

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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

There is a big difference between physical assault and an occasional smacking from a loving parent in order to discipline their child. If this bill is passed, many loving parents will be turned into criminals in the eyes of the law.

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?

Children should indeed be afforded the same protection from abuse and assault as adults, but considered and measured corporal punishment in the context of a loving, secure family unit should not be defined as "assault".

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?

Prohibiting all physical punishment of children will do very little, if anything, to reduce real physical assault and child abuse. The proposed law threatens the freedom of families and parental guidance, is intrusive and will undermine family life. Many parents will be wrongfully criminalised when this law leads to thousands of trivial cases being reported, diverting resources from following up on real cases of child abuse.

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 increase in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

As many trivial cases of parents disciplining their children in an appropriate, measured way are reported, resources will need to be increased to follow these up.

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?

No Response

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?

No

Page 15: General

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

There are examples, such as the case of Sweden where smacking was banned in 1979, where child abuse rates have increased the law was passed. This shows that corporal punishment of young children by loving parents do not necessarily offer increased protection against child abuse.