

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Amanda Vickery

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 protected from all harm including physical harm or punishment. I work within domestic abuse services and if it is acceptable to physically punish a child this creates a culture of violence which can lead to either acceptance of domestic abuse as a victim in adult life or becoming a perpetrator of physical violence. Children learn what they live and physical punishment causes long-lasting damage to health and well being long after physical injuries have healed.

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

I think we need something in place that makes parents legally accountable for any aggressive or violent behaviour towards their 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?

It would provide an opportunity to take action on parents if they use physical punishment. It would provide additional protection for children and would help shift the view within society that physical punishment is acceptable.

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?

Gaining children's views may be challenging and they are often considered to be unreliable witnesses due to their age. They often don't have the language ability to express themselves and it would require professionals with expertise to interview children. If cases go to court, then this can place additional trauma on the child and it is particularly difficult when the offender is a parent or someone close to them.

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

I feel that costs in the short term may be increased, however the long term cost to society may be reduced by less resources being required to address mental health issues, domestic abuse cases and social care.

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

It would give children greater protection from harm, particularly children with disabilities who are known to be at increased risk of harm. People from some cultures may feel that such a Bill discriminates against them as often children can be physically punished in line with cultural practices.

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

I think that children need to be protected and this should be the priority.

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:

Parents come from all backgrounds and domestic abuse is prevalent across all social and economic backgrounds.

Page 15: General

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

I am surprised that children do not currently have the same rights as adults if physically assaulted and think that this proposed Bill is a positive step forwards.