

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".)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Morag Milne

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

I feel very strongly that children are to be nurtured and respected - not assaulted on the whim of a parent/carer. In a progressive and educated society we should be treating children with compassion and understanding and not violence as, despite this practice having been perpetuated over the years, it clearly doesn't work. Children go through various stages of development and the stage they are at is often reflected in their behaviour which they can't help - it's just the stage they are at and assaulting them doesn't change that.

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 this is a very important issue and deserves to be heard as a Bill so more people are aware of the changes.

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 advantage is creating a society where respect and understanding for our most vulnerable members makes Scotland one of the best places to grow up.

At the moment who can define the difference between a child who is 'smacked' by an otherwise loving parent and a child who is 'smacked' by an abusive parent. An abusive parent may go on to escalate the 'smacking' before social work or child protection get involved. If there is a zero tolerance on violence against children then it's easier to spot the children who need protection.

Perhaps in the future fewer children requiring access to mental health services

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 can think of no disadvantage to protecting children from assault.

Others may suggest that 'policing' this or enforcing this might be problematic but I think if people know there is zero tolerance then child protective services can home in on people who abuse the Bill - perhaps before a child loses their life.

Page 11: Financial implications

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

Broadly cost-neutral

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

Please explain the reasons for your response

I say this because I am sure there will be costs involved initially due to enforcing the Bill and perhaps in educating parents in connecting with their children and finding other ways to teach them rather than hitting them. But, these services are already in place and could be built on and the benefits in time with less children needing to access CAMHS would make this cost neutral. However, the human cost far outweighs any of the financial costs

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

Perhaps I'm being simplistic but this Bill should impact positively on all groups - all members of the groups above are human beings first and I can't imagine any of them choosing to assault children

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

There should be no negative impact on any of these groups

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

Please explain the reasons for your response:

I believe the framework is already in place with child protective services and social work, however, more money might be required to educate parents/carers on caring for children depending on the number of people who will be affected by this Bill.

Page 15: General

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

I welcome the Bill and hope that Scotland can show the way forward in looking after it's youngest members. I believe this is just an extension of the GIRFEC approach already adopted by the Scottish Government