Circuit Court for Prince George's County
Case No. C-16-FM-24-807586

UNREPORTED*

IN THE APPELLATE COURT

OF MARYLAND

No. 406

September Term, 2024

PAMELA SPRINGER

v.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

Leahy,
Reed,
Eyler, James R.
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

Opinion by Eyler, J.

Filed: January 3, 2025

* This is an unreported opinion. This opinion may not be cited as precedent within the rule of stare decisis. It may be cited for its persuasive value only if the citation conforms to Rule 1-104(a)(2)(B).

Christopher Phillips ("Father") and Pamela Springer ("Mother") are the unmarried parents of C.P., born in October 2007.[1] Under a consent order entered on June 15, 2017, Mother was awarded primary physical and sole legal custody of C.P., with "reasonable rights of access granted to [Father.]" This custodial arrangement continued for approximately seven years without further judicial intervention. On February 27, 2024, however, Father filed a petition for protection from child abuse in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County against Mother on C.P.'s behalf. In that petition, Father alleged that, on February 12, 2024, Mother intentionally choked C.P. in anger. The court granted a temporary protective order and scheduled a final protective order hearing for March 26, 2024.

Following the March 26th hearing, the circuit court entered a Final Protective Order, finding that Mother had choked and thrown objects at C.P. on February 12th. Although the court permitted Mother to retain sole legal and primary physical custody of C.P., it prohibited her from using further corporal punishment on the child.[2] Mother timely appealed and presents two issues for our review, which we rephrase slightly as follows[3]:

[1] As she is a minor, we will refer to C.P. by her initials to protect her privacy.

[2] The Final Protective Order is effective through March 26, 2025.

[3] In her appellate brief, Mother articulated the questions presented as follows:

1. Did the Court err in finding that the Appellant abused the Minor Child, when the disciplined [sic] used was reasonable?

(continued . . .)

1. Did the court err in finding by a preponderance of the evidence that Mother abused C.P.?

2. Did the court err by prohibiting Mother from using corporal punishment on C.P.?

For the following reasons, we answer these questions in the negative and shall affirm the judgment of the circuit court.[4]

BACKGROUND

C.P.'s Testimony

The March 26, 2024, protective order hearing began with a private, court-conducted interview of then sixteen-year-old C.P., who testified to the following facts. As of the hearing, C.P. was a tenth grade honor roll student and a member of her high school's drama club. C.P. often lied to Mother, including telling her that drama club rehearsals ended at 7:45 p.m., when they actually ended at 7:30 p.m. C.P. lied about the drama club schedule so that she could spend fifteen minutes socializing with friends before Mother picked her up from rehearsal. One evening, however, Mother arrived at C.P.'s school (where rehearsal was held) after her friends had left. Upon finding C.P. sitting alone, Mother asked her what time drama rehearsal had ended. Consistent with her prior representations, C.P. answered: "7:45." Mother subsequently discovered C.P.'s deception after sending an email to her drama teacher, asking what time rehearsal ended.

2. Did the Court err in ordering no corporal punishment when that is contrary to Maryland law?

[4] Father did not file a brief or otherwise participate in this appeal.

Upon learning the truth (*i.e.*, that rehearsal ended at 7:30 p.m.), Mother confronted C.P. in her bedroom and demanded to know why she had lied. After initially attempting "to dodge the question[,]" C.P. answered: "[B]ecause I wanted to hang out with my friends." Mother grew angry and yelled at C.P.[5] She then "grabbed a hold [sic] of [C.P.'s] neck" and "choked [her] on the bed" for approximately fifteen to twenty seconds. Although C.P. did not lose consciousness, Mother's hand left a mark on her neck, which was still visible at the hearing.[6] After some additional "lecturing" by Mother, C.P. attempted to go to bed. She was interrupted, however, when Mother returned to the bedroom and began throwing Valentine's Day gifts (which she had purchased for C.P.) at her. Although the objects (e.g., "lip gloss" and "stuffed animals") struck her, C.P. did not sustain any additional injuries as a result.

