

CATEGORY: Addressing suspicion of abuse	Case Study # 1
TITLE: Parents' abuse of their child	updated: 12-2-2014
SUB-TITLE: Cultural implications; parent in high status position	
LOCATION: Western Europe	
<p>There are many international organizations in the city and a lot of these are quasi-diplomatic. We had an expatriate family whose father worked for an international/inter-governmental organization who had three children at school; the oldest was a girl in Grade 10. As adolescents do, she was at times rebellious, arriving home after her curfew and having a boyfriend against her parents' wishes.</p> <p>It was reported that the mother whipped her daughter's buttocks and back with thin wire and then shook pepper into the open wounds.</p> <p>A PE teacher saw some of the marks and duly informed the counselor who then briefed the Head of School. The city's Social Services Department and the police were notified and the school called a meeting with them. They were very concerned, but then pointed out the consequences if the school lodged a formal complaint. Because the family had diplomatic passports, the parents were out of reach of the law. The police would be bound to insist that the diplomatic passports be revoked, the family would be deported, and the father would possibly lose the best job he could ever get. They were concerned about the consequences for the girl if the family returned back to their home country. They rhetorically asked, "Is she safer here or there?"</p> <p>In the end, the school did not file a formal complaint and instead worked with the mother on parenting techniques.</p> <p>From the girl's perspective, things seemed to be better in the home, and we never saw again any further signs of physical punishment.</p>	
QUESTIONS-COMMENTS-CAVEATS: See the 30 Guiding Questions	