

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Violence is a poor form of conflict resolution. It breeds fear and resentment, not peace and respect. This doesn't change just because one side of the conflict is a child.

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

No

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 that are punished physically go on to believe that violence is an acceptable means of resolving conflicts. Is this a lesson that we want our children to learn? That when someone transgresses a rule, or disobeys a command, they should be assaulted? I do not believe there is any place for violence as a form of punishment in our society. We would live in a happier world if this myth were not perpetuated.

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?

In the short term the only disadvantages I can see are a slightly increased workload for those government and mental health services that respond in the case of transgressions.

In the long term I see no disadvantages.

## 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 increase in cost

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

In order for the Bill to be effective there needs to be a means of assessing and responding to transgressions. This will increase the workload for certain areas of local government, the police and perhaps some charities. I don't expect the cost to be vast, and I believe it to be a worthwhile expenditure if it makes our society a happier place to live.

## 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**

In general, positive. Disadvantaged and minority groups suffer relatively more physical violence in our society in general. Reducing the acceptable levels of violence would therefore benefit these groups.

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

It is possible that some cultural groups within the UK practice physical violence as a form of punishment more than other groups. There is a danger that these groups become stigmatised by the public or the police and get a reputation for beating their children. This should be avoided. Education and familiarity are both useful means of reducing prejudice and stereotyping.

## 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:**

Clearly the aim of the Bill is to change public opinion, but I don't believe it's aims will cause 'disproportionate social impact'. The economic costs should be low. The environmental impact may even be positive, by promoting respect and understanding among families that children will then take forward as adults.

## Page 15: General

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

n/a