

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Infliction of pain on adults is unacceptable; it should be equally unacceptable on children. Administration of discipline is not a valid reason for inflicting pain; there are effective ways to encourage and reinforce behaviour that don't involve physical punishment, as teachers and other school workers will testify. Furthermore, physical punishment teaches children that it's acceptable, and sometimes beneficial, to hurt others. That is a very poor lesson to apply in their adult lives. In a case of domestic abuse, can a person justify their actions by saying that it was for their partner's own good? No. Can they justify hurting a child by saying that it was for the child's own good? Yes, in Scotland. Children are particularly at risk of harm from parents and carers, and cases of child abuse may escape investigation if the abuser uses the excuse of 'the need to enforce discipline' to justify their actions to relatives, professionals involved in the family's care, the police, or the courts. Thank you, John Finnie, for your proposal.

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?

The understanding that all people, regardless of age, should be protected from physical pain. Physical punishment 'for discipline' is inflicted on children by the people they are supposed to love, trust, and respect, and therefore harms them emotionally. If this Bill goes through, it would help promote positive relationships within families, both now and in the future.

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?

It might discourage parents and carers from admitting to the practice and seeking help.

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

It's difficult to estimate the cost benefit of more positive relationships between people, arising from more positive childhoods.

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

Regarding the effect on people with disabilities, my son has autism, and I know that physical punishment would have been the absolute worst way to deal with his sometimes challenging behaviour and would have made all our lives much more difficult.

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?

Yes

Page 15: General

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

No Response