Father called C.P. the following day. During their ensuing conversation, C.P. informed him that Mother "got mad again" and relayed the events that had transpired the night before.

Mother's Testimony

Mother was the second and final witness to testify at the hearing. According to Mother, C.P. had a history of behavioral issues, which included lying and "act[ing] out." Mother testified that she disciplined C.P. by denying her certain privileges, such as taking away her phone, prohibiting her from attending events (e.g., ice cream socials), and/or

[5] C.P. testified that "when [Mother] gets really mad, she kind of loses it."

[6] C.P. attributed the mark to Mother's fingernails.

grounding her. When these measures were ineffective, Mother resorted to "spank[ing]" C.P. Mother recounted that her use of such corporal punishment had prompted her sister to file a complaint with Child Protective Services. Although the ensuing investigation culminated in a finding that the allegations against her were "unsubstantiated," Mother denied having "used the same sort of discipline on C.P." since.

With respect to her daughter's history of deceit, Mother testified that C.P. had repeatedly told her that drama rehearsal ended at 7:45 p.m. On several occasions when she picked up C.P. from her high school, however, Mother noticed that the parking lot appeared empty, "the school [wa]s dark, and [C.P. was] nowhere to be found," at least until Mother called her. When Mother raised the issue, C.P. simply assured her that drama rehearsal had "let out late." Evidently dissatisfied with C.P.'s explanation, Mother emailed her drama teacher to ask what time rehearsal ended. The teacher responded that the students were dismissed at 7:30 p.m., and that she had not seen C.P. in the auditorium or surrounding area while making her rounds to ensure that there were "no remaining kids, . . . staff, or crew."

On February 12, 2024, Mother entered C.P.'s bedroom and confronted her with what her drama teacher had written. This time, C.P. admitted that she had lied about her dismissal time so that she could "hang out with . . . friends." When Mother asked where her friends had been when she arrived, C.P. answered: "[O]h, they left." Mother did not believe C.P., suspecting that she had, in fact, been socializing with "a little boy . . . she likes . . . in another part of [the] school." In expressing that suspicion, Mother told C.P. that

she "didn't want her interacting with this young man." C.P. replied: "[You] don't understand, let me explain." Rather than allowing C.P. to elaborate, Mother responded: "[W]ell, what is it that you're explaining, because I know that you were not where you were supposed to be, and now you're telling me that you were hanging with friends, but now you're telling me let me explain."

Mother testified that C.P. began to cry and attempted to climb over her bed toward the bedroom door. Believing that she was "trying to run out the door," Mother grabbed C.P. by the back of the neck. Because Mother's right hand "is not that strong[,]" she "switched hands[,]" seizing C.P.'s neck with her left. Mother denied that she intended to hurt C.P., claiming that she was "just trying to stop her from running out the door."[7]

After releasing her neck, Mother continued to lecture C.P. in a raised voice. Mother then retrieved a Valentine's Day gift that she had purchased for her. Although she denied throwing the present at C.P., Mother admitted to tossing it on her chair in a gesture of disappointment.

The Court's Ruling

At the close of the evidence, the circuit court announced its ruling from the bench. Based on C.P.'s testimony, which it found credible, the court determined that Mother had assaulted C.P., stating: "[I]n order for me to grant this protective order, I've got to find one of several things. The only one in my mind that applies is assault in any degree. And I do

[7] Mother elaborated: "[T]here has been a time in the past, where C.P. has tried to run out the front door. At this point, it's, like, after 9. And I don't want my child running outside, into the street or into the hallway, or anything else, because it's dark."

find assault in some degree." Although the court declined to modify the existing custody order, it directed Mother to refrain from using corporal punishment to discipline C.P., saying:

