

'Sdim Curo Plant!
Children are Unbeatable!

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Lewis McNaughton,
Deputy Committee Clerk,
Legislation Office,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff bay,
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2nd November 2007

Dear Mr Naughton,

I am pleased to submit evidence to the Proposed Vulnerable Children LCO Committee write on behalf of 'Sdim Curo Plant/ Children are Unbeatable!

'Sdim Curo Plant/Children are Unbeatable! is an alliance of over 300 organisations working with children, young people and families across the UK. We campaign for legal reform to give children equal protection for assault and support for parents to use alternative methods of disciplining their children. We believe that the current law in England and Wales, which effectively condones the physical punishment of children is confusing, unjust and antiquated. Seventeen countries in Europe have now taken steps to ban the corporal punishment of children in the home and bring their laws in line with their international human rights obligations towards children.

'Sdim Curo Plant/Children are Unbeatable! Cymru welcomes the proposed LCO on Vulnerable Children and Child Poverty. If the LCO is granted we believe it will provide a much awaited opportunity for the Welsh Assembly Government to legislate for (in effect) the prohibition of the corporal punishment of children in the home.

Successive Welsh Assembly Governments have set out their principled opposition to the law as it stands. As the recent short debate in the National Assembly illustrated, there is strong cross party support across the Assembly itself for legal reform in this area also.

We are aware that over the last 5 years, the WAG have made repeated representations to the UK Government to change the law on corporal punishment as it affects children in Wales - but to no avail. The recent announcement that the UK Government still does not intend to change the law as it stands is extremely disappointing. It flies in the face of all the evidence about effective parenting and shows the UK up as a country that

disregards children's human rights. It remains disappointing that at this time the National Assembly for Wales cannot follow the path it has said it wishes to follow; to demonstrate respect for children's rights and bring forward policy that can afford children (including vulnerable children) adequate protection.

Children are Unbeatable! urges the Committee examining the LCO to ensure that everything that can be done to ensure the final LCO is drafted in such a way to enable the National Assembly be given sufficient power to enact change in this area of policy – is done.

Yours sincerely

Anne Crowley
Chair 'Sdim Curo Plant/Children are Unbeatable!