

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 am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Dr David White

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

Doing similar to an adult would result in criminal prosecution, so it is even less defensible to do it to a weaker, vulnerable individual. Negative reinforcement is counter-productive. Physical punishment of children is a sign that interaction has failed; in those circumstances it is the adult whose behaviour must be addressed.

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

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

Only parliament can make such action illegal, and this is what is required to make compliance far more likely.

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?

Adults will have to make greater efforts to interact with children. Violence will not be seen as routinely acceptable. Children will be less inclined to adopt violence as a solution to problems if they do not have the model of adults doing it to copy or emulate.

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?

Some children will undoubtedly play up to the fact that they are immune from this sanction. However, this is likely to taper away after a generation or less with fewer children having experienced physical "correction" and therefore not seeing its absence as a licence to cause trouble.

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 can only say that I am speculating here with no evidence whatsoever upon which to base my impression.

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

Violence reduction is always a positive phenomenon. Boys in particular will benefit from not seeing violence a part of a gender model (both as receivers of violence and perpetrators).

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

Teaching parenting skills should be regarded as a norm rather than something which is only delivered to problem families/parents.

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:

There will be some economic cost if, for example, widespread good-practice parenting teaching is adopted. However the social dividend will greatly outweigh that in the medium and long term.

Page 15: General

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

Emphasise the results which this has produced in nations where violence against children is outlawed.