

Submission

Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011 [Provisions].

A study in the Medical Journal of Australia stated that fatal child abuse was the most common cause of death and the offender was most commonly the child's mother or her de-facto partner. The father of the victims was least likely to have been the offender yet this Bill seeks to hold these men responsible by removing the rights of children to have equal access to both parents.

It might be noted that child homicide has gone down almost 50 % since the introduction of the much fairer 2006 reforms according to NSW figures. The NSW Child Death Team Annual Reports stated:

- In 2005, twelve children aged between 0-17 died by fatal assault
- In 2007, nine children aged between 0-17 died by fatal assault. 2007 had the lowest child mortality rate observed over 1996-2007. This is the year directly after the reforms were instigated.
- In 2009, seven children aged between 0-17 died in six incidents.

These results indicate the 2006 reforms reduced the lethal danger to children. It is our belief that child homicides could well go back to their pre 2006 levels with the new proposed reforms. This would be an appalling outcome for our children.

My submission is that the suggested roll-back of the positive reforms be rejected on the grounds that there is no evidence to support the introduction of those changes.