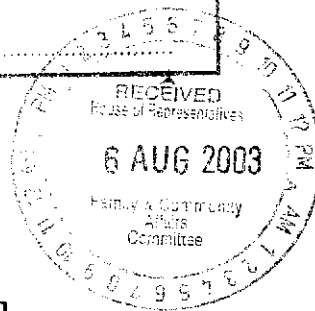


House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 323

Date Received: 6-8-03

Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs  
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry  
Department of the House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia



Re Child Custody arrangements in the event of family separation

We have a system that supports one parent over the other, that is not in the best interest of the children.

At the end of a marriage that was built on 50/50 where both parents worked together to supply and support their children, then to grant custody to one parent is morally wrong, and can only have a detrimental effect on the children and their future marriage.

If both parents love and want to share in their children's life, then balance and equality have to be the most important issue in marriage breakdown, and if we are to get away from the underlying message "I HAVE THE CHILDREN YOU HAVE TO PAY" then shared parenting is the most practical way of achieving this.

When there are no prizes for divorce then we may see the rate drop, but until this happens it will keep growing.

The existing child support formula should be changed. Both parents should contribute to the children emotionally and financially in the form of part-time or full-time work, and equal time spent with the children that is practical.

Ian Whittaker  
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W.A.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Whittaker".