementation of this particular right, through independent professional legal representation services provided to children by the Children Representation Unit ("A Lawyer of my Own") at the Legal Aid Department of the Israeli Ministry of Justice.