

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No.

147

Date Received:

28-7-03

Secretary:

Dear Committee Secretary,

We are the maternal grandparents of our grandchildren [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They at this stage due to an interim order residing with their father in [REDACTED]. We up until OCTOBER 2001 were the children's primary carers as there was a continual problem of domestic violence as they lived with us. We applied for residency of the grandchildren in OCTOBER 2001 and was granted in the interim order phone contact twice a week and four weeks of the year to have them for visits to our home with us to pay all costs for the above. We thought we had settled the matter in OCTOBER 2002 for us to have contact only. On February 2003 the father altered that court order and wanted our contact visits to take place in [REDACTED]. Due to our work commitments and with no family to stay with in [REDACTED] we dismissed these new orders. We have continual problems with contact with the children from the father making it plain that he does not want us to have any contact at all. We have to continually ask the Court and the Children's Representative in [REDACTED] to intervene in these matters. We have been able to all check of our character and.

have attended a meeting with a psychologist for a Family Report in which he concluded without the benefit of seeing us with our grandchildren that there was a strong bond between us which should be encouraged to continue for the sake of the children. Because of other concerning issues as well as us not getting the court ordered contact and last conference the registrar threatened to put the children into foster care because of continuing concern for stability. After 21 months we are still in ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~order~~ and are waiting for a second family report. The only reason we eventually ~~will~~ get our contact back is because it is before the Family Court. Once this court case is finished we hold no hope of seeing or talking to our grandchildren. I find it absolutely heart breaking that our two grandchildren could end up in foster care when we are here and have always been in the past to give them love and stability. The father only has them because his name is on the birth certificate making him the father. That is the only reason we can find for them to be taken out of our loving home - in the eyes of the court grandparents cannot raise grandchildren. It's too ~~late~~ ~~for~~ us but I hope it isn't for the thousands of grandparents that are seeing their grandchildren as their home life with their parents are intolerable.