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Amendments to the Family Law Act 1975

Submission to the Exposure Draft Bill

Family Violence amendments

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Family Law Branch

Attorney-General's Department

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I wish to address cases that are involved in the Court concerning allegations of Family Violence, Family psychological Abuse, Family Psychological Abuse, Children psychological abuse and Children sexual violence.

The way the Court proves or disproves the violence and abuse is by using Social Workers, Family Therapist, Counsellors, Psychologist and Psychiatrists. Most if not all of the above 'experts' possess no training in Family Violence and Abuse. In fact there is no regulations or guidelines to ensure that these 'experts' meet any Court requirements to determine any outcome of Family Violence or Child Abuse cases.

In many cases where children have been removed from the parents care it is based on reports or evidence given by 'experts' who have no specialised training, expertise, or knowledge in Family Violence or Child Abuse. In many of these cases it is the victim of Family Violence who is perceived as the vexatious or frivolous litigant, as the Court dismisses the Family Violence victims evidence over the evidence of the 'expert witness'.

If the proposed exposure draft comes into affect it may in many cases be further hurting or punishing the victims of Family Violence or Child Abuse, from further defending their case and the children will continue to live with the abuser of Family Violence and Child Abuse.

The evidence that is produced before the Court must meet all of the Court requirements but it also MUST be produced by an 'expert' who has specialised training, knowledge and expertise in Family Violence and Child Abuse.

The recommended changes to the Family Law Act 1975 do not address the current injustice that is occurring currently in the Court system in regard to 'expert witness'. I note that it is outlined in the consultation paper that it is recommended (and funded) that further training for Judicial officers, this only represents a small number of people who are involved in the outcomes of Family Violence cases.

The exposure draft could provide the Court more power to remove children from the loving, caring parent to the parent who is narcissistic, controlling and the abuser of Family Violence and Child Abuse as they simply present well in the Court arena, where as, a Family Violence victim who has little or no self esteem are deemed the parent who aligns.

If this Court system is to change and truly believe in assisting victims of Family Violence it must ensure that all Judicial officers, Court represented workers, 'expert witness' which includes all

persons involved in the preparation of Family Reports or other Court Reports have extensive training, knowledge and experience in Family Violence and Child Abuse.

I also surmise that all evidence supplied to Court in Family violence cases MUST be video taped and the full unedited video tape supplied to all parties and the Court.

I wish for you to take into consideration my submission and implement the suggested changes to the Exposure Draft.

Thank you in advance,

Renee Crisp