

Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Jennifer Collins, Moray Women's Aid. Elgin

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

I believe that children and young people should have the same right as an adult to be protected from any level of physical assault from an adult. From a child protection point of view, there are different thresholds as to what would be assessed as a 'smack' rather than an 'assault'. This is in relation to both a single event and accumulative. Current research highlights that hitting children is not beneficial to the child and if anything it is 'beneficial' to the adult as a way of relieving their stress and anger. This places parental need over an adult's need. There are proven alternatives to manage children's behaviour that are child centered and we need to focus on these being promoted as in the best interests of children and parents. Children growing up within a household where domestic abuse is prevalent are at risk of seeing and experiencing physical assault and it becomes the 'norm' and this can be transferred into their adult lives as victim and/or perpetrator. We need to change society's perception that physical assault at any level is unacceptable and evidence shows that a legislative response needs to be part of that process, eg, seat belt, smoking etc.

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

Currently, legislation is there to protect adults and whilst it does not stop physical violence, it gives a level of accountability. Children should be afforded the same level of protection. Also it has the potential to remove the grey area of 'smack' v 'assault' and will probably make it easier for professionals and members of the public to report it if it becomes against the law to hit children.

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?

I believe the main advantage is that children 'live what they learn' and if we are able to have children grow up in an environment where physical punishment is not acceptable and different behaviour management is used, these are positive life skills for adults and children alike.

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?

No Response

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Some increase in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

Initially, there will be an increase in referrals to relevant agencies who are already stretched dealing with child protection and we could see a 'hierarchy' of impact that can result in dilution of benefits of legislation.

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

Agencies will need to be funded appropriately to manage an increase in referrals. potential savings in relation to an eventual decrease in referrals is generational at least

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?

Yes

Page 15: General

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

We need to protect our most vulnerable citizens, we need to value our future generation and for them to grow up in a society that treats them with respect and affords them the same protection and justice as awarded to adults. I am surprised it has taken us so long to get to this point!