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)

No. three quarters of people in Wales do not agree with the making of light smacking a criminal offence, according to a poll. Hard pressed police and social workers may be overburdened, and neglect therefore real cases of child abuse. I heard the previous first minister of Wales admit in a meeting in Llanelli that he had smacked his own children. Legislation out of step with public opinion may sometimes be necessary, but in this case, it most certainly is not.

**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)
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)

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)

Yes. It could be used by neighbours, acquaintances, to "get back" at those with whom they have a poor relationship. How easy to misinterpret crying heard through a wall, etc. And see above for obvious workload increase for police and social workers.

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)

No

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)

Why criminalise loving parents for one form of discipline they use among many others? Four-fifths of people say they were smacked as children, and most have no problem with that, or would claim any long-term damage. It is ludicrous to suggest that what is criminal behaviour done to an adult should not be allowed to be done to a child. Sometimes a smack is the quickest and kindest way of teaching a child not to do what is foolish, dangerous, or hurts others. Parents are in a unique place and role to train children. All of us make mistakes. But so do legislators, and this is likely to be a very serious mistake if they think they know better than parents..