

# Parenting Expert Action Group

## Terms of Reference

### **The Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020**

These terms of reference were first drawn up while the Bill was in the Senedd; they have now been updated following Royal Assent to refer to the Act and timescale for commencement.

#### **Background**

The Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act (The Act) was introduced to the National Assembly for Wales on 25 March 2019 and received Royal Assent on 20 March 2020. The overarching objective of the Act is to help protect children's rights by prohibiting physical punishment by parents and those acting in loco parentis. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises that any physical punishment of children, however minor, is incompatible with their human rights under Article 19, and has called for it to be abolished.

When the Act comes into force on 21 March 2022, defence of reasonable punishment will no longer be available within Wales to parents or those acting in loco parentis, as a defence to a charge of common assault or battery.

The intended effect of the Act, together with raising awareness and support for parents, is to bring about a further reduction in the use and tolerance of the physical punishment of children in Wales.

Welsh Government have set up a Strategic Implementation Group to consider how best to implement the Act. A number of work streams have been set up, including this one which is focusing on parenting support.

#### Parenting. Give it Time

In 2015 the former Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty launched a positive parenting campaign. The campaign, '*Parenting. Give it time*', used the key messages of taking 'time' to encourage parents with children up to the age of 5 years of age, to take a thoughtful, positive approach to parenting. The campaign is now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year and uses a website, Facebook page, Instagram, online and TV/Cinema adverts, animated explainers and resources to communicate key messages

In 2017 we expanded the age range from 5 years of age to 7 years of age. For the next phase of the campaign, we want to expand the age range further to 18 years of age. This is because we want to:

- build on what we know works;

- support parents when their children go through emotional and hormonal changes that could change the dynamics of their relationship;
- support parents throughout their children's education from sharing and making friends to bullying and brain development.

### **The Purpose of the Parenting Expert Action Group (PEAG)**

The purpose of the PEAG is to bring together stakeholders and agencies relevant to parenting to:

1. Determine and action the practical and effective implementation of additional support required for parents and those in loco parentis, to support and effectively manage any change before the Act comes into force;
2. Support the expansion of the Parenting. Give it Time campaign's age range from 0-7 years of age to 0-18 years of age.
3. Use the results of the parenting mapping exercise to identify possible gaps/overlaps in provision, and make recommendations to Welsh Government about parenting support provision based on the analysis. If additional support is identified, support any change/expansion building on existing programmes e.g. PGiT, Flying Start Families First, Healthy Child Wales Programme etc.
4. Provide on-going parenting policy advice and support throughout the implementation of the Act.
5. Co-ordinate with all the Task and Finish Groups and link up with the Out of Court Disposals and Diversion Scheme Task and Finish Group on provision and content of any models recommended by the group to be delivered as a diversion from prosecution.

The PEAG will be looking at and working to three work streams:

#### **Parenting Support alongside the Act – work stream 1**

The Act has highlighted the need for a review of current parenting provision and to consider if further provision is required, to support the implementation of the Act. This includes considering what support is required for parents of children in older age groups, as well as the early years.

The results of our mapping exercise with internal and external stakeholders will inform us about whether and where there may be gaps in provision.

The PEAG will take the results of the recent mapping exercise and consider what additional support, information and advice is required for parents, those acting in loco parentis and professionals who work with parents and families, to support the implementation of the Act.

#### **Expansion of Parenting. Give it Time – work stream 2**

The PEAG will support the expansion of the Welsh Government's Parenting. Give it Time campaign from 0-7 to 0-18 years of age by providing advice on developing the

content of the additional resources required to support the expansion. The PEAG will be asked to provide advice and guidance on the following aspects of the campaign:

- Key messages
- Content of the resources
- Website content
- Ensure materials are accessible to parents with differing needs' and
- Best ways to communicate with parents and engage with them.

### **Universal Parenting Support – work stream 3**

The PEAG will consider the results of the recent mapping exercise, identify if there are gaps/overlaps in provision, and provide assurance that advice, information and support currently available to parents, loco parentis, carers and families is appropriate/ and/ or make recommendations to enhance support to ensure access to provision is available to all parents, those acting as loco parentis, carers and families universally across Wales.

