

## Is Your Spouse Guilty of Parental Alienation?

“Parental Alienation” is currently being examined as a form of child abuse because of its tremendous detrimental effect on children.

What exactly is “Parental Alienation?” Signs of this condition include such behaviors as the following:

- keeping you from visiting with your child,
- not letting you talk to your child by phone,
- not giving your child any letters, cards or even gifts you sent or dropped off for the child, and
- deliberately giving you incorrect information about the child’s activities such as:
  - sporting events
  - school meetings or teacher conferences
  - dance or music performances or recitals

All of these actions are intended to make it appear to the child and to others that you do not care about the child and are not interested in being an active parent in his or her life.

Some psychiatry experts would like to see “Parental Alienation” designated as an actual mental disorder (DSM-5).

If you are separated from your spouse or the other parent of your child and they are engaging in these types of behaviors, it is extremely important for both you and your child that you let the Court know what is going on.

Although we would like to be able to say that so long as you continue to “do the right thing,” that things will turn out alright in the end. Unfortunately, the reality is that this may not be the case.

Resentments by children who think that they were abandoned run deep – even though you absolutely were trying to stay involved with them – and it often takes years of therapy for the relationship to be healed.

Of course, it is essential that you don’t lower yourself to the other parent’s level. Retaliation of any kind is totally a losing strategy. However, we believe that early intervention on your part is critical.

Talk about this with your attorney as soon as you see signs that you are being alienated. The Court will take strong action to protect your relationship with your child.

It is important that you do not allow the other parent to “wear you out” so that you just give up! You should know that the Court has even used alienating behaviors by the parent with whom the child lives as a justification for taking custody away from that parent altogether.

We are, after all, talking about your child’s entire life and well-being here. Your child needs both parents – and, especially, needs to know that he or she is loved by the parent who is not living in the same home.

If you have any questions about “Parental Alienation,” please feel free to contact us for an attorney consultation at 281.550.6650.