

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

I cannot understand why they should not have this protection. In fact they arguably need it more. It is not necessarily about prosecutions but about making a policy statement, putting it in law, that it is not acceptable treatment of children. All the research shows it is damaging. It should be stopped.

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

This is so important that it needs primary legislation

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?

Cultural change and increased respect for some of the most vulnerable in our society. It is a scar against Scotland that we do not have this in place now.

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. The only reason I can see is a fear that it would be politically unpopular. It is clear that those it would protect would benefit. It is not about hauling parents through the courts, though that may happen in some cases, it is about raising awareness, making a statement from Government and saying, we value and respect children's rights in our society and we will not allow those more powerful to cause them pain, in the name of "discipline" and/ or teaching. It would be an opportunity to raise awareness of parenting classes and other methods which are more effective in changing behaviour in our 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?

Please explain the reasons for your response

I haven't seen any impact assessments on this. Some may argue increased costs from enforcement. I would argue decrease in costs at other stages when intervention is needed as children have suffered physical punishments and become aggressive themselves, need help etc etc. It is about stopping the activity, rather than dealing with the fall out.

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 improve the rights of those under 16

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

Not applicable

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?

Please take this opportunity to make this legal change that would mean so much to so many, not just from an enforcement perspective, but from a cultural and societal perspective as well. We should not allow adults to hit children for any reason. Not least because they are simply younger and less able to stand up for themselves. Study after study shows that parents who hit wish they hadn't, did so as a result of loss of control, and the children learn nothing about self control or discipline. They simply feel fear. When we are so concerned about behaviour of our children in the playgroup, about the levels of respect they show for adults, we really owe it to our young people to set an example and say, no, we will not allow those bigger and stronger to hit you, ever. So we ask that you don't use violence either. How else do we model and build a respectful society?