

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 885

Date Received: 6-8-03

Secretary:

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, 6 August 2003 2:07 PM

To: Committee, FCA (REPS)

Subject: INQUIRY INTO CHILD CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE EVENT OF FAMILY
SEPARATION

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

I have read the report on the Internet by a Judge of the Court in regard to the above; Most of the comments I agree with in regard to accommodating the children in two homes and the children's schooling. In our family, there has been extenuating circumstances and I as a grand mother, have grave doubts in regard to three of my grand children who are caught up in this type of situation. Their parents are divorced but live in the same town so the children are able to go to the same schools. The divorce was bitter and my ex daughter in law, through the courts was able to keep the family home and retained custody of the children. She maintains the children as she earns a good salary and the father, my son, has access to them every second week end and one night and one afternoon every week. This can only come about as he now is unable to work on account of a damaged back, through work, and is now receiving compensation payments as income. If he was working full time, this arrangement would be impossible. In this instance, he could have the children on an equal basis, that is one week about. However, the mother, who is in full time employment, has full control of the children and it has been brought to my attention that she is hardly ever at home when the children come home from school and are left in the charge of a "nanny", sometimes till quite late in the evenings. This, I consider, was not what the Family Law Court envisaged when the mother was given full control of the children. The judge did not take into account the fact that the father was available to care for the children on a full time basis. Although, we, as grand parents live in another town, we do get to see our grand children occasionally - we are not actually deprived of their visits, for which we are grateful. I realize that I am only writing of our own personal experience, and I also realize that a "blanket" recommendation for all families is not the way to go, but I care about my grand children and would like to see a better arrangement for them. Their ages are 12, 10 and 8 and I worry about how they are coping with this situation.

7/08/2003