

Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Fully Supportive

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Please explain the reasons for your response

Hitting children is cruel and traumatic. It is not in any way useful, and it is exceptionally harmful. I have PTSD as a result of child abuse, and I still wake screaming from nightmares of what my parents did to me, thirty years later. Hitting children can be traumatic even when it's not all that physically hard. It's a brutal betrayal of trust, and it teaches the child that they have to continue loving someone who has hurt them. If the abuse escalates, the child has already been taught to put up with it, that it's their fault. I don't remember my early childhood, although I know that I was hospitalised as a result of (medical and possibly sexual) abuse, but I know that all the verbal abuse and physical abuse that I went through was not my fault. It was because my mother considered my body to be her property, and took out all her rage on me. There was one incident when I was seventeen when she stopped me from leaving my bedroom and hit at my face and upper body, not particularly hard, screaming at me about how I was cold and unloving. (By this stage she spent about an hour a day yelling at me.) I couldn't get out and she kept hitting me. Hitting her back was unthinkable. The only way to get out was to physically move her aside, and it took me two hours to build up the courage to do that. I still feel bad because I had to do that. Then I fled to my boyfriend's house. I wasn't bruised as far as I know. I was shell-shocked from the ordeal, though, and it should not have been measured by bruising. Only now has it occurred to me that his parents, one of which was a psychiatrist, should have called the police. According to my friends from back then, who remember my childhood better than I do, I made repeated attempts to run away, and people wouldn't take me in "because I don't want to get between mother and daughter". Turning up to school with bruises was rare, I just covered them with clothing, but I had teachers take me aside, ask if there was anything I wanted to discuss, and since I couldn't think of what to do and didn't discuss my home life, they took absolutely no action at all, even though I later realised they knew perfectly well that I was going through a lot of abuse.

Q2. Could the aims of the proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Unsure

Q3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

Stopping abuse of children. Making it easier to intervene when a child is being abused. Reducing rates of trauma.

Q4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of giving children equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children?

None.

Page 11: Financial implications

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

I have absolutely no idea what it would cost, but if you think that I shouldn't have been spared a childhood

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

of abuse, which has led to lifelong disability and suicide attempts, because of *cost*, then you are completely unethical.

Page 12: Equalities

Q6. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response

Marginalised people are at greater risk of abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence. Allowing people to be hit as children makes them get used to putting up with violence, damages their ability to form healthy relationships, and makes it harder to leave if they end up in abusive relationships as an adult. I ended up severely disabled and in two abusive relationships, and I think the child abuse I went through trained me to put up with those for far too long. LGBT children and youth, especially transgender children, are already at severely raised risk of abuse from their parents. We need to do everything we can to tackle that, especially considering the devastating suicide rate that is a result of it.

Q7. Could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected groups be minimised or avoided?

What negative impact?

Page 14: Sustainability of the proposal

Q8. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having a disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response:

I cannot see how the social impact of people being less likely to abuse children is a problem or "disproportionate".

Page 15: General

Q9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

No Response