



CONSULTATION

Equal protection:
Children (Equal
Protection from
Assault) (Scotland)
(2019)

**RAPE
CRISIS
SCOTLAND**

SUBMITTING EVIDENCE TO A SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE

DATA PROTECTION FORM

Name:	
Date:	24/1/19
Organisation: (if required)	Sandie Barton, Rape Crisis Scotland
Topic of submission:	Equal Protection

I have read and understood the privacy notice about submitting evidence to a Committee.

I am happy for my name, or that of my organisation, to be on the submission, for it to be published on the Scottish Parliament website, mentioned in any Committee report and form part of the public record.

I understand I will be added to the contact list to receive updates from the Committee on this and other pieces of work. I understand I can unsubscribe at any time.

Non-standard submissions

Occasionally, the Committee may agree to accept submissions in a non-standard format. Tick the box below if you would like someone from the clerking team to get in touch with you about submitting anonymously or for your submission to be considered but not published. It is for the Committee to take the final decision on whether you can submit in this way.

I would like to request that my submission be processed in a non-standard way.

EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

CHILDREN (EQUAL PROTECTION FROM ASSAULT) (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM Sandie Barton, Rape Crisis Scotland

Rape Crisis Scotland support the move to end physical punishment by parents or carers, and to work to ensure children and young people have the same right to protection as adults.

Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls, starts with the quote from the U.N.'s Ban Ki-Moon that:

"There is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, cultures and communities: violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable."

The law in its current form however says that physical punishment against children can be 'justifiable'. How can we work towards the vision of a "strong and flourishing Scotland where **all** individuals are equally safe and respected" where our children, who are the most vulnerable and the most need of protection, are not equally safe, and not afforded the rights accorded to adults whose care they rely on.

At Rape Crisis we do extensive sexual violence prevention work with children and young people in delivering the vision of Equally Safe with key messages around consent, respect, a right to bodily autonomy and collaborative, supportive, safe and healthy relationships. Having a legal framework which states that young people, who are inherently more vulnerable, have fewer rights and that their physical chastisement be state sanctioned and morally justifiable, is at odds with this approach.

We know from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey that many problematic views around violence against women remain around victim blaming, and attribution of responsibility. If the key messages for children aren't anything other than a zero tolerance of violence and physical punishment how can we ever hope to shift this?

We support to move away from this, and support the commitment to raise awareness of this change and to equip parents and carers with the knowledge and information they need on the reality and impact of physical punishment.