

Submission No: 1218

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Secretary:

SUBMISSION ON CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

1. The system that is in place is unfair to the paying party for the following reasons ,
 - A. Payments do not take into account time that the other parent has the child in their care (daytime).
 - B. The formula used to work out payments.
 - C. The cut off age for dependant children when working out the payee's exempted income.
 - D. Total income of the other party not paying child support.

2. Reason A; I can have access to my child for 109 nights a year and still have to pay full child support. I have looked after my child for three weeks in a month and have still had to pay full child support for that month. This faces me with a double financial burden and gives my former wife a financial gain of not having to look after our daughter and receiving money for her up keep. Also I have looked after our daughter for most of a day but she has slept at her mothers that night and I still have to pay child support for that day she was with me.

Reason B; I have two of our three children living with me yet because of my income being higher than my ex wife I still have to pay child support. This means that I am financially responsible for our three children. A fairer system would be when parents separate and are given equal custody of the children then no child support should be payed by either parent regardless of their income.

Reason C; I have two sons living with me, but because one has turned 18 he is not classed as a dependant any more and my income threshold is reduced to one dependant only. Centre link regard people that have turned 18 and live at home as dependants and any payments received are means tested on their parent's income. This is done until the person has worked for 18 months or turns 25years old. It is not fair to have different rules from departments.

Reason D; The family support payment should be taken into account when totalling up income. Even though I earn more gross money than my ex wife my disposable income is around the same as her income is.

Summary

With the current system a lot of women are financially better off leaving their husbands. They get all or most of any property that there is, get family payments by simply walking into Centre link and saying that they are leaving their husband and to top it off the husband has to pay child support.

A fairer system would involve making marriage-counselling compulsory also seeing whether there is a history of violence in the home. Only after this happening should family payments be payed to the wife for a genuine reason for leaving. This would help a lot of family's stay together instead of falling apart.