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

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

For several reasons below, NOT listed in order of priority.

* Interpreting smacking as child abuse is erroneous. There is a significant difference between child abuse and using a smack to show clear parental discipline and to teach the child that unmodified behaviour will have painful consequences. When this is understood by the child in a loving family relationship then just the threat of a smack is often sufficient discipline. I know this from personal parental experience!

* A child will understand the meaning of a smack long before it is able to be reasoned with as to why some behaviour is unacceptable.

* The law as it exists already protects children from violence, so this additional law is unnecessary.

* If a parent is convicted for such an offence as smacking, as well as being branded as a “criminal” in society and possibly affect their employment situation, it may introduce a psychological barrier between parent and child which will never be removed - our memories being what they are.
* Polls in Wales have always shown in excess of 70% are against a law which criminalizing smacking.

* This suggested law is Government interference in normal family life.

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. Law already exists to protect children from violence, so this additional law is unnecessary.

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)

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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)

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3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are 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)

* Introduction of this bill will make family discipline much harder, perhaps even to the point of indiscipline in the home by parents who do not want to risk being known as criminals!

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)
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)

This is gross Government interference in family life.

Taking a sledge hammer to crack a nut when nut crackers already do the job adequately!