

Patrick Edgerton

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

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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 ACT 2600



Submission

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a father having separated from my family in July last year. The pain of separation from my 8-year-old son is still with me.

Immediately after separation my ex-wife agreed to my caring for our son for a majority of the time i.e. on average 4 days per week. However when I was required to respond to her solicitor's letter, my ex-wife's attitude changed and she made it more difficult for me to see and care for my son.

I do shift work and my roster runs over seven days. I have been reluctant to face a court and admit the difficulty I face in balancing my work and parental responsibilities.

I find it a ridiculous situation that due to the unfair whims of my ex-wife and due to our respective work situations, that my ex-wife is able to say how much or how little my son and I may have contact with each other. I cannot begin to express the complete helplessness I feel when circumstances tell me I must place my trust in someone I do not trust, and trust that person to care for my child the one person I love most in the world.

I believe I am a good person and a loving parent. I believe all fit parents should have the right to care for their child half of the time if the parents wish it. I believe it is in the best interests of the child and indeed of the parents that he or she spends equal time with each parent. The only exceptions should be if the child faces any danger with the parent.

Adding insult to my emotional trauma is the fact that by denying me access to my son and thereby denying him his right to spend time with his father, my ex-wife is financially rewarded and I am penalised through the Child Support system.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Edgerton
Parent & J.P. (NSW),
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