

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.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

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

- Thousands of loving mothers and fathers would be turned into criminals overnight. - It will divert resources away from tackling genuine cases of child abuse. - It will turn out to be an embarrassing, expensive, litigious nightmare like the Named Person Scheme was previously.

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

No Response

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?

No Response

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?

- This proposal threatens the freedom of families throughout Scotland
- Mr Finnie, you say in your consultation that the law does not offer "children the same protection from assault as adults", but point out that children are not adults. For obvious reasons, children are not allowed to drive, marry or own a firearms licence. Children are dependent on their parents to teach them right from wrong and smacking is a loving way of doing so.
- The law does already protect children from assault. It is completely misleading to describe a loving smack as assault.
- Parents should not be criminalised. A smacking ban could turn thousands of loving parents into criminals overnight.
- The plan is intrusive and undermines family life.
- Banning smacking will lead to thousands of trivial reports being made to social workers so that real cases of child abuse are missed.

Page 11: Financial implications

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

No Response

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?

No Response

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

No Response

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?

No Response

Page 15: General

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

- The public strongly opposes a ban on smacking. A 2012 ComRes poll found that 65% of adults said it is sometimes necessary for a parent to smack a naughty child. Only 22% disagreed.
- Smacking is not child abuse. There is a clear difference between child abuse and loving parental discipline.
- It is bad for children, families and society when children are not properly disciplined.
- The state should not be regulating on how they bring up their children. It should not use the criminal law to interfere in normal family life. Have you not learned from the massively expensive fiasco that was the Named Person Scheme that the population of Scotland as a whole do not want the Scottish Government interfering in this way but would rather it used its time, gifts and resources to improve education, health care, employment rates etc.
- Child abuse rates and child-on-child violence in Sweden increased after smacking was banned there in 1979. I urge you to drop this proposal before it becomes another embarrassing, massively expensive, litigious, disaster like the Named Person Scheme was. If it goes ahead the resulting court cases and criminalising of ordinary, hard working, law abiding men and women, including Christians who believe that loving parental discipline includes smacking when necessary as a last resort, will reflect very badly on you and the Scottish Government as a whole.

I pray that God will give you the wisdom to make the right decision to drop this intrusive, unnecessary, ill thought out, authoritarian and ultimately harmful proposal.