> You're going to have to find another way to discipline her. And so, I'm granting the protective order. I'm granting that you not have – no corporal punishment. And I'm also putting in the order that you and your daughter, and possibly her father, all go to family counseling, which may assist you.
>
> * * *
>
> But I do find that [C.P.] was credible. And I think that you did discipline her. And I do find that it was an assault. And, you know, like I said, I talked to her. Her testimony, you know, I find was credible. She . . . didn't . . . back away from the fact that she was lying to you . . . . And then, I'm not suggesting that you didn't have a reason to discipline her.
>
> * * *
>
> Ma'am, you are not to commit any corporal – no spankings. I'm sorry. You're going to have to find another way. And [I am] ordering that you and the minor child, and [Father], if he chooses to participate – hopefully, you'll get involved in that. You all attend counseling. And I'm closing this case.

Mother's attorney asked the court to clarify its ruling, stating: "I . . . just want to be clear, are you finding that the corporal punishment is unreasonable in any manner?" The following exchange ensued:

> THE COURT: Why do I need to find that? . . . I only need to find assault in any degree.
>
> [MOTHER'S COUNSEL]: Sorry. Because I thought that part of it is that punishment, in and of itself, was not considered abuse. But if it was unreasonable, that it had to be reasonable if the – the language that I've seen. So[,] that – that is why I'm asking, just to be clear, of what the findings are, is it that you're saying that her punishment is considered unreasonable?
>
> THE COURT: I do, if that's what you want me to find.

[MOTHER'S COUNSEL]: Yes, I just wanted to be clear.

The court memorialized its oral ruling in a written one-year protective order entered on March 26, 2024. In that order, the court found by a preponderance of the evidence that Mother had committed an "[a]ssault in any degree" on February 12, 2024, by choking C.P. and "thr[owing] objects at her." (Capitalization omitted.) The order further provided, *inter alia*, that Mother "SHALL NOT abuse [or] threaten to abuse [C.P.]" and "THERE IS TO BE NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT[.]"

DISCUSSION

I.

Mother contends that "the court erred in finding abuse when the discipline [she] used . . . was reasonable[.]" (Capitalization and emphasis omitted.) In support of that contention, she asserts that the court failed to properly assess whether her conduct constituted reasonable corporal punishment (which the law permits) or abuse (which the law prohibits). Specifically, Mother claims that the court neglected "to consider how the incident occurred" as well as whether the discipline she administered was reasonable "based on the child's age and condition." When properly weighed, Mother argues, the evidence demonstrated that her "method of discipline was reasonable[,]" and did not therefore "support a ruling of assault or abuse of C.P. by a preponderance of the evidence."

When reviewing the issuance of a final protective order, "we accept the facts as found by the hearing court unless it is shown that its findings are clearly erroneous." *Piper v. Layman*, 125 Md. App. 745, 754 (1999). We thus "consider evidence produced at the

trial in a light most favorable to the prevailing party and if substantial evidence was presented to support the trial court's determination, it is not clearly erroneous and cannot be disturbed." *Mills v. Mills*, 178 Md. App. 728, 734-35 (2008) (quotation marks and citation omitted). *See also Innerbichler v. Innerbichler*, 132 Md. App. 207, 230 ("When the trial court's findings are supported by substantial evidence, the findings are not clearly erroneous."), *cert. denied*, 361 Md. 232 (2000). We likewise defer to the trial court's assessment of witness credibility, as it had "the opportunity to gauge and observe the witnesses' behavior and testimony[.]" *Barton v. Hirshberg*, 137 Md. App. 1, 21 (2001) (quotation marks and citation omitted). "As to the ultimate conclusion, however, we must make our own independent appraisal by reviewing the law and applying it to the facts of the case." *Piper*, 125 Md. App. at 754.

