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 Bill is fundamentally flawed. The initial public consultation was flawed because of the inept, statistical data provided to the public, was non representative and of a similar quality to a shampoo advert. Additionally, third parties like Charities and Welsh Government have been given a vote equal to a parents on how ALL children in Wales are brought up, which is a gross invasion in family life. Where charities wish to withhold physical chastisement, then they can do so, without the need to deny this measure from actual parents. The consultation was biased toward the non smacking camp, and therefore was not a fair, balanced consultation. It was simply a political tool. I URGE WELSH GOVERNMENT TO RERUN THE CONSULTATION WITH FAIR ACCURATE, REPRESENTATIVE MATERIALS. Follow up private consultations show 3/4 of respondents are against the removal or reasonable chastisement which indicates the level of bias of the Welsh government consultation.

It is difficult to believe that Welsh Government would in all good conscience could separate children from their parents on the grounds of smacking. Please spend some time looking at the statistics around Looked After Children (LAC) which show on every conceivable metric that LAC do worse than children who live with their parents. The logical extension of banning reasonable chastisement is that parents will continue to parent as they see fit, the child will be removed from the parent and the parent will be prosecuted. The Child will be LAC and all
that that means, and the parent will be a criminal. This is unforgivable. Should this Bill Go Ahead, I vow never to vote labour again.

Finally, there is simply no evidence to support the notion that smacking harms the child. On the contrary, children who are disciplined at home are happy, and succeed in life, in direct correlation to LAC who are not smacked by their carer givers and do poorly.

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! No parent wants to see a child who is beaten and assaulted, that is why we have laws against this for everyone in society not just children. Smacking is the end product of a balanced and effective care and home discipline approach, it is not at all assault, those who deliberately try to conflate the two have ulterior motives which are not in the best interest of the child.

When corporal punishment was removed from schools, we saw a corresponding rise in poor discipline, particularly with the children disrespecting the teachers and making claims "there is nothing you can do about it." Corporal punishment is not smacking, but it does show the likely effects of criminalising smacking. Welsh Government will be storing up problems for generations to come for right minded society to solve. Why has WG not instigated a longitudinal study which seeks to find the effects of smacking vs the population as a whole over time. Although WG would have to use actual science and statistics and not the Shampoo commercial variety in the consultation document. Finally! we have laws to protect all members of society from assault, WG should spend its political efforts on enforcing the current laws and limitations.

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)

In addition/repetition to points already made, removing the ‘reasonable chastisement defence’ will mean that a parent disciplining their child with a mild smack would be classed as assault. Banning smacking will inevitably catch ordinary loving parents and turn them into criminals, and the children in to LAC. Enforcement would disrupt families and ruin open relationships with teachers and other services seek to support family life as teachers, social workers would be bound to report smacking, parents
would defend themselves by avoiding teachers and social workers. If a parent is penalised for smacking they could lose their job or even custody of their children. Turning smacking into abuse will bring confusion into the law against child abuse. This will be dangerous for at-risk children.

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)

It is not possible to mitigate these issues, in fact the greater the mitigation the greater the intrusion into family life, and the more pointless the change is. Neither of which will improve the safety of the child, as there is no evidence to support the banning of smacking.

3 Intended 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)

Criminalising good parents. Wrecking homes. Loss of jobs. influx of children in to care. Diverting resources away from children who actually need social services. turning children in to LAC. Destroying the fabric of Wales for the future.

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)

in direct contradiction to the WG public consultation, there will be a cost, to policing, teaching, socials services, courts and prisons.

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)

Labour Welsh Government should consider their tenure, as parents will not accept this betrayal, and the ineptitude of its leaders.