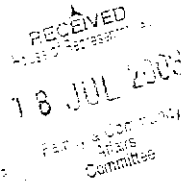


Submission No: 102

Date Received: 18-7-03

Secretary: _____

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
Child Custody Arrangement's Inquiry



My ex defacto _____ is in a lesbian relationship. The Government doesn't recognize this as a relationship. So that means _____ is on a single parent pension and her girlfriend is out working and I am paying child support to her. I pay \$128.00 per week. There is no way you could spend \$128.00 per week on any child, No matter what age.

He attends a public school, NOT private. Don't get me wrong I don't mind paying Child Support, but at a reasonable weekly rate. My ex defacto and her girlfriend could be earning up to X amount of dollars each week and living easy.

Here I am struggling each week to feed myself. I do see my son on a regular basis, (Every second weekend and school holidays) but I have to work seven days a week so I don't get to see him very much. My Mum and Dad have to buy him clothes as I can't afford to. Even working seven days a week as a truck driver, I still Cannot make ends meet.

As it stands Child support doesn't know I have a second job, (on weekends) But when I put a tax return in they will, and then they will deduct more money from my pay as they calculate your earnings on your gross annual amount. The more I earn the more child support wants and I believe that's not fair. For example if you are a solicitor and you earn X amount of dollars, that means a solicitor's son cost more to feed and cloth. Then a truck driver's son. How could this be right?

My ex defacto and her girlfriend are living in a defacto type relationship and _____ is still receiving a single parent pension and her girlfriend is out working. You are not allowed to do this if it is a man and woman relationship, but can if it is a lesbian relationship. My ex defacto backdated out break up and notified Child support and in that case I have arrears.

The arrears just keep growing because of a \$70.00 a month late fee and now after several attempts to pay the arrears Child support has finally agreed to make me pay more money each week to clear the arrears up. Child Support has informed me I am doing everything right. (Arrears, weekly payments and so on) I was told if everything is in order, I would receive my tax return, but now Child support is telling me it is very unlikely I would receive my tax return because of my arrears. My Arrears are so high

because of my ex defacto backdating our break up, and then there is the \$70.00 a month late fee added on to my arrears.

I contacted Child support on several occasions to start paying the arrears but like always I get the same answer "I will get someone to contact you", and that never happens. Child support contacts me when it suits them. I can't even afford to own a car. I have to borrow my Dads car.

I had a car accident on the way to work in last year and as a result I have been on and off workers comp. Since October 2002 I informed Child Support that I would be off work for some time at the minium wage. Child Support then cut my weekly repayment in half which is \$64 a week. One week later while still on compo Child Support told me I had to start paying my arrears. I said I am still on compo (minium wage) and the gentleman from Child Support said I had no choice. I agreed on \$10 per week but he said no \$20 and I said no that is too much. He said to me \$15 per week for my arrears and I said that is still too much while I am off on compo, but really I had no say in the matter. He was taking money wether I liked it or not. This is once again not fair. Now while I am off on compo I am paying \$79 per weck and still struggling.

I have spoken to a lot of people about my child support and they all believe I am paying too much. You must take into account that I am paying child support to a family that is a lot better off than me. My son always comes in old clothes, no undies and no socks and shoes that are too big for him and when my mum picks him up he never wants to go back to his Mum.

My ex-defacto is a drug addict and will never work while the pension is paying her good money to sit at home. We the paying fathers never receive receipts for the money we pay to the mother to prove the money has been spent on our son. I believe my ex-defacto is spending the money elsewhere. My son is always hungry when my mum picks him up. I don't have a leg to stand on as the mother doesn't have to provide receipts on a weekly basis. Once again this is not fair for my son or me.

I had to borrow a lot of money from my mother and sister for solicitor's costs when left; I had to pay a private investigator to find her to serve papers so I could see my son on a regular basis. I borrowed almost \$10.0000 in total for all the court proceedings. Child support doesn't take that into account. I had to borrow the money on my mums and sisters credit cards and lucky they are understanding and realise some months I can't pay the repayments on their credit cards so once again they have to help me out.

I can't see the point in working 2 jobs and struggle when I can be unemployed and struggle the same amount. Child support doesn't help the average father. All I think they are doing to me is heading me to the unemployment line as well as a lot of other fathers out there. I know I am not the only one who is suffering but something has to be done

about child support before its to late and sends me to Centre link and receive payments from the government .It should be all about the age of the child, not how much the father earns.

You are probably saying to yourself there is not much you can do but why cant the government make it compulsory for receipts to be shown on a regular basis and that a same sex relationship be treated in the same manner as a heterosexual relationship. I am not saying I should not pay for my son as he is my responsibility but at a reasonable amount of money per week so I can get on with my life as well.

Please don't treat this letter as confidential as I do not.

Thanking you for your time and awaiting your reply