

LETTER FROM NINO MARGVELASHVILI

I am based in Tbilisi as I work here as a psychologist with children with special needs in an international school; I also do assessments and rehabilitation courses concerning different disorders, including epilepsy, specific learning disorder, ADHD and others.

I have been working as a trainer for teachers in the regions of Georgia covering the aspects of inclusion and specific strategies on how to help students in school on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Together with a colleague, we conducted ICDP courses for parents. I believe ICDP provides a unique experience and skill to parents, focusing on their engagement and personal experiences. More than that, everything is done in ICDP through empathy and acceptance of the caregiver. From my point of view this point makes the whole process worthy and valuable.

My long-term goal is to develop community-based trainings in future.

Georgia needs ICDP: According to the report of UNICEF together with USAID "Violence against children in Georgia" from the part of the survey "National Survey about Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices":

1. 45% of the Georgian population accepts and regards physical violence and punishment as a discipline against "spoiling" kids.
2. 30% of women and 17% of men said yes when asked if they use physical punishment
3. 60% of population thinks that using punishment methods in children upbringing are more effective than using non-violent methods
4. Society does not know much about the meaning of psychological violence
5. Children's interests are ignored - parents or caregivers deprive children's physical or emotional needs despite having relevant possibilities, knowledge and access to services.
6. 30% said that their parents used physical violence in their childhood.
7. 14-18 year old youngsters think that the possible abuser on child mostly is a parent.
8. Society thinks that intra-family violence against children is family's business and are against intervention

However, **82% of Georgian population states that violence is a problem that should be ended** (opposing with the idea that violence is a type of discipline (45%)).

Despite of that it shows that there is a will to overcome this problem in Georgia.

Based on this data UNICEF gives recommendations to Georgian government and NGOs, and one of them is to launch special programs and campaigns to make parents use non-violent discipline, encourage positive parenting and introduce alternative methods to physical disciplining; to raise awareness of parents to develop children's potential and possibilities.

Within the above context, my vision is to try to develop community based ICDP trainings, for parents with children with normal development and then make it nation-wide. I think it is time for us to change the basis of parenting for our children to have happier and healthier future.

Comments from participants who attended ICDP training by Nino at the Institute of Neurology and Neuropsychology in Tbilisi:

We became more engaged in our shared activities; communication is easier and more interesting for both of us, my child and me.

Our relationships in family became more peaceful and balanced; we started to find common ground for problem solving and consequently we now dialogue with each other more.

I became more confident, more aware and mindful, paying more attention to each word and gesture. Thank you.

It's very important to use the guidelines. I will use it more in my life.

We discovered that we are very different from our parents' generation; we express more love, through close dialogue with children.

I follow my child's initiative – I discovered that I do it and it is important. I discovered I should not be the leader but follow the child.

I now know how to regulate behaviour through explanations, giving alternatives.

I understand how important it is to pay attention and show love, have close dialogue and not to be afraid to express love and emotions.

I loved role play, analysing videos and photos.