

Forbes, Bev (REPS)

From: David & Sandra Dare [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 21 October 2003 3:00 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: Letter re childcare arrangements.doc

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: **1634**

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Secretary:

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20 October 2003

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee of Family And Community Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Beverley & Committee Members

Inquiry into Child custody Arrangement in the event of family separation.

Recently in the Victorian Herald Sun newspaper we read about the concern raised about additional costs that may be incurred if joint custody of children was introduced in Australia. This issue cannot be generalised, as individual circumstances will determine the childcare arrangements that they will require.

Grandparents and other extended family members can be a valuable source for childcare whilst a parent is at work. This source as well as being cost free to the community, can be valuable time that allows grandparents and extended family to enjoy time with these children. They may also care for older children before and after school, freeing up the single parent to continue working. Currently the non custodial parent's parents and extended family members may have very little time with these children and be only too pleased to embrace the role as child carer. Others may be able to provide part-time care thus reducing time required by an outside agency. In our case, having this ongoing responsibility for the past seven years – with our Grandson - we would be only too pleased to care for our Granddaughter as well. The role of child carer is a privilege as it enables us to play a very active role in your grandchildren's lives.

Single parents who do not have a family that can assist with childcare, can access care through an outside agency and before and after school care programs. There is a wide range of programs available in local communities that provide the care and support required.

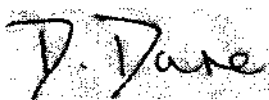
Currently custodial parents have access to regular childcare in centres even when they are not in the workforce. We personally know several single mothers who have used childcare two to three times a week. In our own case our granddaughter was at one time in three different centres, being cared for by the maternal grandmother one day a week as well as care by a friend.

In considering shared care please consider that childcare arrangements can vary whether the mother or father has custody. Being a father doesn't lessen your love for your children and wanting to spend time being actively involved in all aspects of their lives. Shared care enables both parents to be involved with kinders, schools, and recreational activities. We believe that unless proven otherwise,

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shared care is the better option for children.

Yours sincerely


David Dare


Sandra Dare