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COMMITTEE SECRETARY,  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS,  
CHILD CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS INQUIRY,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE,  
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600.  
AUSTRALIA.

House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 407

Date Received: 7-8-03

Secretary: .....

**RE: FAMILY LAW REFORM/ REBUTTABLE CUSTODY.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

In relation to the above mentioned matter it is timely and relevant that such attitude is getting underway. I personally feel glad and encouraged that after so much time and resource wastage something is really getting stirred up.

This is no doubt a very sensitive subject and there is so much at stake. However there is certainly lot of ground to gain and achieve. Through personal experience I not only commend our Prime Minister to dare to put his hand in the bee hive but also for being a proactive person. I am sure that I am speaking on behalf of so many fathers that are denied the opportunity to be with the children they love and want to be with. In our society this is becoming a plague that is not only devouring the present generation but if left unchecked it will continue to consume so many generations to come. Adults are hurting every where and the hurt that they have carries on to the children. **The cycle goes on.** The saddest part of the whole unfair phenomenon is that the men/fathers are expected to be living in a world of absolute positivity, hope, proving themselves, speak, talk, work, live impeccably. Every one scrutinizes them and constantly look for faults. Rarely these men find pockets of encouragement and affirmation. No doubt the rate of suicide is the greatest in this age group.

I would like to draw your attention to another ugly aspect of this saga- **Domestic Violence Order.**

There is no denying that there are men and women in society that take up abusive and violent methods to control the lives of the people they claim love. However it is also a fact that there are many women who use this method to get their hidden motives. So many women have genuine causes to seek help from law but going parallel to this is a picture that is too ugly to explore. Conspiracy, deceit, lawful abuse of the law are only some of the ways that some women resort to gain sympathy within the society, work place and ultimately within the Family Law Courts. The use of children has become a common norm in so many cases. **The abuse of the Domestic Violence Orders** has been on such a rampant scale that it scares people who want to achieve the best for the children through co-operation instead of competition. Certainly there are mothers who are willing to go to any measure to satisfy their greed, manipulation and hunger to annihilate the men they once loved and the fathers to **THEIR** children. There is a need to isolate each case according to its merits.

**The undeniable benefits of the shared parenting are many.**

Children live in an environment that acknowledges its difference but is united when it comes to the best for the children.

The children learn to be positive, trusty, compassionate, strong, affirmative, assertive.

They not only learn the female ways of doing things but also have an insight into masculinity.

This is necessary especially for the male children.

There is plenty of literature and research available now indicating that equitable participation of parents is vital for a balanced growth of the children.

**I strongly support the SHARED CUSTODY** however let us not forget that both parents need to be thinking proactively putting the childrens' needs as paramount consideration.

The parents may have to live close to facilitate such interaction, they may have to attend counselling that targets on how to parent while living separately. There may be some other loose strings that need to be tied in order to bring some sensibility into the current mayhem.

**P.S. I have not seen my children for last 220 days. And I am expected to remain calm, collected, stay on the job, positive. Certainly we have missed the missing link.**

*Rajiv Samson Solomon*

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06-08-03

*I am willing and interested in community feedback later as the process gets underway. Any forum, seminar etc. if held please indicate as I wish to participate.*