

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Please explain the reasons for your response

There is a huge difference between physical assault and a parents' discipline by means of age-appropriate smacking. To conflate the two is dishonest. Part of a parents' job is to discipline their children in an age appropriate way, and smacking can be the quickest and kindest way to get a message across, without numerous 'time-outs', and with quick restitution between the child and parent afterwards. Those who actually physically assault their children are unlikely to care about the law, and so it will do nothing to protect those children. On the other hand those who truly love their children and want to teach them obedience, and right from wrong, sometimes with the use of smacking when appropriate, will be totally unjustly penalised for doing so. And not to mention the damage to children that could result from being removed (potentially? As we've seen in Sweden) from loving parents.

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

See previous answer - I disagree with the aims of this bill and don't believe it should be delivered by any means. Conflating physical assault and smacking is sincerely dishonest. The two are not the same.

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?

I don't think there would be any advantages.

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?

Children may end up being removed from loving parents (as we've seen in Sweden), with absolutely devastating emotional effects on the rest of their lives.
And from a discipline point of view - it's likely you will have more unruly children that show no regard for authority.

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Some increase in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

I expect there would be some increase in cost in implementing a new law.

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?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

I'm not sure it would affect anyone other than parents and their children.

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

N/A (see previous answer).

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:

It would have a significantly detrimental effect on our society, as explained in previous answers. I am unsure of the other areas of impact.

Page 15: General

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

Even though most people easily recognise the difference between discipline (smacking) and abuse (physical assault), to protect parents and families who implement smacking it would be helpful to put in writing what is and isn't abuse. For example: smacking on the face is abusive; smacking on the bum is not.

To have our intuition on paper would be helpful to all parties.