

Submission No: 107

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Secretary:

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: child custody



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21 JUL 2003

Inquiry into child custody arrangements in the event of family separation.

Thankyou for the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

I will be brief and remain focused. When my then wife left she promised to live within 20 minutes of me - I anticipated the children remaining at their schools. I was told I would see my children on weekends and during the week. I became ill with depression and my children were taken to live with the new partner some two and a half hours distant. They required new schools. My 15 year old daughter left the home there because of 'difficulties' with the new man - luckily she kept in touch with me and continued at school and returned to the house after 3 weeks.

Now after 18 months my youngest son would rather live with me but feels responsibility to his new friends at school. My middle child is performing poorly at school. My daughter can't wait to finish school and leave the area.

I must approach the possibility of my children living with me cautiously as they support each other and I've always been cognisant of the fact that if they are separated from each other this may have its own negative consequences. I can only now work 3 days per week - the child support I pay goes to fund my ex-wife and partner's mortgage - I have no control over this so a further concern for me is that when my daughter goes to tertiary education, my child support payments will only drop marginally (I still have 2 other children) so I will have little scope to assist her.

The time I spend with my children is wonderful as are the phone calls but I miss them terribly.

In my case there was no violence or risk of harm.

Shared parenting to me would allow the best of an awful situation - there would be minimal impact on schooling; both parents would have some control over how monies were spent; equal time could be spent with both parents - this would also reduce time spent with disinterested or even potentially harmful 'partners'.

I realise that violence and anger marr some family breakups - this should not stop shared parenting being possible for those where this is not the case.

Irealise that in my case it will not have much impact but for others it is vitally important.

Thank-you