

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: **890**

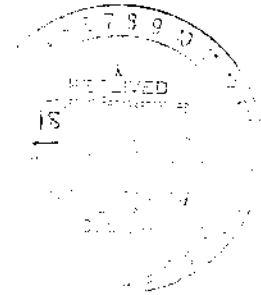
Date Received: **7-8-03**

Secretary:

WOMEN FOR ACTION

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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
Email: FCA.REPS@aph.gov.au



Dear Secretary

Inquiry into child custody arrangements in the event of family separation.

Please find below, **Women For Women For Action's** submission to this inquiry.

Women For Action is a feminist activist group dedicated to fighting women's oppression. While **Women For Action** acknowledges that feminism has made some gains for women's rights, the reality is that women still bare the brunt of poverty, abuse and domestic violence as women. These small gains due to the waves of feminism experience last century could hardly be called "women's liberation."

As women are the oppressed of the two sexes in society, women and their children are often the groups that are most likely to be abused. Having mandatory 50/50 custody of children post-separation means that the safety of women and children leaving abusive relationships will be compromised.

This arrangement would reverse the gains made by feminism so far by denying women leaving abusive relationships the right to safety. By this, I mean by employing mandatory 50/50 custody of children instead of looking at the facts of the case.

Women For Action is concerned about the impact this inquiry, and a decision to make mandatory 50/50 custody legal, which seemed to be predetermined by this inquiry, will have a negative impact on the rights of women in abusive relationships. We are also concerned about the little notice, and amount of time we have had to submit this submission.

If you have any need for further information regarding this issue, please contact myself, Annie Mandela, from **Women For Action** at the address or email address above.

Yours faithfully:

Annie Mandela on behalf of **Women For Action**