

**Submission to Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry**

To: Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs  
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry  
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From: Carlos J Garcia  
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Dear Sir/Madame

I have been separated/divorced from my ex-wife for the last 6 years. Even though the relationship with her was amicable at the beginning in the last 4 years the friendly relationship have been deteriorating due to the unwillingness of my ex partner to let the kids stay with me more time.

She has maintained all along that due to the amount of time I spent at work (I work in Sydney and commute every day) I do not have the time to take care of them. Unfortunately the CSA backed her demands in every single case. In reality her reason for not allowing the kids to be with me more time were never substantiated. She works from 9-5 everyday and she arrives home between 6:00pm and 6:30pm (I get home at 7:10pm). My daughter (15) and son (10) arrive home between 3:30pm and 4:30pm and nobody is in until she gets home.

My oldest son moved in with me 6 months after my ex-wife and I separated, due to conflicting personalities. He is now 18 years of age. He is usually at home as he is trying to get accepted in the Australian Army. In the times the kids have stayed with me he has taken care of them while I was away working. All my kids enjoy being with me, specially the 10 year old. He has a strong relationship with his elder brother. My daughter also like to spend time with me but she likes to have her privacy at home (she says I am too strict with her and her mother allows her to be more independent).

My ex-wife counts the days the kids spend with me and she does not allow me to have the kids more than 29% or 110 days. If she does, she makes sure that the kids do not sleep over. It is all to do with the amount of money she receives in Child Support and she does not want to relinquish any of it.

As you can see my family have been broken apart (she asked for the divorce because she had another relationship) and I am not able to spend more time with my kids because she knows the system and takes advantage of it. We are not talking about the well being of the kids but of the well being of the mother. The system cannot allow parents to manipulate the kids for money. The kids want to spend more time with me but she does not allow it, and if so she will allow it until 9pm and when they go back home otherwise I will have the 30% needed to reduce her Child Support.

I am very happy that this law if being reviewed as the burden separated/divorced parents have because of Child Custody/Support issues is great.