

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Physical punishment of children is not an effective way to manage their behaviour so it should not be used to justify assault from which adults are protected. Assault is mentally and physically damaging to all individuals regardless of their age.

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 would send a clear message to the public that physical punishment of children is unacceptable in our society. As with the smoking ban, the vast majority of people in Scotland are respectful of laws so they do comply with them even if they would not necessarily have voted for them. It also creates a mechanism for people to intervene to object to something that is clearly damaging without being told that it's "none of their business".

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?

There may be confusion and misinformation about what is covered, with sensationalised media coverage eg trivial examples suggesting that people can be criminalised for things like accidentally bumping into their child, restraining their child to keep them safe etc.

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Broadly cost-neutral

Please explain the reasons for your response

I think the impact will be to improve the health and wellbeing of children, but it would be difficult to see a direct financial impact from this measure alone. Unfortunately, poor parenting will not be fixed on its own by telling people they can't physically punish their children.

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?

Unsure

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

Working with pregnant women and parents of young children to establish positive parenting techniques as an alternative to smacking

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

Page 15: General

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

I am strongly in favour of this proposal and I believe that it is one of those changes that we will look back in the future with disbelief that it took so long, like legalising homosexual relationships and banning smoking. Scotland should be proud to lead the way in the UK on this change.