

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Scott Macdonald

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

Physical punishment leads to escalation, transitive injury and damage. When children grow - assault is normalised, and visited on other people and children.

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

Yes (if so, please explain below)

Please explain the reasons for your response

I am not a lawyer - I'd considered clicking "Unsure". However, I would generally support the use of a bill within the Scottish Parliament to achieve the aims. Outright legislation leaves no possibility for wiggle room, and since assaulting children is abhorrent, we should expunge it from society. A bill - providing it is clear, unambiguous and consequences are explored fully at debate and committee stages - is the clearest statement possible.

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 punishment of those who would use the degradation of children as a coercive disciplinary implement. Children should have the right to feel safe and protected in all situations.

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.

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

I'm sorry, I cannot hope to answer this question without resorting to extraordinarily broad guesswork. I hope this is reasonable for a member of the public's submission to the bill's consultation. It is entirely likely that punished parents of assaulted children may lose access to the children, and it would require investment elsewhere in child care services - which are at a social and economic premium. I also believe a modest rise in the caseload of the Scottish judiciary would occur. To my mind, this should not impact on the bill's traversal through Parliament in order to become law.

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?

Unsure

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

Unknown. Apologies.

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:

There is considerable statistical evidence that people believe smacking has not been very, or not at all, useful. Once it is outlawed, and cases prosecuted, people who would consider assaulting children will get the message.

Page 15: General

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

No. Other than to state that I believe protecting children from assault should become law swiftly.