

Forbes, Bev (REPS)

From: C Grant [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 8 December 2002 11:51 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)

House of Representatives Standing Committee
 on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 1493
 Date Received: 11-9-03
 Secretary:

Dear sirs and madams

Please accept my submission to assist you in understanding the problems within the Family Law system and its impact on children

There is widespread concern and understanding into many factors that affect a child who goes through a divorce. I have researched the many, many problems that can occur as a result of these situations. I trust you all have a reasonably thorough understanding yourselves or this inquiry would not be taking place. There are readily available statistics which indicate the highest suicide rate in Australia is middle aged men who have been recently separated. Although the Courts state they are not interested in the parents, they seem to be missing a vital aspect. The parents are the children's mother and father, it is in the best interests of the children to ensure the mother and father are able to provide for the children.

It is very clear from the statistics of the child support agency which indicate 75% of their clients are unemployed, that this system is also failing. Both parents need to be treated equally to ensure they are both able to care for the children.

The children are referred to as the most important issue in Family Law matters, but as anyone who has been through the system knows, the children rank about third most important behind time and money. All I, and thousands of fathers around Australia want to do for our children is the best we can, we do manage with this ridiculously outdated every second weekend arrangement, but it hurts the children and the parent they have been separated from.

Children need their parents when they need them, not when a judge decides and not when it is convenient for the parents. The only fair and civil way to treat children is to automatically apply shared parenting if there is no evidence of mistreatment.

My children love me and respect me because I love and respect them, but I have never been able to tell them the truth about why they must go back to the mother's house all the time. They are unable to understand why someone else is making these decisions about them and their dad.

It would not be right for me to tell them that I worked for 21 years and paid taxes all these years so that their mother could use these taxes via the Legal Aid System, to take all of my assets and to take the father out of their lives.

My letter to you is brief, I have emailed many MP's (over 300) in the past months about these issues and have not yet received any responses to convince me otherwise.

There is no doubt that the system needs radical reform and it needs to happen now. When you realise the resulting suicides, drug abuse, early pregnancies, underachievement at school, and many other psychological problems occurring are not really a result of the divorce, but are more directly a result of the system's intervention in the divorce, this is when you understand why nobody will admit to the problems. I think there is a great deal of fear amongst the MP's about law suits, as this is a similar situation to the events of the stolen generation.

Thankyou for taking the time to read my submission.

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