

Submission No: 57

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Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

[REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 29 July 2003 2:19 PM  
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)  
Subject: Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry  
[REDACTED]

30 JUL 2003  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Attn: Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs  
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam

1. It is my opinion and experience that in the majority of cases no one will love and care for a child/children the way the mother will. This is not a sexist statement. It is simply based on the fact that women carry the child and give birth to that child. It is part of the maternal instinct to be selfless and to make sacrifices for a child/children beyond the capacity of most men.
2. It is my opinion that groups such as Lone Fathers' would be pushing for such an arrangement so as to find another reason not to pay child support. Some men are so consumed with maintaining a level of power over their ex-spouses and their children. The way to exert that power is to deny financial support.
3. If the paying of child support is so difficult for so many men, how would they possibly be responsible enough to raise the child/children. Writing the cheque is the easy part!
4. If the government feels that the monetary costs are so great because of the lack of child support paid, give the agency more teeth. Or for those people who don't pay their child support and receive family assistance (which is available to any parent with more than 10% care) deduct from that allowance. (e.g. \$20.00 per pay as with other Centrelink overpayments). Children cannot be thrown to the wolves simply to save money. More effort needs to go into the Child Support system. I have found that nobody looks after my own case better than I do. Therefore I stay vigilant about my child support and I get it. Others can do this too.
5. The logistic problems associated with this arrangement are enormous. The best example is schooling. In most cases the child/children would not be able to attend the same school. Most marriages do not end amicably yet the couple would have to live near to each other. The issue of confusion for the child; half a week here, half a week there. Or, whose house am I at on the 24th February? I don't have a bike here! Children need stability particularly after divorce; this system would not provide that in the vast amount of cases. One proper home, school etc.
6. As children grow older (teens) no order or arrangement will stop them from seeing or living with whichever parent they decide. However, there will be a huge number of parents (it would be my guess the father and the new wife who wants her own children) that wouldn't want them. Why put kids through the agonising process of having to deal with this.
7. As it stands 50/50 custody is available to whoever can agree on it now or through the Family Court system. To make it mandatory would only clog the court system further. (More money for the solicitors!)
8. As for grandparents etc., these people are visited during one's own contact period. In my opinion it would be a very rare situation where this did not occur. If it is an issue simply write the extended family into the parenting plan or court orders in they so wish.

I realise the issues of contact and child support are very emotive issues but 50/50 custody is not the answer.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]