

Philip Noonan

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**Submission to Senate Select Committee on Men's Health**

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to make a submission. I write with the benefit of seventeen years experience working in Victorian Secondary Schools and as a parent to two sons aged 12 and 14.

My motivation for making a submission to the committee is a desire to enable improved outcomes for our younger male citizens and of course for younger female citizens

Empirically I have witnessed better outcomes for male and female students who have maintained an equal relationship with both of their natural parents in the event that they have become separated.

I submit that the Committee make a recommendation that should a child's parents become separated that the time the children spend with each parent be of equal time as presumption, rebutted in the case of proven abuse or neglect by either parent.

I submit that binge drinking would be less because now two parents would have the time and energy to supervise their children or teenagers when it is that parent's turn to do so. At the moment a high threshold of young men (and women) have only one parent in their lives. These parents from time to time will go out and leave children unsupervised or in the care of another male adult who is not the child's natural father and who is less concerned with the issue of drinking alcohol.

Students who have both natural parents in their lives on an equal footing have demonstrably improved organisation, use of diary and ability to submit worthwhile work by published deadlines. I have seen in my own sons the tremendous growth in their self esteem when they have been cajoled and encouraged to over months and years to stick at a task and see it through to completion.

Equal time parenting as presumption may actually lead to the flourishing of a variety of healthy and worthwhile parenting plans. It represents a radical step however I submit that we really don't have any more time to waste on trialling any more quick fixes. Australian Citizenry is ready for it and I know we can make it work.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Noonan