

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Catherine Cameron

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

It is, in human rights terms, discriminatory to deny children the same legal protections from violence and assault that are given to adults. Indeed, children should be given more, not less, protection as they are more likely to suffer psychological trauma from repeated physical assaults.

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

A Parliamentary Bill is preferable as it highlights and strengthens the issue.

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?

- promoting a deeper understanding of children's emotional needs;
- encouraging better parenting and family cohesion;
- helping people to develop skills of communication and conflict resolution;
- enabling greater respect for children as individuals with rights and not as the 'property' of adults;
- promoting an ethos of compassion and non-violence in society with reduction of aggression in general;
- achieving equality is a goal in itself.

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?

We must be careful not to create potentially harmful divisions within families by being overly punitive of parents and carers. While the law must be unambiguous in order to be practical, it would be important to provide support in the form of parenting skills, understanding child development and communication for parents who initially find it difficult to manage their children's behaviour in a non-physical manner.

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

Additional costs for provision of support and training for parents/carers.

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

The protection from violence of any one group in society and the message that violence is never acceptable will have a positive effect on everyone and particularly on those groups that have been the victims of hate.

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

I cannot think of a negative affect as long as the Bill is promoted on the basis of equality, inclusion and compassion and is supportly rather than overly punitive.

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:

Existing structures such as Homestart and other successful early years and Third Sector initiatives could be used to promote (as they for the most part already do) positive parenting skills.

Page 15: General

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

I believe that this is a long-overdue and much needed Bill that has the potential to effect positive change not just for children but for society as a whole.