

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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**

Smacking your child is not the same as assaulting a child and I foresee that there is a danger that a caring parent could be wrongly criminalised for this. Assault should always be treated as a criminal offence but smacking is simply a very effective, quick way of disciplining a child.

Q2. Could the aims of the proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Unsure

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?

I am not able to think of any advantages

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?

Parents who discipline their children by smacking could be criminalised for this.  
Monetary resources and time will be diverted from genuine cases of child abuse.  
The decision on how to discipline children should be left to the parents of the child unless there is concern about child assault or abuse.  
The state should not be interfering with normal family life.

## 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

## 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?

Unsure

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?

No

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

Social workers would be duty bound to investigate families who were simply using loving discipline and not abusing their children. Money and time would be badly spent.

## Page 15: General

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

Children have to be disciplined properly by their parents. Society is already seeing the effects of lack of parental control. The government introducing a smacking ban will not prevent children at risk from assault and physical abuse and it will impact on family life. Smacking is a very effective means of correcting and protecting young children and teaching them how to behave. As a mother of 5 children with an age range of 6 years, I found that a quick smack would let them see their behaviour was not acceptable and the threat of a smack for repeated bad behaviour prevented its occurrence.