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)*

The central issue is whether parents love and care for their children. They are the ones that know their children best and sense how they respond. A mild smack by a caring parent is not physical abuse.

Excessive force is clearly not acceptable – and is currently covered by law.

Regular shouting at children has been shown to be damaging:

https://www.theguardian.com/education/2001/mar/21/schools.familyandrelationships


Is shouting at children to be made illegal? If the Assembly is to ban smacking, for which the evidence is ambiguous, shouldn’t this be done too?

This is a dangerous path to follow.
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.

Excessive physical force is currently covered by the law. We are already in a situation where the current law is being broken and violence against children, women and vulnerable is widespread – and the police forces are swamped, being unable to enforce the current law.

Is it logical to extend the law into the homes of caring parents and make the law even less enforceable?

Surely, we should enable the police to enforce the current law, rather than introducing additional laws

where the supporting scientific evidence is ambiguous.

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)

Caring parent training their children with a mild smack will be made criminals.
Enforcement will disrupt families. Violence against children is rife currently - and the law is not being enforced across the country. Publicity and political influence will focus on smacking where there is no danger with inevitable consequences for police time and effort. It is not difficult to predict that detection of physical and sexual abuse against children will be detected to a lesser extent as a result of diverted police resources.

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)

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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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