### **Governance Arrangements**

The PEAG will report to the Strategic Implementation Group and be co-chaired by a member of the PEAG and a Welsh Government official. The co-chairs, through the Welsh Government, will co-ordinate reporting and updates to the Strategic Implementation Group after each PEAG meeting and/or at appropriate points throughout the project. At the inaugural meeting, the PEAG will decide ways of working to enable the core areas of work, set out above, to be carried out effectively and efficiently. This could be by, for example, the creation of two Task and Finish Groups or sub-groups that would meet virtually and face to face on an ad hoc basis.

### **Timings & Key Dates**

The first meeting of the PEAG will take place on 17 October 2019. The PEAG should decide the frequency of meetings (it is suggested that the duration would be quarterly) throughout the lifetime of the Project, develop and work to an agreed project plan, manage issues and risks and report as required to the Strategic Implementation Group. The work of the PEAG should ensure that any additional universal parenting support required alongside implementation of the Act and beyond (including support needed as part of a diversion scheme) and the expansion of Parenting. Give it Time is in place by no later than the end of September 2021.

### **Proposed key tasks & dates for the PEAG**

<i>Task</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Work stream</i>
Development of a project plan, including key tasks and timescales to support the three work streams based on the results of the mapping exercise.	End of December 2019	1, 2 and 3

Consider results of the parenting support mapping exercise and provide initial recommendations.	End of December 2019	1 and 3
Development of options for additional parenting support required alongside the Act.	End of December 2019	1
Identify list of resources required to support the expansion of Parenting. Give it Time 8-12 years and 13-18 years	End of January 2020	2
Development of information, advice and guidance for parents and those in loco parentis, to support the Act and beyond, to provide universal parenting support if required.	End of December 2020	1 and 3
Review and enhance current positive parenting programmes ensuring the Act message is reflected.	End of December 2020	1 and 3
Development of resources and website content for Parenting. Give it Time to expand the age range from 0-7 to 0-18.	End of December 2020	2
Launch Parenting. Give it Time expansion.	March 2021	2
Universal additional parenting support in place if required.	September 2021	1 and 3
Evaluation	To be agreed	

### **Specific roles of Members and Welsh Government**

Membership is from experts from a range of organisations with a key interest and expertise in parenting support and child development.

Members should:

- Make recommendations and, as necessary, develop evidence based ideas/options on additional parenting information, advice and support required as a result of the Act and more widely to ensure high quality universal parenting support is available across Wales.
- Develop evidence based ideas/options on additional information and support required for parents of children in older age groups to support the expansion of PGiT; review and amend existing PGiT resources, emphasising positive techniques to provide guidance and discipline for children without physical punishment; and factor in the impact traumatic experiences in childhood, such

as inter-parental conflict, and adverse lifestyle choices can have on children throughout their life-course.

- Facilitate how best to ensure messages are accessible to parents with differing needs, communicate messages and gain buy in from key professionals on using the additional information.
- Facilitate best ways to communicate with parents and develop ideas on recording data with which to measure impacts.
- Co-opt professional expertise to support the work of the PEAG when required
- Provide reports and updates to PEAG when required and carry out actions and tasks swiftly to ensure progress is sustained.
- Highlight issues to the PEAG as they arise with ideas for potential solutions.
- Be able to take decisions in the PEAG, that can be taken forward within their own organisation

The Welsh Government will provide:

- Policy support and technical expertise.
- Secretariat, admin support and arrangements for the meetings and the work of the PEAG.
- Papers within 5 working days before each meeting.

## **Membership**

The Parental Expert Action group membership will include representatives of:

- Academia
- The National Parenting coordinators Network
- Representative from Families First Parenting Learning Set
- Representative from the Flying Start Network
- Representative from Families First Programme
- Representatives from the Third Sector
- Representative from Family Information Service
- Representative from WLGA
- Representative from Parents and Teachers Association (PTA)
- Representative from All Wales Health Visiting Leads Group
- Representative from Heads of Midwives Group
- Representative from Public Health Wales/National Safeguarding Board
- Representative from Social Services
- Representative from Education
- Representative from Educational Psychologists
- Representative from CAF/CASS Cymru
- Representative from Safeguarding teams/services
- Representative from Children in Wales/ Young Wales
- Representative from Family Justice Young Persons Board
- Representative from Children's Commissioners Office - observer
- Police Liaison Officer for Welsh Government
- Representative from Social Care Wales
- Representative from the Health Inspectorate
- The Royal College of Paediatrics and Children's Health will have an advisory role