

Dear Senate Inquiry - Shared Parental Responsibility Bill 2005

This is a my submission to the Senate Inquiry into the provisions of the Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Bill 2005

I am horrified to see that in the Selection of Bills Committee, Appendix 3, that there is no mention of Single Fathers' Groups, or Men's Groups - there are only Womens' Groups mentioned.

How blatantly discriminatory can you possibly be?

Kindly ask yourselves "How do children come into this world?" In answer - it takes both males and females to cause procreation. In other words, there is a father in this equation too.

Do NOT accept the stereotypical "wife beating husband" line as the 'norm'. It is far from. The lawyers, and Centrelink, and to a degree the Family Court themselves actively encourage separating mothers to take an AVO or DVO against their 'partner', with the express intention of gaining full custody of the children.

This does not take the best interest of the child into consideration.

The best example that PROVES the Shared Parenting (or 50/50 parenting) must be the default is from the mouths of our politicians themselves.

The Education System is quite literally screaming for Male Teachers, as there are not enough "male role models" for the male students? Why not? Simply put, because the Family Court sees fit to award full custody to more than 90% of biological mothers.

Why is it that during a marriage / relationship, both parents are seen as morally and financially responsible for any children that result; yet when the relationship breaks down, one parent is seen as "disposable" - they are only allowed to see their child once a fortnight?

Who gives any person the right to decide that this parent is not worthy of spending equal time with their child? I do not believe that it should be determined by Magistrates who ARE NOT DIVORCED. Yes - a pre-requisite for appointment to the Family Court. In other words, these people who make the decisions have NO idea what they are doing to families, and the simply do not care.

Another issue that needs to be seriously considered is the "financial and emotional pawn" syndrome - whereby the children become bargaining weapons (not tools, WEAPONS). If shared-care was the default, then there would be an almost overnight evaporation in the cases heard before the court regarding contact and custody.

This would then have a follow-on effect that the CSA would quite simply no longer be required - because each parent is responsible for the children (financially) when in their care.

It is THIS point that you committee is too frightened to face. You do not want to be seen as the people who got rid of an entire government department, and to this end I see you as cowards.

I have spent the past ten years fighting for justice for disenfranchised fathers, and each time it comes down to the public servants self-perpetuating their employment, NOT the best interest of the child.

If you make shared-care a default - you ARE acting in the best interest of the child.

In many cases, I will happily agree that children could be in danger. But isn't this then an issue that would require evidenciary support? Not just a claim by an angry spouse (male or female) that the other parent is dangerous.

If you cannot prove that the other parent is dangerous - with fully documented evidence, then you face slander and defamation charges. Again, this would stop any frivolous and petty claims...freeing up the court to deal with those cases it SHOULD handle.

Please take into consideration the children - they love both parents, and should NOT be made to choose who they spend time with. That is the most unfair and cruel of emotional abuse imaginable.

Thank you for reading my submission

Name: Danielle Pitts
Postal Address: Oxley Park NSW