

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Circle - Supporting Families in Scotland

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**

As an organisation we support families affected by multiple health inequalities. We are very aware of the importance of positive family relationships for children and young people and how adverse childhood experiences affect longer term development. Circle fully support Article 12 of the UNCRC which states that every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously. Given that 82% of young people who responded to a Youth Parliament consultation agreed that 'All physical assault against children should be illegal' then our full support goes without saying.

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**

We feel currently there is no clear message about how we afford equal protection to everyone so a strong message needs to be delivered on behalf of all children and young people. Clear legislation will get the unambiguous message to parents that assault is not allowed.

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?

Other than the obvious advantages of affording children and young people more protection from physical assault and abuse, other would be;  
Getting the unambiguous message to parents that assault is not allowed.  
Conveying that the best interests of the child is paramount, to these parents.  
Conveying that the threat of assault cannot be used as a defence – to govern children's behaviour.  
We now know the long-term impact that negative experiences in childhood can have on children in later life. A better start in life free from violence may contribute to young people becoming more confident individuals and responsible citizens.

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?

We see no disadvantage to giving equal protection from assault by prohibiting all physical punishment of children.

## 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

## 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?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The impact of the proposed Bill will, in our view, be neutral. All children and young people should be afforded protection from assault regardless of race, ability, sex, gender, age or belief. Equally all adults/carers/parents have a responsibility to respect this right regardless of their own position.

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?

Not at this stage.