

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".)

Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Martha Wardrop

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

We also know more about the negative effects of physical punishment on children, family relationships and society. The overwhelming published, international evidence shows that physical punishment is an ineffective way to improve children's behaviour and is likely to be emotionally and/or physically damaging to children. We need to take active steps to protect the minority of children affected – and apply the same, EqualProtection in law to everybody in society.

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 proposal will ensure that the law that already protects adults from assault will apply to children. Police and prosecutors will use the same careful considerations including the vital 'public interest' test, to determine whether to take forward any case of assault. In 34 countries where children are equally protected, there has been no rise in criminal proceedings and the law has helped to further reduce the use of physical punishment. Where countries have already reformed the law parents have discovered different, more effective ways to manage their children's behaviour.

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?

The main advantages are:

- Children have the same right to protection from assault as adults.
- Bring the law into line with the majority of parents' attitudes in Scotland.
- Prevent children experiencing physical and emotional harm.
- Help reduce violence in Scotland.
- Help parents find more effective ways of supporting their children's behaviour.
- Bring the law into line with wider policy approaches to children's health, wellbeing and protection.
- Meet Scotland's international human rights obligations.

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?

N/A

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 reduction in cost

Please explain the reasons for your response

Reference can be made to research <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2015/equally-protected/> The findings are: - physical punishment is associated with increased

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

childhood aggression and antisocial behaviour - experiencing physical punishment is related to depressive symptoms and anxiety among children - physical punishment carries a serious risk of escalation into abuse. The outcome of the proposed Bill is reduction in the provision of public services responding to these issues.

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?

Positive

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

N/A

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

Page 15: General

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

No Response