Consultation on the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

Tystiolaeth i’r Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg ar gyfer craffu Cyfnod 1 Bil Plant (Diddymu Amddiffyniad Cosb Resymol) (Cymru)

Evidence submitted to the Children, Young People and Education Committee for Stage 1 scrutiny of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

CADRP-15

About you

Individual

1  The Bill’s general principles

1.1 Do you support the principles of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill?

— No

1.2 Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

A mild smack as a form of discipline is NOT the same as abuse.

It would be crueller NOT to smack in a loving relationship... it quickly helps the child learn safe boundaries.

Psychological means of attempting to discipline can be far more harmful to the child in the long run.

It is very easy for children to learn their ‘rights’ but far harder to take on their ‘responsibilities’. You can just imagine the child gleefully taunting their distraught parents with “You can't touch me, I can do what I want and you can't stop me!” What would that be actually teaching the children?

Many parents might think they could no longer discipline their children... so the children enter the wider society with little restraint, causing problems in school etc and the potential for a large cost to the government later on.

It would stretch the NHS, police, Social Services and other government agencies when they are already not coping and further cuts in funding are likely (especially if Brexit happens).
It would be likely to increase the numbers taken into care... causing trauma to both the parents AND the children supposedly being protected, who would almost always want to be with their loving parents anyway and not feel at all protected by it.

Polls show that three quarters of the public oppose a smacking ban.

The European Court of Human Rights has upheld the legal defence of reasonable chastisement in principle.

A light infrequent smack in the context of a loving parent-child relationship is not harmful. The Government admitted this in its consultation document last year.

1.3 Do you think there is a need for legislation to deliver what this Bill is trying to achieve?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

NO!

2 The Bill’s implementation

2.1 Do you have any comments about any potential barriers to implementing the Bill?
If no, go to question 3.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

It could criminalise ordinary loving parents

It would be an infringement of their liberties

It wouldn’t protect vulnerable children any more than the current legislation

It would stretch the NHS, police, Social Services and other government agencies when they are already not coping and further cuts in funding are likely (especially if Brexit happens)

2.2 Do you think the Bill takes account of these potential barriers?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

NO!

3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are there any unintended consequences arising from the Bill? If no, go to question 4.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)
It would utterly fail to protect those children that are already in danger of true abuse any more than the current legislation would already.

It could lead to a huge increase in demand for counselling and similar services trying to deal with the psychological hurt caused by parents trying, to use other means of disciplining their children.

It would be likely to increase the numbers taken into care... causing trauma to both the parents AND the children supposedly being protected,, who would almost always want to be with their loving parents anyway.

Mistakes will happen and some over enthusiastic and/or misguided individuals will suspect far too many instances of problems, such as the publicised instances with children's sore bottoms.

Polls show that three quarters of the public oppose a smacking ban... MPs should think very carefully on this!.

4 Financial implications

4.1 Do you have any comments on the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum)? If no, go to question 5.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

It would stretch the NHS, Police, Social Services, Prisons and other government agencies when they are already not coping and further cuts in funding are likely (especially if Brexit happens).

It would be likely to increase the numbers taken into care, causing trauma to both the parents AND the children supposedly being protected,, leading to yet further costs as the other agencies are needed to pick up the pieces of unnecessarily shattered lives.

Many parents might think they could no longer discipline their children (especially those on the lower end of the intelligence spectrum)... so the children enter the wider society with little restraint, causing problems in school etc and the potential for a large cost to the government later on.

5 Other considerations

5.1 Do you have any other points you wish to raise about this Bill?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)
I am sure the legislators mean well but they are sorely misguided and will cause huge problems down the line. If this idiotic bill were to be passed into law, a few decades later, those behind it will be spoken of with great sadness and not a little anger at all the trouble they have caused.