

Submission No: 1523
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 5 August 2003 3:52 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: submissions for child custody arrangements

AUG 2003

I am pleased to be able to finally put my opinion forth and know that someone will finally listen and that some action may be taken.

This is a topic I follow with great interest as I am divorced with two young girls aged 9 and 7 (2 and 4 when separated).

At this time I would like to request that specific personal information remain confidential but am happy for general circumstances/situations to be made public. I will deliver my submission in point form and keep it as brief as possible.

* Why can she earn up to \$35 000 per year before it affects what I have to pay her but my threshold is only \$18 000?

* If I have 50% custody of both children or each child week about this does not cancel out my payments to her. I still have to pay her a large sum of money per month as well as take on the extra financial burden of having equal access and therefore equal costs.

* The mother is not supportive of my relationship with the children, and is particularly hostile to any relationship that the children have with their step mother and 1/2 sibling. This is frustrating as she had an affair and left me yet I am not allowed to move on with my life and recreate happiness for myself.

* Fathers (or paying parents!) have no right to say how some/all of the money should be spent. Sure some of the money should be used for food and rent but when the children come over in rags, clothes too small, stained etc etc and we are told that they have no clothes, this is unacceptable. For all the money I am paying the children should want for nothing, and at the very least have sufficient clothing to keep them comfortable in the cold weather. And then their mother has the hide to tell me that she is not going to send clothes and to buy our own!!! Thats why I give her money - to buy the things that the children need!!!. And then we hear about the new car or she turns up in her \$250 knee high boots. The money I pay is not to support her lavish lifestyle but for the benefit of the children. If she wants those things - fine . Get her off her backside and go and get a job to support it. The Government is doing too little to enforce this. She has got several qualifications and has ample means of self support but has not worked in years. What does she do all day while the children are at school.? Why should the taxpayer support her when she will not make any effort to support herself.? She should be made to be accountable for where she is spending the money and fathers should be able to nominate where a certain % is to be put towards.

* We have spent several thousand \$ on litigation just to have fair access to the children and yet she constantly threatens to go against the order. Our legal advice is that she will only get a slap on the hand if she disregards the order which does me no good when I miss out on a christmas with my children. I can never get that christmas back

* The order says speak kindly and gently to and about one another in front of the children. This cannot be enforced. Its frustrating that she can not speak in anyway that could be considered kindly to me at all- either on the phone or in person. When she picks the children up I am lucky to receive a grunt. And the children must pick up on this. Especially when she hasn't seen them for three weeks and when she picks them up its not (smile kiss kiss) hello girls Ive missed you how are you (cuddle). Its more like " Quick - get in the car." with a scowl on her face.

And what about when the children want to bring home a photo of their newborn sister they have to throw a tantrum to be able to . She doesn't put the children first. And then when they do bring home a photo she covers up the baby in the picture and says to the girls " thats a really nice photo of you girls" . Are they not going to pick up on the anger there?

* When the litigation procedure was beginning no other help was offered to us by our solicitor to maybe help the situation be resolved more equitably or easier.. The court ordered counseling but she turned up at that so agitated that it was a waste of time for all involved. The only help that was available it seemed was for the mother, yet I was the one faced with the devastation of losing my marriage and my children in one foul swoop an having to deal with the fact that I have virtually no rights to decision making over my children - where will they go to school, what extra curricula activities should they take on, religion, etc etc etc.

* Why does the mother generally have more right to the children than the father? I have been told that to gain custody of my children I would have to PROOVE her to be a drug taking prostituting bad person and even then I would most likely lose.

* It is devastating to a father that they have very little rights to be largely involved in the childrens lives and services should work together to make this happen . The government should set up intervention which allows non custodial parents more equitable conditions and does not think solely of the mother and children.

Thankyou for the opportunity to voice my concerns and opinion. For the sake of all non custodial parents, I sincerely hope that our needs are listened to and taken into consideration when deliberating on the lives of our children and our families.

Yours Faithfully

[REDACTED]