

Submission No. 802
(Inq into better support for carers)

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Subject: Enquiry into better support for carers

Acc 16/7/08

I am a single parent of a severely intellectually disabled 14 year old and a mildly intellectually disabled 11 year old.

Their father has ceased caring for the older child and has been harassing me, DOCS and DADHC since November 2007 to have him made a ward of the state to save himself money for child support and because his new wife (20 years younger and depressed and suicidal) is terrified of our son. The father has lodged objections to paying child support approximately every three months.

I spent the three years and close to \$90,000 trying to settle the matrimonial assets and parenting issues so that the boys and I can be free of the father's control and resume our lives.

Last month I had to request APRA release \$31,000 of my super (losing a further \$8,500 from my superannuation for tax) to prevent NAB foreclosing on the joint mortgage so we would not be homeless until after the Family Court hearing the was held last week.

The father provides me with no assistance whatsoever other than the child support that I continually have to fight for through the Child Support Agency.

I am the single breadwinner for the family now and my biggest challenge is the 12 weeks of school holiday each year. I only get the standard 4 weeks annual leave and the gazetted public holidays.

What does the government expect me to do for the other 8 weeks of school holiday?

- a) Leave the son to wanders the streets while I at work
- b) Take sickies or leave without pay (and super!)
- c) Quit my job and go on the Carer's Pension
- d) Admit that Dad was right all along - child should be made ward of state.

What can the government suggest once the older child finishes school in 4 years time and is at home all the time except for 3 days per week of community access from 9 - 3? How will I work 9 to 5 plus travelling time either side when my sons care only is from 9 to 3?