

Sent: Thursday, 24 July 2003 2:55 AM
To: Gash, Joanna (MP)
Subject: Contact and custody.

Dear Jo,
I read in the SHN last Wed. Your article re: contact and custody. I tried the website to no avail.

Just a couple of thoughts:

01/08/2003

- * each case should be judged on its merits
- * Some partners will use this ruling to spite their partners
- * some partners will accept the 50 / 50 contact then have the children cared for by others. Hardly fair for the other parent.
- * many people are great part time parents. And this fulfills their and their children's needs. They are now being made feel inadequate for the contact they have.
- * many children suffer emotional abuse from a bitter partner. What will happen when one has to fight the legal system to prove this is happening and have adequate contact orders in place? Either cost will be a factor or our children will have to pay a hefty price for a law.

I know that these issues do not apply to all cases and for some families 50 /50 contact is great. I wish them well. I do feel that the Government should look carefully be fore it leaps into a minefield. In my case a marriage couldn't work because one party couldn't commit to family or involve themselves in family life (only decided after 2 children and 6 years of marriage) now the government is going to give them what they didn't want, don't have the skills to do and are only interested in doing so to keep up a image. Not much thought has been given to the children in this situation. Particularly young children.

Thanks for listening. This has been rather rushed but I hope you understand some of the points.

Jo Smith

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs	
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