

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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 barbaric, abusive and does not work. It is an infringement of their human rights and contributes to fear, trauma and developmental issues. It promotes violence and is abhorrent in every way Scotland would be proud to be anti-smacking

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

No

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?

It gives a message that we value children and childhood and do not want to cause children harm. It says that we don't support violence and wish to look to other ways to resolve problems. It enables children to live happier lives, free from fear and secure in the knowledge that they can be protected.

It gives clarity to parents, carers and others that all violence is unlawful and saves time and effort debating this in planning and legal settings - courts and children's hearings. It's a positive demonstration that we support parents in their role.

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?

Significant reduction in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

Child,protection processes would be simpler Money saved could be invested in prevention and parent support or anti-poverty initiatives. Charities may receive more money if Scotland was anti-smacking as people may want to invest in this positive and progressive approach. Trauma is life-long and costs a lot - the impact of abuse costs far more to society.

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

Everyone has the right to safety and protection, it's an inclusive and good message Protected groups are often more likely to experience difficulties in childhood and be subject to physical chastisement - if anything it gives them more protection. The anti-violence message also protects from bullying - we know these groups are more likely to be bullied. By removing his additional stressor (smacking) there would be less trauma, psychological effects and improved mental health and well being, particularly important for these vulnerable groups.

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

Only that it gives a voice to those who support it (for the period of time of the consultation) which is detrimental - I have already heard views which are very negative of children, parents. It's given licence to bullies and abusers to have their voices heard - I hit my children and it didn't do them any harm etc. This is absolute rubbish and needs to be challenged through public health and education. People from violent households may also be affected by hearing about it on to etc. It potentially retraumatizes people to hear negative things. Abusers don't care about is kind of thing and actually use this as a platform to increase fear and powerlessness. I worry if it doesn't get passed that this will just give permission for more smacking and abuse

Please pass this legislation - if not now then when? How many childhoods need to be scarred before we take a stance on this?

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:

Absolutely - every child affected by smacking costs more in terms of education, health and life-long supports. I'm thinking of crime, mental health issues, violence to others and impact on educational attainment, capability and future relationships. Not to make this change is unsustainable in the longer term - harm costs £billions

Page 15: General

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

There should have been more public information prior to the consultation. I'm not sure that everyone is aware of research in relation to smacking, human rights, UN opposition etc.

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

It's a bit like other public health issues and education such as anti-smoking - there needs to be clear and consistent messaging over a long period to get public support.