

WELCOME AUSTRALIA

Limited A.C.N. 069 784 907

AN INDEPENDENT NON PROFIT ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO THE UPLIFTMENT AND PRESERVATION OF
CHILD, FAMILY, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LIFE.

TO:
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

August 8th 2003.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs	
Submission No	948
Date Received	18-8-03
Secretary:

Dear Sir/Madame,

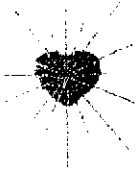
Please find enclosed by way of email attachment, Welcome Australia's submission to the inquiry into 'Child Custody Arrangements' in the event of Family Separation.

A hard copy of the Submission will be forwarded to your office this coming week.

Thank you.

Yours truly,


Anthony Halpin.



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SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY ON CHILD RESIDENCY FOLLOWING SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

AUGUST 2003

For Publication.

TO:

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

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SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY ON CHILD RESIDENCY FOLLOWING SEPARATION AND DIVORCE AUGUST 2003

Welcome Australia truly welcomes the opportunity to make submission to the inquiry on Child Residency following Separation and Divorce. It is welcoming to see that the prime focus and intention of the inquiry is to be, "In the Best Interest of the Child." In accordance with the Family Law Act. Perhaps one of the most accurate appraisals of this intent is best expressed in the words of an American Judge Dorothy T. Beasley, Georgia Court of Appeals, "In the Interest of a Child," July 2, 1993

"Although the dispute is symbolized by a 'versus' which signifies two adverse parties at opposite poles of a line, there is in fact a third party whose interests and rights make of the line a triangle. That person, the child who is not an official party to the lawsuit but whose well-being is in the eye of the controversy, has a right to shared parenting when both are equally suited to provide it. Inherent in the express public policy is a recognition of the child's right to equal access and opportunity with both parents, the right to be guided and nurtured by both parents, the right to have major decisions made by the application of both parents' wisdom, judgment and experience. The child does not forfeit these rights when the parents divorce."

--Presiding Judge

**It is within this Spirit and Focus of the Children, that Welcome Australia
wishes to make the following submission.**

Shared Parenting

Welcome Australia endorses and promotes Shared Parenting to all Australian Parents that may have experienced the dissolution of their family. Except in cases where children are exposed to a life of: Drugs, Alcohol, Violence, or Child Abuse of any nature. Or where one parent wishes to deliberately break up the family unit in order to pursue one or numerous relationships.

International research clearly shows that children flourish in Shared Parenting arrangements. Their deep pains after losing a secure Family structure subsides substantially as they are embraced loved and supported by both parents equally. See **APPENDIX 'B'**

Shared Parenting reassures children, establishing stability in their lives and even though the parents live separately the children are happy to be welcomed into two homes. Shared Parenting enables both the difficult times and the joyous moments of the children's lives, to be shared by both parents together with sharing equally the financial responsibilities for the children's upkeep and development.

Children crave for the involvement of each parent's individuality and talents to be shared with them, that these may become part of the memories of their lives. It is so vital for children to be given the opportunity of having Happy Memories of their childhood.

When children are denied this experience of intimate sharing with each parent, they suffer deep grief as their inherent instinct is not fulfilled. Although on the surface a child appears to be coping, their 'Hearts are Weeping'. This pain is always present and expressed through rebellion, disrespect, short temperateness, resistance to learn and in teenage years is often released through the excessive use of alcohol, drugs or sex. In many cases their grief, self-blame, hopelessness and despair may lead to ending their own lives. See **APPENDIX 'A'** Report from Family and Child Psychiatrist Frank S. Williams.

Children of separated parents must be permitted to have unrestricted communication with either parent whenever they so require. A parent whose behaviour includes Brainwashing, Defaming or Belittling of the other parent, or who Intimidates and Threatens the child or children, or who deliberately creates an intolerable environment with the intention of preventing Shared Parenting becoming a reality, be directed to undergo counselling or forfeit their right of residency until such time they embrace empathy and recognise the developmental requirements of the child or children.

The ideal Shared Parenting arrangement in the eyes of Children is, that when both their parents live under the one roof. However in today's Society have we not promoted the Separation of Parents as a natural progression of marriage as long as this process proceeds respectfully? Have we also forgotten the 'Broken Heart's' of Grand Parents whose dreams of sharing the love and precious moments with their Grand Children have been denied them?

Due to the intricacy and importance of both Shared Parenting and Parental Separation, **Welcome Australia** wishes to include a submission for Separation Reform, highlighting many causes for separation, their consequences and recommendations.

Separation Reform

Separation Reform is Designed to Preserve and Protect Honest,
Hardworking and Devoted Parents and Children from
having their lives devastated...

Family separations have escalated to epidemic proportions over the last twenty-five years with no decline evident. Parents struggle to find their own identity and a new level of freedom, which they consider, has been denied them.

