

20.10.20

**10 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour of the Minister for Children and Housing regarding the prohibition of smacking in accordance with the Children and Education (Amendment) (Jersey) Law 2020 (OQ.283/2020):**

What steps, if any, has the Government taken to ensure that parents and prospective parents are fully aware of the new Children and Education (Amendment) (Jersey) Law 2020, which prohibits the smacking of children?

**Senator S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Children and Housing):**

Jersey is the first jurisdiction in the British Isles to implement a smacking ban. I was very pleased that it received a lot of publicity at the time in the local media and even some national media as well, so I know that a large proportion of the Island hopefully will already be aware of this because of that significant coverage it got. There was a communications effort alongside this to try and spread awareness about this where the Government encouraged further media coverage of this with press releases, and I myself took part in quite a few media engagements with this. The details of the ban have been sent to all schools for parent mail, the youth service and I understand some Parish magazines as well. There was also a leaflet produced in English, Portuguese and Polish for an Island-wide leaflet drop through every letterbox in Jersey homes, and of course social media was used extensively as well to put this across.

**4.10.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

What follow up is the Minister doing to check whether Islanders do understand that the law has changed so that he can assess the impact of these measures, because it seems the measures have been quite broad? How is the Minister assessing these to ensure they have gotten through to the entire population?

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

I do not have a specific idea now of how successful that has been. I can only guess based on the breadth of the coverage that there was at the time, and I am not necessarily entirely sure what more could be done to ascertain whether that message has been picked up loudly and clearly by the public. I suppose one idea could be having some sort of question in the next survey that the Statistics Unit puts out to understand if there are parts of our community which may be less aware of it than others, but that is just an idea I have come up with on the top of my head, so if the Deputy has any suggestions on how we might ascertain that information I would be grateful to hear it.

**4.10.2 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier:**

Has the Minister considered putting out any sort of periodic reminders about the legislation, especially for those where there might be some cultural factors in play as well?

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

In terms of an update campaign, not at this point but I can raise that with my comms officers who were involved in putting the first campaign together and who I think did a very good job; that is something I can raise at my next ministerial meeting. I think one important thing we may need to consider, if it has not been considered already, is how this is included in any sort of information pack or things that are provided to people when they come to the Island because many people may perfectly innocently just assume that the rules here are the same as they were when they have

come from elsewhere and that can include the U.K. because of course it is still legal in most of the U.K. That is something I can take up with my officers to see what a good follow-up could be.

**4.10.3 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

The Minister's idea is a good one. As for measuring the reach of the initial campaign, I wonder if the Minister could look at some comms feedback, a comms report on what the engagement levels were with that campaign. That might give some information. Also I do wonder if the Minister please would agree to communicate with health colleagues and discuss the option of including this information at a set point where women are in touch with health professionals during pregnancy because that to me seems like a good opportunity to access parents before they give birth.

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

I thank the Deputy, those are all really good suggestions and I might get in touch with her afterwards just to explore some of that but, yes, they sound like good suggestions.