Maryland Code (1984, 2019 Rep. Vol.), § 4-506(c) of the Family Law Article ("FL") authorizes courts to issue final protective orders "if the judge finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the alleged abuse has occurred[.]" FL § 4-506(c)(1)(ii). The petitioner therefore bears the burden of proving that it is "'more likely than not'" that the alleged abuse occurred. *C.M. v. J.M.*, 258 Md. App. 40, 56-57 (2023) (cleaned up) (quoting *State v. Sample*, 468 Md. 560, 598 (2020)). *See also Piper*, 125 Md. App. at 754 ("The burden is on the petitioner to show . . . that the alleged abuse has occurred."). "'If the court finds that the petitioner has met th[at] burden, it may issue a protective order tailored to fit particular needs that the petitioner has demonstrated are necessary to provide relief from abuse.'" *Id.* (quoting *Ricker v. Ricker*, 114 Md. App. 583, 586 (1997)).

FL § 4-501(b)(1) defines "abuse" as the term is used in FL § 4-506, and provides, in pertinent part: "'Abuse' means any of the following acts: . . . (iii) assault in any degree[.]" In Maryland, "assault" "'encompasses three modalities: (1) intent to frighten, (2) attempted battery, and (3) battery.'" *Hammond v. State*, 257 Md. App. 99, 126 (2023) (quoting *Snyder v. State*, 210 Md. App. 370, 382, *cert. denied*, 432 Md. 470 (2013)). *See also Lamb v. State*, 93 Md. App. 422, 428 (1992), *cert. denied*, 329 Md. 110 (1993). The battery variety of assault consists of "the unlawful[,] unjustified, offensive[,] and non-consensual application of force to the person of another." *Hickman v. State*, 193 Md. App. 238, 256 (2010).

"As a defense, by way of justification, to what would otherwise be an assault and battery, an individual *in loco parentis* may . . . establish that the force used upon the child was privileged as necessary and proper to the exercise of domestic authority." *Anderson v. State*, 61 Md. App. 436, 443, *cert. denied*, 303 Md. 295 (1985). This parental privilege arises from the common law "'precept . . . that the parent of a minor child . . . was justified in using a reasonable amount of force upon a child for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.'" *Fisher v. State*, 367 Md. 218, 271 (2001) (quoting *Bowers v. State*, 283 Md. 115, 126 (1978)). "The Maryland General Assembly has expressly codified the parent's common law right to impose reasonable corporal punishment" in FL § 4-501(b). *Dep't of Hum. Res. v. Howard*, 168 Md. App. 621, 635 (2006) (quotation marks omitted), *vacated on other grounds*, 397 Md. 353 (2007). Specifically, FL § 4-501(b)(2)(ii) states: "*Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to prohibit* reasonable punishment,

including *reasonable corporal punishment*, in light of the age and condition of the child, from being performed by a parent or stepparent of the child." (Emphasis added.)

The parental privilege to employ corporal punishment "'has two clear limitations.'" *Fisher*, 367 Md. at 275 (quoting *Anderson*, 61 Md. App. at 444). "'The first . . . is that the force truly be used in the exercise of domestic authority by way of punishing or disciplining the child—for the betterment of the child or promotion of the child's welfare[.]'" *Id.* (quoting *Anderson*, 61 Md. App. at 444). "The second . . . is that the amount of force used be moderate and reasonable." *Anderson*, 61 Md. App. at 444-45. *See also Charles Cnty. Dep't of Soc. Servs. v. Vann*, 382 Md. 286, 303 (2004) ("When . . . deciding whether a particular parental discipline is child abuse . . . under . . . FL §§ 5-701 or 4-501, the court always determines whether the corporal punishment was reasonable.").

In this case, we are principally concerned with the second limitation (*i.e.*, that the force used was reasonable). In assessing the reasonableness of corporal punishment, courts must "consider . . . the totality of circumstances surrounding the physical punishment[.]" *Id.* at 299. Relevant factors include "the misbehavior of the child[,]" "the amount of force used in the punishment from the parent's perspective, . . . the physical and mental maturity of the child, and the propriety of the decision to use force in circumstances that may increase the potential for serious injury." *Id.* Ultimately, however, "[t]here simply is no privilege . . . within the context of administering ostensible child discipline, for excessive, cruel, or immoderate conduct[.]" *Anderson*, 61 Md. App. at 446.

