

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

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 1108

Date Received: 7-8-03

Secretary: _____

Dear Secretary,

I am a 43 year old single mother of four children.

I have been separated from the children's father for 10 years.

The foreshadowing of legislation to give effect to a rebuttable presumption of 50:50 joint custody after separation would have brought complete and absolute disaster upon this family. The emotional health and well being of the children would have been greatly taxed.

My ex husband, after separation, was in the middle of a mid life crisis, coupled with a separation from his family. My ex husband went on to spend many years, roaming from friends house to friends house, to employers house, seeking accommodation. Over the first initial 4 years, my ex husband had nowhere to live that was stable.

For the immediate 50/50 shared custody to have taken effect upon separation in our case, would have resulted in a messy toing and froing of the children, to many schools, many homes and many environments.

My ex husband has since moved to [REDACTED] north of Sydney, and we are still in the Sydney basin. During the last ten years i have kept the children in the same environment and at the same school to which they belonged before separation. I believe that if i had not done this, the children would not be as emotionally, socially and academically stable as they are today. If 50/50 shared custody had been enforced on our family upon our separation, the children would be in need of counselling and psychological services today, due to seeing the erratic and chaotic lifestyle of their fathers, during his time of instability. After the separation it took my ex husband many many years to stabilise his life.

Children need a stable, routine driven environment. There is enough evidence and statistics to show and validate this.

For 50/50 shared custody to be enforced on our family, I believe that the State and Federal Government would now be having the burden of added unemployment figures (from the lack of employment and skills from the children), the involvement of State Social Services (counselling services) and a underclass generation of welfare dependant children of 50/50 shared custody families.

I am very happy to speak further on my case, with the Committee.

thanking you, for your time,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]