

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

David Hunter

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

Current law already provides protection for children against assault. There are, however, times in the life of many children when a loving smack from a parent or guardian is the best way of dealing with a child who is misbehaving and will not stop doing what they are doing when told - behaviour that could lead to them or others being harmed if they persist. This is NOT assault. The criteria for assault is quite clearly laid down already in the law.

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 a totally unnecessary proposal that if enacted will not only lead to loving parents being convicted of criminal offences, but will ultimately harm the very children it is supposed to 'protect'.

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?

None.

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?

Some children can be reasoned with to a greater extent than others, and will, therefore, do as they are told (i.e. stop wrongful behaviour) with a telling. Others will not and will continue to do what they want, to their own danger and that of others, unless a short sharp shock is administered by a loving parent. Having their parent made into a criminal by administering a smack is not something any right-minded child would want. Children actually like to know that there is a line they should not cross in their behaviour.

Page 11: Financial implications

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

Significant increase in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

It goes without saying that if this badly thought-out and unnecessary Bill ever saw the light of day there would be many parents taken before the courts, which obviously would have a significant financial cost, as well as a most unfortunate effect on society.

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?

Negative

Please explain the reasons for your response

Those of us who are Christians are already under attack for holding to Biblical views, as are others who hold 'traditional' views on marriage etc. This Bill would increase the negative attitude towards almost everyone, other than those of the most liberal views.

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

No - the Bill needs to be dropped completely.

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:

As previously said, this is a bad Bill that will harm children, and criminalise their parents if enacted.

Page 15: General

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

No.