We will first briefly address Mother's peripheral assertion that the court's findings were internally inconsistent. Noting that the "Domestic Violence Statute carved out an exception to abuse which allows parents . . . to punish/discipline their children[,]" Mother claims that the court's determination that she "disciplined" C.P. contradicted its conclusion that she "assaulted" her. The fatal flaw in Mother's argument is that it focuses exclusively on the first limitation (*i.e.*, that the force be used for disciplinary purposes) while completely disregarding the second (*i.e.*, that the force be reasonable). Contrary to the discipline-assault dichotomy Mother proposes, corporal punishment of a child—even when performed for purely disciplinary purposes—constitutes assault, and therefore abuse under FL § 4-501(b)(1)(iii), if the force used is unreasonable or excessive. *See Anderson*, 61 Md. App. at 446 ("Where . . . the chastisement becomes immoderate, it defeats the parental privilege and is treated as an ordinary assault and battery, as if perpetrated upon a stranger[.]"). Although the court in this case determined that Mother had "discipline[d]" C.P., it also found that the force she used was unreasonable. The court's conclusion that Mother assaulted C.P. necessarily followed from the latter finding and was not, therefore, inconsistent with the former.

We turn now to Mother's argument that the court failed to consider the totality of the circumstances surrounding her use of corporal punishment when assessing whether it was reasonable. Preliminarily, we note that, although FL § 4-506(c)(3)(ii) mandates that the court "make[] a detailed finding of fact" before issuing *mutual* final protective orders, FL § 4-506(c)(1)(ii) imposes no such requirement, stating instead: "[I]f the judge *finds* by

a preponderance of the evidence that the alleged abuse has occurred, . . . the judge may grant a final protective order[.]"[8] (Emphasis added.) The fact that the General Assembly explicitly required courts to make detailed factual findings in a different paragraph of the same statutory subsection indicates that it deliberately omitted such a requisite from FL § § 4-506(c)(1)(ii). *See In re Adoption/Guardianship of Dustin R.*, 445 Md. 536, 565 (2015) ("Because FL § 5-324(b)(1)(ii) includes language in subsubparagraphs (2) and (3) limiting the juvenile court's order to [the Department of Social Services], but does not contain such language in subsubparagraph (7), such an omission is presumed to be intentional."); *Miller v. Miller*, 142 Md. App. 239, 251 ("[W]hen Congress included particular language in one section of a statute, but omitted it in another section of the same act, it could be presumed that Congress acted intentionally and purposely in the disparate inclusion or exclusion." (citing *Lindh v. Murphy*, 521 U.S. 320 (1997))), *aff'd sub nom. Goldberg v. Miller*, 371 Md. 591 (2002). Thus, to the extent that Mother is arguing that the court failed to make detailed findings before issuing the final protective order at issue, we hold that it was not required to do so. *See Green v. Taylor*, 142 Md. App. 44, 59 (2001) ("There is no requirement that the trial court . . . make detailed findings on every fact in dispute.").

We are also unpersuaded by Mother's argument that the court neglected to consider the totality of the circumstances in reaching its decision. As with factual findings, a court is not necessarily required "to state each and every consideration or factor in a particular

[8] FL § 4-506(c)(3)(i) authorizes the issuance of "mutual protective orders" if, *inter alia*, "the judge finds by a preponderance of the evidence that mutual abuse has occurred."

