

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Rhona Foster

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**

Children should be afforded the same protection from assault as adults. They should be valued and respected, and the current legislation as it stands does not reflect this.

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**

Education and support for families is required in addition to the bill, however a change in law is required to send a clear message that assault of a child is not acceptable.

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?

Decrease and hopefully eventual cessation of physical punishment of children, which can pose short term and long term risk to their safety and development.  
Increase in the use of positive communication and parenting strategies.  
Positive changes within society as a whole, in terms of how we treat each other.

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 parents may feel initially that they are being targeted, or defensive about their use of physical punishment. Some might even fear being prosecuted. This is why it would also be very important to support parents in changing attitudes and perceptions, as is being proposed in the bill.

## 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 reduction in cost

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

To support people to make changes, increase knowledge and raise awareness of the change in law, there would be an initial increase in financial outlay. However I believe that in the longer term, the use of more positive parenting and promoting secure and happy children would lead to a decrease in public spending in other areas.

## 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**

In a broad sense, I think that the bill will encourage us respect one another and view one another more positively.

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

**Please explain the reasons for your response:**

I feel that the bill will help to change perceptions and attitudes over time, and that any initial impact in terms of deliverability will have positive long term effects.

## Page 15: General

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

This bill is long overdue. I sincerely hope that it is successful.