

Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

Fully supportive of the proposal of children being afforded the same protection as adults. As an organisation which works to end violence against women, we believe that violence in all forms is not acceptable and the current stance in Scotland undermines this message. The stance of the proposed bill is clear: the aim is to remove a legal defence and afford children equal protection rather than criminalise parents and "has been done with the purpose of altering behaviour and challenging the acceptance of certain behaviours in society". It is time for Scotland to address the imbalance and work towards fulfilling its role in ensuring children's human rights, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, are upheld. In addition, GIRFEC the national approach in Scotland to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of children, sets out wellbeing indicators, one of which, "Safe", states that "children have a right to be and feel safe and protected" from "being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed in any way".

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 process is essential to ensure that this proposal is thoroughly examined and considered. Acceptance of this proposal would send a very clear, unambiguous message about children's rights to equal protection and the obligation of the Government and Scottish society to recognise and protect these rights.

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?

- Children have equal protection and their human rights are acknowledged and upheld.
- Children are better, and equally, protected.
- A clear, unambiguous and consistent message sent to children, parents and Scottish society.
- Positive (and healthier) parenting methods explored and adopted.
- Better outcomes for children in Scotland.

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?

None specifically.

However, consideration would have to be given to the influence of gender on expectations of parents as women largely continue to be seen as the primary caregiver responsible for the protection and wellbeing of their children.

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Unsure

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

Age: children would not be treated differently and afforded less protection due to their age.

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

None specifically.

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?

This bill would have to be set in a context of clear, sensitive, accessible and positive awareness campaigns with high quality information and sufficient resources. In addition, provision of high quality information, educational tools and support systems with regard to positive parenting would also be useful. Ensuring society is well informed, engaged and equipped would be very important.