

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Graeme Bell

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

The bill sets out to give children the same protection as adults from physical punishment but if an adult in Scotland were to break the law eg drunk driving, selling drugs, shooting civilians then what would happen? They would be PHYSICALLY detained and PHYSICALLY locked up as a punishment and in order to protect the public. So if children are treated in the same way as adults then when they misbehave sometimes there are physical consequences. Most of the time disciplining children is simply a telling-off from their parents, sometimes it means removal of privileges, time-out etc etc dependant on age and the nature of the misdemeanour. Adults are protected in this country from someone physically assaulting them and so are children there is no need for further legislation. Furthermore, there is no evidence that physical punishment has a 'long term negative impact', most adults in this country were smacked as children and we do not have a nation of mentally ill adults. That is not to say that abuse never occurs and there are no individuals that have suffered the negative impact of abuse but this bill is not differentiating between abuse and physical punishment (a smack) carried out in a loving parent-child relationship for the ultimate good of the child. The majority of the argument around introducing the bill seems to be because other countries have?? the fact that Scotland is one of only a handful of European countries which still permits some physical punishment of children i, the increasing number of countries around the world which have introduced, or announced plans to introduce, a full ban; i, the UK's need to meet its obligations as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other European and global organisations; i, the growing consensus amongst parents and children and young people that children are entitled to expect equal protection from assault Since when was 'because everyone else is' a good reason for doing anything? Most people in Scotland want to become an independent nation i.e. we are big enough to decide for ourselves what our laws will be. So why would we introduce a law because just because most other countries have. Lets think for ourselves, would this be a step forward for our country? Introducing a law that criminalises parents for disciplining their children. If children don't have to do what their parents say then why should they do what anyone says? A teacher, a policeman, a judge? I think the introducing of such a bill would lead to an increase in behavioural problems and anti-social behaviour.

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

I think that parents should retain the right to smack their children if it is required whilst child rearing.

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

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 this bill will criminalise good, conscientious parents who believe it is right to smack their child sometimes.

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

Cost of implementing new bill.

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

Some race/religious groups place greater emphasis on the family and the upbringing of children. These minority groups could be greater impacted and their way of life come under great assault than others.

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

Yes, don't go ahead with the bill.

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?

Unsure

Page 15: General

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

No Response