

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

To protect children from physical and emotional abuse. To assist with changing society's attitudes to physical abuse of children. To assist society with understanding that physical abuse is not an effective method of behaviour management. To assist professionals undertaking child protection work and criminal investigations with parents and children where physical abuse is a cause for concern

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**

Legislation Professional prosecution of cases and compiling evidence of harm for court / Reporter will be assisted by a supportive and clearer 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?

Change of society attitudes over time with respect to children and the use of physical assault as never "justifiable".

Prosecution of cases / evidence to court / reporter in order to protect children will be clearer cut and hence professionals will be better able to protect in law those children who do need protecting.

Change in attitude over time with respect to effective parenting and behaviour management strategies. law will back up what professionals are advocating in this respect.

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. Despite public fears that parents who "smack" their children would become criminals, working in the field of child protection, I believe that this would not be the case. Support and advice for parents to change behaviours would always be the first routes of action and prosecution used when deemed necessary / appropriate.

## Page 11: Financial implications

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

Broadly cost-neutral

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

I doubt we would see a great rise in prosecutions, We might see public attitudes towards positive parenting strategies change over time. A lot of money is taken up with parenting programmes / advice / support and whilst this is needed...it can prevent many greater problems further down the line.

## 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?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The rights of the child to be protected from physical assault must take precedence over any adult claimed right to inflict physical assault in the name of eg. religion

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

Education and dissemination of information through getting key leaders of certain groups that might not want to see a change in the law on board. Public campaigns about a change in the law through social media.

## 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:**

physical abuse of children has a long term negative impact on outcomes for individual children re. self esteem , violence and that impacts upon society as a whole. Even if there was a cost to this, which I don't see, we have a duty to protect vulnerable children from physical assault and abuse and the emotional impact of the same.

## Page 15: General

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

No