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

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)

The law is already very clear on the subject of what constitutes abuse of a child. A gentle tap is not abuse. My parents smacked me, and I smacked my children. None of us are violent people in any sense at all. Parents should have the right to use a smack in correcting a child where they deem it necessary. There is no evidence to prove that smacking damages children and there is no popular demand for a change in the law in this regard.

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. Absolutely not. Laws that prosecute in the event of child abuse are already quite sufficient. If this legislation becomes law it is likely that the police and social services will find huge amounts of time taken up on trivial cases and more serious ones are neglected. The proposed law very much undermines parents and their authority in their own home. Given that many children are arriving in Reception with no sense of discipline at even a most basic level this is not the time to further erode parents' rights and authority within the home.
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)

Yes. It is questionable how the authorities would know if children were being smacked in a home without unwarranted and inexcusable intrusion into family life. Cases would be very hard to prove. It is quite likely that police and social service time would be consumed on trivial or non-existent cases.

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. I don’t think it would be the intention of the law to criminalise parents but this could be the effect.

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)

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