applicable standard . . . so long as the record supports a reasonable conclusion that [the] appropriate factors were taken into account[.]" *Ademiluyi v. Egbuonu*, 466 Md. 80, 131 (2019) (quotation marks and citations omitted). *See also Aventis Pasteur, Inc. v. Skevofilax*, 396 Md. 405, 426 (2007) ("[T]rial judges are not obliged to spell out in words every thought and step of logic." (quotation marks and citation omitted)). Nor is it necessary for a trial judge to "articulate each item or piece of evidence she or he has considered in reaching a decision[.]" *Id.* (quotation marks and citation omitted). Rather, "'we presume judges know the law and apply it even in the absence of a verbal indication of having considered it.'" *In re X.R.*, 254 Md. App. 608, 629 (2022) (cleaned up) (quoting *Marquis v. Marquis*, 175 Md. App. 734, 755 (2007)). *See also Bangs v. Bangs*, 59 Md. App. 350, 370 (1984) ("A judge is presumed to know the law and to properly apply it. That presumption is not rebutted by mere silence." (internal citation omitted)).

In this case, the court repeatedly and unequivocally found C.P.'s testimony credible, thereby implicitly endorsing her narrative of events. That testimony provided the court with ample evidence relevant to the above-enumerated factors it was required to consider. The only arguable suggestion that the court may have inadequately considered these factors was a remark it made in response to Mother's counsel asking whether it had found that Mother's use of corporal punishment was unreasonable. In a seemingly off-the-cuff response that Mother characterizes as "sarcastic[,]" the court answered: "I do, if that's what you want me to find." Mother construes the court's response as an attempt "to put an end to the discussion rather than an indication that [it] actually made a judicial determination

that the punishment was unreasonable." As explained above, however, the court's determination that Mother's corporal punishment of C.P. amounted to assault (of the battery variety) necessarily entailed a finding that the amount of force she used was unreasonable and excessive.[9] Thus, by answering counsel's question in the affirmative, the court simply made explicit what had been implicit in its initial ruling.

Finally, Mother claims that the court erred in finding that she assaulted C.P., arguing that the force she used was reasonable "to maintain some control over the situation and keep C.P. in the room[,]" particularly in view of her recent deceptive and rebellious behavior. In support of that position, Mother relies on her own self-serving testimony that "she grabbed C.P. to prevent her from leaving the room," resulting in a "minor scratch on C.P." In so arguing, Mother makes two fundamental mistakes. First, she distorts the applicable standard of review by viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to herself—rather than Father, who was the prevailing party. Secondly, she disregards the court's unequivocal determination that C.P.'s testimony was credible.

Deferring, as we must, to C.P.'s narrative of events, we perceive no error in the court's implicit determination that the amount of force Mother used was neither reasonable nor moderate, and therefore defeated the parental privilege. C.P. testified that Mother grabbed her neck in anger and choked her for approximately fifteen to twenty seconds,

[9] Indeed, the court recognized that not all corporal punishment rises to the level of assault. Immediately after announcing its conclusion that Mother had both disciplined and assaulted C.P., it noted that "corporal punishment . . . is still on the books" and cautioned: "[T]hat's not to suggest that you can't spank your children."

leaving a mark on her neck that was still visible at the protective order hearing held over six weeks later. According to C.P., Mother left the bedroom after releasing her neck only to return and throw objects at C.P., repeatedly striking her. Based upon the totality of the circumstances, we hold that the court did not err in concluding that Mother's conduct exceeded the bounds of reasonable corporal punishment and therefore constituted assault. *See B.H. v. Anne Arundel Cnty. Dep't of Soc. Servs.*, 209 Md. App. 206, 216, 226, 230 (2012) (affirming the administrative law judge's determination that appellant's use of corporal punishment was unreasonable and amounted to abuse where appellant grabbed his four-year-old son by the neck and forced him back to the dinner table, resulting in bruises to the child's neck and a scratch on his chin).

II.

Mother also contends that the court erred in ordering that she refrain from using corporal punishment to discipline C.P. Citing FL § 4-501(b)(2)(ii), she argues that such a prohibition "[i]s contrary to Maryland [l]aw[,]" which "clearly contemplates and allows parents to use corporal punishment as a method of discipline so long as it is reasonable." By imposing a "wholesale ban on corporal punishment[,]" Mother claims that the court infringed upon her fundamental liberty interest in raising C.P.

