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

Tystiolaeth i'r Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg ar gyfer craffu Cyfnod 1 Bil Plant (Diddymu Amddiffyniad Cosb Resymol) (Cymru)  
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

CADRP-548  
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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)

This bill constitutes an unwarranted intrusion by government into private family life. It is the responsibility of parents, not of the state, to decide how to discipline their children. The job of parenting is already difficult enough and full of pitfalls. This bill will make it all the more difficult for parents trying to bring up their children in the right way, by making them feel that Big Brother is constantly watching them.

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)

The proposed change in the law is quite unnecessary. There are already laws in place to protect children from violence. A small smack, administered with loving intentions, does not constitute child abuse and cannot be classed as violence.
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)

The majority of adults in Wales are not in agreement with the proposals in this Bill.

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)

No, I think people’s opinions are being ignored.

3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are 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 the consequences have been sufficiently thought through.

This bill could potentially turn thousands of decent, loving parents into criminals, simply for trying to do the best for their children and discipline them in a reasonable way, while doing nothing further to deal with the problem of bad parents who really do abuse their children.

By wasting time investigating innocent parents who have done their child no harm by a small smack, precious resources could be diverted away from investigating the real criminals who are carrying out child abuse and causing real suffering to children.

Children need discipline to help them grow up into well-balanced people. Crime rates have been on the rise because so many young people have lacked this discipline in their home life. Parents are becoming ever more afraid to discipline their children, and this Bill will do nothing to help the situation. On the contrary, it could contribute to an even greater rise in crime levels, as more and more children are deprived of the kind of loving discipline that they need as they grow up.

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)