

House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

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Secretary: .....

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Dear Mrs Gash ,

My name is Gerard Bawden and I am putting pen to paper in the hope that mine and my daughter [REDACTED] voices may be heard. We have an incredibly close relationship considering the distance put between us by a very slow moving and out dated court system.

When my ex-partner and I separated, I had great access to Emily by today's standards; we shared every weekend, Tuesday night and often time in the afternoons after work together. Which is how the closeness in our relationship was built. since this time a bitter dispute between my ex-partner and myself has accrued and my access to Emily was stopped. It took six months through the local court to get some access again, and still another six months has past and I have not had an overnight stay with [REDACTED]

I am a very proud parent and I believe a fine one. I think that the laws should be changed, so that both parents have equal access or very close to it, as today's fathers play a far bigger role in their children's up bringing than past generations.

I brought my child into this world with the intention of being there every step of the way, but I seem to have no rights as a father, if the system was changed and fathers were automatically awarded more rights or access, then the children that are close to there fathers would be far happier and well balanced.

Its saddens me deeply to see the tears and distress on my four year olds face when at times I have had to physically detach her hands from my shirt to get her to go to her mother, not because she doesn't love her mother, but simply because she doesn't get enough time with a dad she loves deeply.

It's in the best interest of any child to have the love of a mother and a father.

I believe each parent should at least be given the opportunity of equal access or care, even if it is then decided that they cant because of work or financial commitments, then access could be down graded from there.

This would also give a father more of a say in his children's schooling and education, not to mention a closer eye on his child's health and certainly a greater influence in there up bringing and the kind of person they grow up to be.

Child support is another subject I would like to write about, I believe it is necessary, particularly when the main caretaker has limited financial resources, I also believe the costs to the paying party are to high. children obviously need to be clothed, fed, educated, kept healthy, a roof put over their head and to be spoilt from time to time. Which are just some of the things child support pays for, then the paying party has to come up with this money a second time to give his child all these things as well when they are in your care.

Mrs Gash, I could write another dozen pages on this subject as it is very close to my heart, I think you will get a general outline of how I feel from the above letter.

I hope you and Mr Howard can help myself and many others like me, as this is very emotionally draining if you believe there is anything more I can do from my end please contact me thank you for listerung.

Gerard Bawden.