

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Evidence shows that when the law is changed, attitudes and behaviour also change. I work in Child and Adolescent Mental Health and the negative impact of physical and emotional abuse on the well-being and mental health of children and young people is not very well understood by some children, young people, parents and carers or the wider public in general. Changing the law is the first step in changing this. Prevention of mental health difficulties by creating a society that values and respects children and young people - for example by making assault illegal - is far more powerful than trying to provide therapy that may help children to recover from these experiences.

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

See previous comment about changing the law being essential to changing attitudes and behaviour (Norway is a good example of how attitudes and behaviour changed AFTER it became illegal for parents to physically punish 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?

Raising awareness of the damage caused by physical assault and punishment on children;
Making children better aware of their right to be treated respectfully in ways that are not damaging;
Changing attitudes and behaviour of adults;
Breaking the cycle of abuse;
Creating a more caring and respectful society;
Improving the mental health of children and young people;
Improving parenting for future generations.

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?

None

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Significant reduction in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

The impact on a change of attitude and behaviour in how we nurture the next generation is potentially huge. Therefore in the long term, we should have less children and young people requiring the support of social services and mental health services.

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

A society that fosters respect of children is one which will create caring and open minded adults. This is likely to have a positive knock on effect on how we as a society respond to all vulnerable people, including those protected by the Equality Act 2010.

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

I can't see how stopping the physical assault of children can negatively impact on anyone, including those from protected groups.

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:

The social and economic cost of allowing physical punishment of children to continue far outweighs that of publishing, promoting awareness of and enforcing the change in law.

Page 15: General

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

This is one of the most important Bills for many years and will hopefully help us to create a more nurturing and respectful world in which our children to grow and develop.