

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

There is no place for a law which enables adults to assault children simply because they cannot find appropriate methods of communicating with children. There is a wealth of research and evidence that tells us that "smacking" is not an effective method of discipline for children and can indeed cause negative outcomes for children. We do need to support parents and families to understand why smacking is not effective, to develop improved skills at managing and understanding child development and behaviour and to ensure that the response to an incidence of smacking is dealt with proportionately.

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

There is a need to combine legislation with learning so that the aims of the proposal be fully understood and accepted within Scottish society. However, it remains that there should not be a law in Scotland which states assaulting children can be "justifiable" and to that end legislation is needed to ensure children's rights to protection as stated in the UNCRC are upheld.

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?

Children would be more adequately protected.
Families would begin to understand the facts and reasoning behind the act of prohibiting physical punishment of children.
A culture shift would begin to happen in Scotland whereby children are regarded as equal to adults.
Outcomes for children would improve

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

There may be an increase in cost from increased investigations and from (hopefully) an associated campaign directed at learning, behaviour change and support. However, longer term there would be a reduction in cost to society and public services associated with improved outcomes for children

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

Equality is always better for society as a whole

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

We know from experience that some of those who campaign against removing the right to "justifiable assault" come from religious groups and they may claim to be being discriminated against for their beliefs.

I am not sure their perception can be minimised or avoided but knowing that Scotland is doing the right thing for all its children should be in the forefront for this piece of legislation. Getting it Right for Every Child is one of our underpinning policies after all.

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:

It requires a proportionate response to any concerns about children, is however, is a tenet of GIRFEC and we have the mechanisms in place to respond in order for the needs of children to be met

Page 15: General

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

If Scotland is to be the "best place to grow up" then we need to ensure our children are equally protected from assault