

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Jennifer Pewsey

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**

Research shows that physical punishment is not an effective strategy in disciplining a child. The law as it is leaves a loophole for physical abusers of children to use in defence of their actions. I fully support this proposal as a big step towards reducing child abuse, and increasing convictions of child abusers

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**

Whilst other methods such as public education may reduce physical punishment of children, the children who are most in need of protection are statistically more likely to belong to demographics that have less education or are in harder to reach populations. There will also be many who are stuck in the belief that physical punishment is a good thing. A Bill in the Scottish Parliament sends a clear message that physical punishment of any kind is unacceptable

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 will make it easier to prove cases of child abuse as there will be no grey area. It will also ensure that children learn constructively from their mistakes as they grow, enabling them to become more considerate adults who don't reflexively lash out physically if somebody wrongs them

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?

There will be parents who disagree and who feel that smacking is an effective punishment

## 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**

Initially I think there may be an increase in cost, as educational material will need to be distributed and it may increase the workload of social workers and police officers, but ultimately I think it has the potential to reduce cost in the future if fewer children are raised in an abusive household. Even if the cost is increased overall, I think it is a small price to pay for safeguarding vulnerable 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**

It can only have a positive impact on these people, it will protect them from physical abuse that is difficult to prosecute because it lies in that grey area that could be classified as smacking

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?

Yes

## Page 15: General

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

*No Response*