

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 30

Date Received: 28-7-03

Secretary: _____

10 Bates Street

Homebush, NSW 2140

24/7/2003

Dear Sir,

I am writing to support the Prime Minister's proposal for equal custody of children to both parents in the event of a separation and/or divorce.

The present system which gives custody to the woman is grossly unfair in many cases. I recognise that there are cases where this is justified but there are also cases where the opposite is true and discriminates unfairly against fathers.

The father is often the innocent party in a mental breakdown and is often equally capable of rearing the children as the wife is. The supporting role played by grandparents and others in these situations often greatly assists the lone parent in their task.

I believe that a child does require the proper upbringing and example of both a mother and a father, ideally in a loving home where both parents work together. Where there has been a breakdown in the marriage relationship it is desirable that reconciliation be achieved as quickly as possible, but unfortunately this is not always possible. This option should be constantly explored.

There are situations where the father is more capable and/or suitable to rear the children than the wife is and it would be clearly inappropriate to grant the mother the majority of custody in such instances. It is also unfair that the children should be denied access and contact with grandparents and others from one side of the family unless there are very strong reasons for doing so. Boys in particular need a father's influence, guidance and good example and look to their father as a role model. Mothers often cut the child off from the father's side of the family and then go to work and send the child off to childcare which usually costs

both the father and the government considerable expense and
could have been avoided .

yours sincerely

W. G. Shailer

(W. G. SHAILER)