Parents have been encouraged and permitted through loose Legislation and an endless promotion of ones individual rights to "Move On" or find 'Love' with another, the moment any situation becomes stressful or unpleasant.

This pattern has now been installed as normal progressive action, which has enabled Separation and Divorce to develop into a multi-million dollar industry for a certain sector of our Society.

The dissolution of any family is always a tragedy for Children, for Parents, for Grand Parents and for Society. Parents love their Children dearly and would do anything to protect or prevent them from being hurt, yet as a result of some Parents being so consumed in their own pains and needs, they become oblivious to the often irreversible trauma experienced by their children, this trauma is invariably psychologically lethal with life long consequences.

In many cases of Separation, one spouse may have created an intolerable environment for a devoted spouse and children to endure. This intolerable behaviour, while sometimes deliberately employed may also be related to many other contributing factors.

Today, when one parent becomes slightly imperfect or distressed or unwell or suffers financial loss or on the other hand accumulates a certain level of wealth and possessions, it is common practice to move them out.

These parents are of no further use, however enormous claims are made against them at every level. In many cases marriage is repeatedly used as a vehicle to accumulate such wealth or possessions. In these cases if children are involved, they are rarely considered nor are they a priority, for they may well have evolved overnight into an investment opportunity, except in genuine cases where parents elect to examine, change and take responsibility for their own behaviour expressing empathy, patience and love.

OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SEPARATION AND DEVOICE

1. Parents Being Revisited by their own subconscious painful memories due to changes in levels of hormones, (especially after child birth) poor health, stress, trauma or exhaustion. These unsettling experiences may give the illusion that they are the result of the other Parents behaviour. That Parent, is often wrongly blamed or accused of, the lack of loving, caring, empathy or understanding, where in fact these are the exact traits being portrayed by that Parent suffering from the resurrection of their own past painful experiences.

Often fathers will experience unintentional rejection from their spouse after a child is born and become upset, however this will pass, it is the natural instinct of a mother to become completely absorbed in the presence of her new born. She requires support.

2. Financial Pressure. For the past twenty-five years families have come to endure an ever-increasing financial struggle. Families and 'Family Businesses' have been squeezed from every side, many thousands have been forced into bankruptcy or to close their doors for a variety of reasons such as increased overheads and operating costs, lower profit margins to cope with cheap imports or taxes or just insufficient knowledge and inexperience with the nature of that business.

When a Family has worked hard for many years only to lose everything, often one spouse walks away from the Family as they are unable to cope with the pressures and stress or in some cases losing a standard of lifestyle. Financial pressure of any nature especially under these circumstances is devastating to one's physical and mental health, peace of mind, and general relationship between children and family members.

3. Spiritual Evolvement. For many years now there has been a gradual spiritual awakening, which presents itself as a deep hunger to acquire something more, something far greater than that, which we have been presented in life. People are searching for a level of happiness and love that they instinctively know exists. Where two Parents are able to explore this quest together, the Family is greatly strengthened.

However, if only one Parent pursues this Inner Hunger while the other Parent remains steadfast in what they experience as security or fear, then the gap between the two Parents energy and communication widens. One parent often experiences disruptive behaviour, either intentionally or unintentionally, until finally one parent may leave the family home to seek a more sensitive or peaceful environment or in some cases as it is commonly expressed, to 'Move On.' Again the Children are often not a priority.

4. Sensually Driven Desires wishing to be explored and fulfilled at any cost, originating from the constant subtle brainwashing and acceptance of low principals, values, morals and the misinformation as to the origin of Love, together with the unceasing saturation of Violence and Fear. Each of these low vibrational factors are openly promoted by a certain elements within media and entertainment, including; Television, Videos, Internet, Films, Music, Literature etc. To be portrayed and eventually developing to become normal unbalanced self-diminishing behaviour.

All in, the desperate struggle and search for Love and Happiness. Again we are influenced to 'Move On.' Perhaps it is all an illusion. Perhaps what we are really searching for is our own experience of something far greater, something far more satisfying. Perhaps we are being drawn to an energy that part of us knows exists; yet we become so frustrated in our pursuit of it. Perhaps we may have already attained what we are looking for, maybe we are just looking in the wrong place, that is, outside instead of inside of ourselves.

5. Family and Friends. Often family and friends with the best of intentions offer us advice, which may become powerfully enthusiastic and influential. However on a more subtle level we are often being encouraged to act out and fulfil their own unexpressed subconscious life.

This advice, no matter how sincere the intention, is strongly influenced by the deep memories of their own past experiences, what ever they may be. In many cases this advice is separation, without the couple concerned investigating and working to heal the root causes of the situation. This advice invariably is not in the best interest of the child or children.

