

Submission to the Parliamentary Enquiry into the Child Support Programme.

My name is . I have been a paying parent to the Agency since 2005.  
I have 3 children. 2 to my ex wife, and 1 to my ex partner.

During this time, I have had nothing but bad experiences with the Child Support Agency.

Namely the following

- Constant arrears, despite the fact that my employer sends the money across to the agency. This has resulted in threatening letters, phone calls from the agency.
- The children to my ex-wife believe that I am deceased. I have had no contact with the children since April 2010, I do not know the children's location, yet I am still expected to pay. There is no incentive for the parent receiving the money to allow decent, fair and equitable access to the children.  
I believe that it would be of benefit that if the parent is withholding access to the children, that payments are suspended until such time as the children are able to see the paying parent.
- My Ex-Wife has remarried, and I am still paying the full rate of pay. Why aren't the assets/income of the parent's partner/husband/wife not included?
- The Self sufficiency amount of \$18k is not sufficient. This should be increased to 25% of the person's taxable income. For some people, this amount is equal to what they pay in rent every year. This is not sufficient to enable a person to feed, clothe and house themselves.
- I feel that I am being punished by the CSA for trying to earn a decent income to support myself. I earn \$90,000.00 a year, yet I lose 25% of this before I'm able to pay my tax, rent, food and clothing. I am often left with \$350 a month after CSA & Tax Deductions.
- The Child Support Estimate system is simply too complicated. For a person who works casually, or in an environment where they are in receipt of allowances, it leads them to a situation where they over/under estimate. Surely a floating table (similar to the PAYG Tax rates would be of benefit?)
- Cap the rate at 10% per child per yearly income regardless of age.

The CSA System is Broken, and the previous reforms by The Howard Government did not go far enough.

Immediate repairs are required to the system to ensure its fairness for both paying and receiving parents. Unfortunately the system seems incredibly skewed towards receiving parents, and the agency is too quick to penalise those who make simple mistakes.

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