

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".)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

John Paton

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

Thousands of loving mothers and fathers would be turned into criminals overnight and it will divert resources away from tackling genuine cases of child abuse

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

No Response

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?

No Response

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?

The law does already protect children from assault. It is completely misleading to describe a loving smack as assault.
Parents should not be criminalised. A smacking ban could turn thousands of loving parents into criminals overnight and the plan is intrusive and undermines family life. Banning smacking will lead to thousands of trivial reports being made to social workers so that real cases of child abuse are missed

Page 11: Financial implications

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

No Response

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?

No Response

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?

No Response

Page 15: General

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

The public strongly opposes a ban on smacking. A 2014 ComRes poll found that 65% of adults said it is sometimes necessary for a parent to smack a naughty child. Only 22% disagreed. Smacking is not child abuse. There is a clear difference between child abuse and loving parental discipline. It is bad for children, families and society when children are not properly disciplined and we are already suffering as a society from a lack of discipline. The state should not be regulating parents on how they bring up their children. It should not use the criminal law to interfere in normal family life. Child abuse rates and child-on-child violence in Sweden increased after smacking was banned there in 1979.