**Perhaps the best adviser and advice to be found may be heard from within
the Silence of our own Hearts.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Any parent wishing to dissolve their family in order to; escape violence, alcohol or drugs or to 'Move On' or to pursue another partner or to achieve a hidden agenda, regardless of whether or not, an unacceptable disruptive or abusive behaviour has been employed, may leave the Family home, if they so wish, providing the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. To attend specialised counselling or mediation designed to heal rather than to dissolve, and to be made completely aware of the implications and life long effect that their decision and behaviour will have upon their children.
2. To undergo an independent assessment of their marital or de facto situation, and to be given guidance and support where every necessary.
3. A parent suffering from violent tendencies, addictions, depression or ill health must take measures toward recovery by attending rehabilitation programs, specialised courses or programs as such, after which if a parent still wishes to leave the Family Home, they may.

However, the devoted parent wishing to maintain the family unit and not leave their children; must remain in the family home with the children. The family home may not be sold for settlement purposes until the youngest child has turned eighteen years of age. If the Parent leaving the family home is a financial contributor, (eg. The home mortgage.) Then the same proportion of financial contribution be maintained.

"Why should innocent Children and hardworking devoted Parents have their lives devastated and sentenced to cruel isolation, because of one Parent being unaware of their own Responsibilities, their own Weaknesses or the Great Person they really are?"

Welcome Australia also recognises the difficulties experienced by many families and individuals in relation to Child Support following Separation or Divorce and there fore wishes to make the following submission with recommendations.

Child Support Reform

Child Support Payments are a vast and expansive Government initiative designed to provide Financially for the Care and Well-being of Children after Separation or Divorce. In many cases the 'Status Quo,' works well. However there are many thousands of Parents who neglect their obligations towards their Children's financial support for a variety of reasons. These are varied, complex and. urgently require addressing.

In the majority of cases Family Allowance and Sole Parent Pension may cover the day-to-day living expenses for Children. However there are many additional costs if a Child is to acquire a variety of life skills or have their special needs catered for. It is here that the non Resident Parent must be involved in the day-to-day life of their Children, and where possible become a Shared Parent.

All caring, loving Parents wish to Financially Support their Children.

However what often prevents this, are a number of factors...

1. One Parent may witness or become suspicious of the other squandering the money given for their Children, or spending such on their own Self-pleasures or Investments, whilst their Children go without. In some cases that Parent may be aware of the Resident Parent living in an undisclosed De-Facto Relationship whilst claiming full Sole Parent entitlements.
2. Often unrealistic claims of Child Support are garnished from a Parents **GROSS** income, leaving little after **TAX's** with which to survive. The paying Parents are also denied their Rights to contribute and have input into how such monies may best be spent on their own Children. In the majority of cases, the paying Parents are treated as aliens on developmental aspects of their children's lives. These Parents becomes strangers and are starved of any intermit love and affection with their own Children, and yet they are expected to pay exuberant amounts.
3. It is common for Parents to have been subjected to psychological concussion prior to a trial separation where upon the locks on their own Homes may be changed, their Bank accounts emptied, false allegations of Violence Orders imposed which may include prohibited distance and restricted access with impossible odds to see their children. Many find themselves financially ruined after the Family Courts has relieved them of up to 70% of their assets and life's work.
4. These parents enter into a state of shock, as they are striped of everything most precious and dear to them. Our current System then proceeds to treat them in a sub human and discriminatory manner by implementing lengthy and costly procedures that achieve very little as these Parents are almost destitute. Many take their own lives as their pain becomes so unbearable especially the pain associated with the forced separation from their children whom they dearly love. Likewise, children do not recover from the forced separation of a parent they dearly love. And we ask why violence is rife and why so many children are becoming dysfunctional, unable to focus or study, resorting to promiscuous behaviour, excessive drugs alcohol taking and sexual activities.

RECOMMENDATION

Bank Accounts For Your Children

IF Parents were able to pay a fair and equitable agreed amount of their NET Income into a Bank Account established for their Children, where they had authority and input into the allocation of such money, together with joint care and or input into every aspect of their child's development. And that such private arrangements be registered as a formal agreement in the Family Law Court. If this were the case, then the majority of Parents would willingly participate. Records of such transactions being available to the Child Support Agency on request, thus saving the Australian people multi millions of dollars presently used in administration and court costs, and in the general chasing and disputes arising from Parents for unpaid demands. When a Loving Parent is denied their Human Rights and is isolated from their loving Children either partially or wholly, the consequences are devastating for both the parent and the children. See APPENDEX 'A' Report from Family and Child Psychiatrist Frank S. Williams.

In Conclusion,

Welcome Australia wishes to sincerely thank all Members of the Inquiry for the opportunity to submit the enclosed submission together with recommendations and trust that the content of such be taken to Heart in the final analysis and the formulation of any future Legislation on Family Matter's. For the Government of the Day has an enormous responsibility in such formulation and preparation of today's Children becoming tomorrow's Citizens and future leaders of Australia. Thank you.

Yours truly,


Anthony Halpin.

P.S. Further research Information on the above topics and other Family issues, may be located

on www.vote.org.au

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