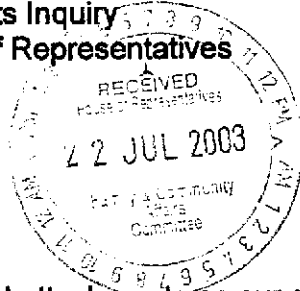


Submission No: 118  
Date Received: 22-7-03  
Secretary: .....

16<sup>th</sup> July 2003.

Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs  
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry  
Department of the House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600.



Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept this letter and attachments as our submission to the Inquiry. We applaud the Government for its initiative in establishing this Inquiry, as changes to the law in these areas is long overdue.

Any changes to the contact and residence provisions as a result of your recommendations will be welcome, although they will come too late for our personal circumstances. When parents divorce, it is not anticipated that the children are also divorced, but for the fathers this is often effectively the outcome.

The Child Support system is grossly unfair to the paying parent. The formula based on adjusted taxable income is, at best, a blunt axe. For many PAYE taxpayers, the amount of money paid is far in excess of the actual cost of raising a child. The money goes to the other parent, in most cases the mother. Unfortunately, it is often used to improve her lifestyle rather than that of the child. Apart from the basic injustice of this, it discourages the mother from participating in the workforce and leads to a reliance on welfare payments from the Government, a waste of public funds.

The Child Support Agency commands draconian powers to investigate the financial affairs of paying parents. Unfortunately, in their enthusiasm to uncover hidden sources of income, officers of the CSA often disregard the privacy of the new wives of paying parents. In our case, there have been unwarranted and covert intrusions into all of our joint financial affairs both together and separately.

The C\$A's catchphrase "Helping parents manage their responsibilities" is printed on every letterhead; to every paying parent a sickening joke.

Yours sincerely,