

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 87

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Secretary

Addressing to the Parliament inquiry for rebuttable joint custody:

I am writing in relation to the child custody inquiry. I am a divorced mother of three children my ex-husband and I have a court agreement that has been running smoothly for over two years now. Since the media has been announcing the inquiry my ex-husband has been telling my children that they will see less of me. This has already upset my children as they have become settled with the arrangements we already have. My ex-husband would love this, as child support would cease he would also get more Family Assistance from Centrelink for the extra time he has with them. This would be his true motive why should a man be given more time with this children when he doesn't already make the most of the time he has with them. He has on numerous occasions asked me to look after the children whilst it was his access time because of activities he plans when he should be spending time with his own children.

I have never stopped him having access, I have never moved away from him, so he can see the children whenever he wants. I find it very insulting to read where people think all divorced mother are anti-men and move away from the child's father just to get back at him because I have never done that.

The father of my children is a highly religious man, when my daughter was playing a CD at his house (one that I got for her). He told her to turn it off as it would let demons into the house. I have grave concerns if my ex-husband has more time with the children, that they won't live normal lives like other children do because of his outrageous religious stand. He also has another side to him, he talks to the children in un-appropriate ways: For example, he tells them that women's breasts are only for looking at. My kids are only ten, seven, and four. Way to young to hear statements such as that. It would not be in my children's best interest to be around this man more time than what they are already. I have read where John Howard MP is concerned about boy's growing up without male role models. What about girls when they reach puberty? I know my ex-husband won't be helpful to her because he wasn't helpful towards me, so why would he be helpful towards her. What about if this 50-50 custody and she is in his care when she starts menstruating? Many girls in that situation would feel uncomfortable going to their dads.

My ex-husband has the children three weekends a month. We share the holidays 50-50. He agreed happily to this in front of his solicitor and mine because of his work. Now all has changed because he has heard he wouldn't have to pay child support if this proposal goes through.

This proposal might work for some, but not all. I see more latchkey kids coming out of this, crime will increase because children will not have a place they can call home, and will be living out of their bags for ten or more years. My children have two wonderful male role models in their lives. My new husband, and also their grandfather. Who is to say fathers are the best role model for their children. I do agree father should be able to have time with their children but should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Thank you for reading my e-mail and taking my views into account.

Signed,

[Redacted Signature]