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-554

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)

I am sure that the proposers of this bill are sincere and feel that they are doing the right thing, but I feel that ideology is being allowed to over-rule common sense. Smacking is not hitting, for which there is already adequate legal redress. Have the proposers ever watched a mother dog with a litter of puppies? They would soon see a good example of reasonable chastisement in action.

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. Legislation would end up with many loving parents getting a criminal record. Discipline is already a real problem in many schools, do we really want to relax it any further?

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 practical problems caused to the police and social services, which are already overstretched, would soon make the law unworkable. More seriously, genuine cases of child abuse would be harder to detect due to the greatly increased workload on staff caused by this proposed legislation. Children's Social Services in my own county of Powys already are having problems, and the police suffer from underfunding and shortage of manpower.

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)

I have not seen any proposals as to how these problems would be overcome.

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)

Child-on-child violence could well increase as has happened in Sweden.

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)

Children are not adults, and are not treated as such in their formative years, e.g. they have to attend school, cannot learn to drive, get married, vote in elections, etc. Has there ever been any serious research to show that an occasional smack does lasting damage? If not why is this very divisive legislation being proposed?