

Forbes, Bev (REPS)

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

From: Leah Bray [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 28 October 2003 7:08 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: child custody

Submission No: **1676**
Date Received: **28-10-03**
Secretary:

To whom it may concern,

I was unable to attend the public hearing held in Coffs Harbour on Monday, October 27 2003 due to employment commitments. I really would liked to have attended the meeting to voice my concerns about the new legislation regarding child custody.

Firstly, I am a single mother and I know that my children want to be with me, their mother.

Secondly, my parents divorced when I was 7 years old, and as much as I loved my Dad, there was never a question in my mind about who I wanted to live with. I wanted to live with my Mum.

I'm sure there are certain situations where children are better off with their Dads and even situations where the 50-50 arrangement works in a healthy and functional way for the children concerned. I'm also fairly sure that those situations are few and far between.

I have many close women friends who are single Mums and I know most of them would be happy with a shared custody arrangement IF they thought it would be the best thing for their children. I don't know of one who thinks it would be.

All children deserve the right to have a stable home.

I would be concerned that there may be situations where a man may want shared custody of his children simply to gain more money to support drug, alcohol or gambling addictions. Or as a way to spite the woman that he once loved and who bore his children.

Every single Mum I know would heart wrenchingly prefer their children to be growing up with both parents. Sadly, it just doesn't always work out that way. No woman I know has ever made the decision to be a single parent without a tremendous amount of pain and consideration.

Remember being little.....

Sincerely,

Leah Bray
Repton.

29 OCT 2003