"[T]he Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment protects the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning the care, custody, and control of their children." *Troxel v. Granville*, 530 U.S. 57, 66 (2000) (plurality opinion). *See also Conover v. Conover*, 450 Md. 51, 60 (2016) ("[T]he rights of parents to direct and govern the care,

custody, and control of their children is a fundamental right protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution."). That right, however, "is not absolute and . . . must be balanced against the fundamental right and responsibility of the State to protect children, who cannot protect themselves, from abuse and neglect." *In re Adoption/Guardianship of Rashawn H.*, 402 Md. 477, 497 (2007). *See also In re T.K.*, 480 Md. 122, 131 (2022) ("Parents have a fundamental right to rear their children without unwarranted interference by the State. . . . That interest, however, is not absolute, and must be balanced against society's obligation to protect the welfare of children."). "That which will best promote the child's welfare becomes particularly consequential where the interests of a child are in jeopardy, as is often the case in situations involving . . . physical . . . abuse by a parent." *In re Mark M.*, 365 Md. 687, 706 (2001). *See also In re Adoption/Guardianship No. A91-71A*, 334 Md. 538, 561 (1994) ("[I]n all cases where the interests of a child are in jeopardy the paramount consideration is what will best promote the child's welfare, a consideration that is of 'transcendent importance.'"). "[I]n cases where abuse . . . is evidenced," moreover, "the court's role is necessarily more pro-active." *In re Mark M.*, 365 Md. at 706.

Mother acknowledges that FL § 4-501(b)'s definition of "abuse" "balance[s] the [S]tate's interest in caring for children and . . . parent[s'] fundamental liberty interest to raise their children by authorizing reasonable corporal punishment." She argues, however, that the court's order upset that balance in contravention of Maryland law by failing to

"distinguish between reasonable corporal punishment" and abuse. Mother's argument misses the mark.

The exclusion of reasonable corporal punishment from the definition of "abuse" is clearly relevant to whether parental conduct supports the issuance of a final protective order pursuant to FL § 4-506(c)(1)(ii). It has little if any bearing, however, on the permissible scope of such an order, which is governed by FL § 4-506(d). Rather, FL § 4-506(d) "gives discretion to the trial judge to choose from a wide variety of available remedies in order to determine what is appropriate and necessary according to the particular facts of that case." *Coburn v. Coburn*, 342 Md. 244, 258 (1996). *See also La Valle v. La Valle*, 432 Md. 343, 357 (2013) ("The [domestic violence] statute provides for a wide variety and scope of available remedies designed to separate the parties and avoid future abuse." (quotation marks and citation omitted)). In 2015, the General Assembly further expanded an already extensive list of enumerated remedies by adding a catch-all provision to FL § 4-506(d), which permits a final protective order to provide "*any other relief* that the judge determines is necessary to protect a person eligible for relief from abuse." 2015 Md. Laws, ch. 335, § 1 (S.B. 269) (emphasis added).

In this case, the court evidently determined that preventing Mother from using corporal punishment on C.P. was necessary to ensure the child's safety. That conclusion was perfectly reasonable given that Mother's prior exercise of such disciplinary measures exceeded the bounds of reasonable punishment and therefore amounted to abuse. Thus, the relief granted in the court's order was properly "tailored to fit [the] particular need[] . . .

necessary to provide relief from [that] abuse." *Piper*, 125 Md. App. at 754 (quotation marks and citation omitted). Finding no error in the court's determination that a prohibition against corporal punishment was necessary to protect C.P. from abuse, we hold that the court's remedy was permissible pursuant to FL § 4-506(d)(14). Accordingly, we conclude that the court did not err in ordering that Mother refrain from using corporal punishment as a disciplinary method against C.P.

For the foregoing reasons, we will affirm the judgment of the circuit court.

JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO BE PAID BY APPELLANT.