

# Voices on Violence

## *Why does it happen, teacher?*

*"The teacher beat me again in the morning," Juma told his friend. "I was five minutes late and tried to explain that I had walked from far but he does not listen. He beats students every day! He says it will teach us to be more disciplined but what can you do if the conductor will not let you on the bus?"*

*"Yesterday that same teacher came half an hour late for his lesson," his friend added, "and then beat us two strokes each for 'making noise' while he was not in the class. Do you think teachers ever get beaten for coming late to teach their lesson?" Juma asked, jokingly.*

*"Ah you are dreaming my friend. There is one rule for children and another for adults. Don't you know that by now?" his friend asked. "It's not that I want the teacher to be beaten. I just want everyone to be treated fairly," Juma clarified.*

*"Our teacher beat a boy so hard that he had scars all along his legs. The teacher said that it would 'teach him not to repeat the mistake again.'" his friend commented.*

*"What was his mistake?" Juma asked, curious if he had made that mistake too.*

*"He didn't know the answer to a question that the teacher had just asked."*

*"There are some good teachers, you know." Juma reminded his friend. "Yes, like our maths teacher who tries hard to encourage students. We need more teachers like her," his friend said.*

*"But why do many of them keep beating us like that?" his friend asked. They both sat in silence for a while and then his friend said, "Maybe because they can. Who will stop them? Everyone knows that we are just children and big people can do what they like to us because they believe that they are more important compared to children."*

*"Do you believe that?" Juma asked his friend. "It doesn't matter what I believe. What matters is what the teacher and other big people like him believe."*

*In a study completed recently, more than 90 percent of the adults said that they used physical or emotional punishment to cause change of behaviour. However, more than 50 percent of these adults said punishing children like this did not result in a change of behaviour.*

Raising Voices, P o Box 6770,  
Kampala, Uganda  
info@raisingvoices.org  
[www.raisingvoices.org](http://www.raisingvoices.org)