

Scottish Directors of Public Health Statement
Physical Punishment of Children - 'Smacking'

17 May 2017

Directors of Public Health in Scotland do not support the smacking of children.

'The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland has lent his support to a consultation on the 'Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Bill' launched in the Scottish Parliament today around whether children should have equal protection to adults under Scots law.

The consultation, which has been launched by John Finnie MSP, seeks views on the removal of a justifiable assault defence.'

Scottish Directors of Public Health (SDsPH) agree that children have rights; their wellbeing and freedom from the threat of physical punishment is part of our expectation of growing up in Scotland. Modern parenting does not include smacking for any child. 'Fair chastisement' is a thing of the past; any kind of assault is unlawful. Our stance is consistent with implementation of the UN convention on the rights of the child.

Our position is that there should be no physical punishment.

Dr Andrew Fraser
Chair of the Scottish Directors of Public Health

Professor Alison McCallum
Director of Public Health and Health Policy
NHS Lothian

Dr Linda de Caestecker
Director of Public Health
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde