

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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

I am a loving parent who uses smacking as one of many kinds of discipline with my child. It DOES work, and I find much of what the consultation document says insulting. Calling it "assault", describing good parenting skills as being the opposite of the use of smacking, as if the two can not possibly go side by side. We are intelligent parents who take parenting far more seriously than many of those who would pontificate on this subject. We have taken a significant financial sacrifice in my wife staying at home to raise our children because we consider the development of our children as being of the utmost importance. We believe we use smacking intelligently with consideration of all the other disciplining options and we never use it in anger. We're largely in the position where the threat of a smack stops her from misbehaving and it is used sparingly. The threat of the removal of privileges does not work in those cases where we deem this particular threat necessary. Many of the studies used as proof that an all out ban is necessary just do not apply to our kind of parenting, is politically motivated and far from unbiased or at the very least is far from conclusive given so little attention has been given to best practice smacking. I obviously fully support measures to address child abuse. For my wife and I there is little in life that we find more abhorrent than physical abuse of children. It is a truly horrible thing. I believe teaching on ALL the possible methods of disciplining can be a very good thing for those parents who simply haven't prepared and haven't taken their responsibilities as parents seriously enough. But I find it appalling that my country is taking steps towards making me a criminal because I disagree with them on this issue. It is ideological and arrogant to take such a step. The paper bangs on about the UN and other countries and silly surveys about the views on school pupils. I couldn't care less what left wing politicians have done and pressured others into. The government HAS NO RIGHT to criminalise me for the way in which I discipline my child, which is 100 miles away about from what is described in 99% of what I've read in this paper. A government which criminalises people like me is going down the wrong path and stepping into dangerous territory, reminiscent of communism where the state knows best and children are really children on the state and not of their parents. The story of the Romanian family in Norway is very frightening and a real worry because these are the people our politicians aspire to emulate on these very issues. I find it an absolutely appalling and repugnant government which acts in this way. I wish I had more time to give to this issue but I am a very busy father and I just don't. David Robertson has laid out many concerns with which I agree. His blog is easy to find so please refer to it.

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

Yes (if so, please explain below)

Please explain the reasons for your response

I might agree with many of the "aims" of the paper, the problem is that I believe that the proposal DOES NOT achieve the aims it claims it will. But however it is done, please do not criminalise parents. And please don't insult my intelligence and tell me you don't plan to prosecute me, if you don't plan to prosecute me THEN DONT CRIMINALISE ME.

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, I think it will have an adverse effect because it is an important method of discipline which has a place

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?

I think it is an important method of child discipline and therefore will have an adverse effect on child behaviour.

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?

We repeatedly find that only the threat of a smack will stop our child from deliberately disobeying us. And we have tried every method which those who oppose smacking propose, and we do use them too. It is very damaging for a parent to be unable to control their child.

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

Complete waste of police resources, diverting them from those who are truly in need and going after the kind of parenting which the government should be promoting. It is just insane that I and my wife could be criminalised by our government.

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

It is yet another assault on religion. The Bible clearly teaches that physical discipline is important to loving parenting.

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

It can't be an all out ban. Don't criminalise us. That is making adherence to the Bible criminal and that is itself abhorrent and an absolute abuse of the power of government.

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

Q8. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having a disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

Please explain the reasons for your response:

The social impact will be very negative.

Page 15: General

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

Criminalise the naughty step while your at it. It is psychological abuse. Criminalise those who withhold privileges from their children when they misbehave too. That is a negative experience for the child and studies show that negative experiences are damaging to a child in the long term....