

Statistics on Fatherless Homes:

63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes (US Dept. Of Health/Census) – 5 times the average.

90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes – 32 times the average.

85% of all children who show behavior disorders come from fatherless homes – 20 times the average. (Center for Disease Control)

80% of rapists with anger problems come from fatherless homes – 14 times the average. (Justice & Behavior, Vol 14, p. 403-26)

71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average. (National Principals Association Report)

Father Factor in Education – Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school.

Children with Fathers who are involved are 40% less likely to repeat a grade in school.

Children with Fathers who are involved are 70% less likely to drop out of school.

Children with Fathers who are involved are more likely to get A's in school.

Children with Fathers who are involved are more likely to enjoy school and engage in extracurricular activities.

75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes – 10 times the average.

Father Factor in Drug and Alcohol Abuse – Researchers at Columbia University found that children living in two-parent household with a poor relationship with their father are 68% more likely to smoke, drink, or use drugs compared to all teens in two-parent households. Teens in single mother households are at a 30% higher risk than those in two-parent households.

70% of youths in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Sept. 1988)

85% of all youths in prison come from fatherless homes – 20 times the average. (Fulton Co. Georgia, Texas Dept. of Correction)

Father Factor in Incarceration – Even after controlling for income, youths in father-absent households still had significantly higher odds of incarceration than those in mother-father families. Youths who never had a father in the household experienced the highest odds. A 2002 Department of Justice survey of 7,000 inmates revealed that 39% of jail inmates lived in mother-only households. Approximately forty-six percent of jail inmates in 2002 had a previously incarcerated family member. One-fifth experienced a father in prison or jail.

Father Factor in Crime – A study of 109 juvenile offenders indicated that family structure significantly predicts delinquency. Adolescents, particularly boys, in single-parent families were at higher risk of status, property and person delinquencies. Moreover, students attending schools with a high proportion of children of single parents are also at risk. A study of 13,986 women in prison showed that more than half grew up without their father. Forty-two percent grew up in a single-mother household and sixteen percent lived with neither parent

Father Factor in Child Abuse – Compared to living with both parents, living in a single-parent home doubles the risk that a child will suffer physical, emotional, or educational neglect. The overall rate of child abuse and neglect in single-parent households is 27.3 children per 1,000, whereas the rate of overall maltreatment in two-parent households is 15.5 per 1,000.

Daughters of single parents without a Father involved are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers, 71% more likely to have children as teenagers, 164% more likely to have a pre-marital birth and 92% more likely to get divorced themselves.

Adolescent girls raised in a 2 parent home with involved Fathers are significantly less likely to be sexually active than girls raised without involved Fathers.

43% of US children live without their father [US Department of Census]

90% of homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes. [US D.H.H.S., Bureau of the Census]

80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes. [Criminal Justice & Behaviour, Vol 14, pp. 403-26, 1978]

71% of pregnant teenagers lack a father. [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services press release, Friday, March 26, 1999]

63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes. [US D.H.H.S., Bureau of the Census]

85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes. [Center for Disease Control]

90% of adolescent repeat arsonists live with only their mother. [Wray Herbert, "Dousing the Kindlers," Psychology Today, January, 1985, p. 28]

71% of high school dropouts come from fatherless homes. [National Principals Association Report on the State of High Schools]

75% of adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes. [Rainbows f for all God's Children]

70% of juveniles in state operated institutions have no father. [US Department of Justice, Special Report, Sept. 1988]

85% of youths in prisons grew up in a fatherless home. [Fulton County Georgia jail populations, Texas Department of Corrections, 1992]

Fatherless boys and girls are: twice as likely to drop out of high school; twice as likely to end up in jail; four times more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems. [US D.H.H.S. news release, March 26, 1999]

The mercury reported in 2014 that "the legal system is not the place to domestic violence in majority of cases. Ploughing more money into prosecutors and creating criminal offenses will not assist in dealing with the root causes of family violence".

Science Debunks the "women are the gentler sex"; Medical Daily Jan. 30, 2014, in a symposium (June 25, 2013) on intimate partner violence at The British Psychological Society's division of forensic Psychology annual conference found women are more likely to be "INTIMATE TERRORIST" or PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE to their partners.

Medical Xpress reported that Dr Elizabeth Bates study of 1000 students revealed that just as many women as men could be classified as abusive, coupled with controlling behavior with SERIOUS levels of threats, intimidation, and physical violence. This study also found that women demonstrated a desire to control their partners (and family, children?) And more likely to use physical aggression than men, "it wasn't just pushing and shoving"

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence "men and boys (children) are less likely to report the violence. Sixteen percent of adult males who did report being raped or physically assaulted are victims of current, or former spouse, cohabitation partner.

Harvard Study 2010, revealed that 70 percent of domestic violence is committed by women against men.
2001 CDC survey of young adult in heterosexual relationships provided answers to violence-related questions Researchers found that women were more likely to insight violence then men.
Australian Institute of Family studies, Australia biggest childhood study reveals found girls are more devious then boys in the torment of their classmates.
All states in the USA, using the case load and statics from child services, Human resources shows that 70 to 75 % of abuse, neglect, and emotional issues are against the Biological mother (CHECK YOUR OWN AREA).

The only Federally funded study ever undertaken on the subject, psychologist Sanford Braver found the "deadbeat dad who walks out on his family and evades child support "does not exist in significant numbers. Braver found women initiate at least two-thirds of divorces, and that the cause of action is rarely desertion, adultery or violence
Researcher Shere Hite reports that 91 percent of divorces are initiated by wives, And David Chambers claims "the wife is the moving party in divorce actions seven times out of eight
Study of low-income fathers in England found "the most common reason given by the fathers for not having more contact with their children was the mothers' reluctance to let them. . . . Most of the men were proud to be seen as competent care givers and displayed a knowledge of child-care issues

The trap is real, some, like myself, feel we can't give up. So we feed the machine designed to enslave and torture us, using our children as the proverbial carrot on the string, leading us down the path of self destruction in a fight for our children.

We are warriors, in an untrainable battlefield, the rules are rigged against us, our resources dwindled, yet still we press on.

I am not a visitor, I am not a deadbeat! I am a slave because I fought for my rights to be a dad!

CALL TO ACTION AGAINST SB 318 (Rebutted)

Original opposition by Deirdra Eden

Rebutted by Parental Equality Network

Oregon's current law requires courts, in every case, to individually consider each child's "best interests," then to fashion a custodial schedule to serve them.

SB 318 is the first bill that would add any defining resolution to what is considered "best interest" of our children. Under current law the courts are required to subjugate one parent or the other to a "noncustodial" role if/when the parties cannot agree on custodial arrangements, limiting their time by enacting a Standardized Parenting Plan that allows for, on a good year, 73 Days a year of contact with a parent. The right of a child to a meaningful relationship with both parents should be at the core our consideration for their "best interest".

To identify a child's best interests, the court must consider many facts, including: both parents' mental and physical health; their criminal backgrounds; their history with drugs and alcohol; their work hours; their ability to provide; which parent has been the child's primary caretaker; what kind of living environment each provides; what kind of people each parent spends time with; whether domestic violence or other abuse was a factor in leading to the divorce; and more.

Facts are not necessary in family court, a mere allegation is sufficient to establish precedence under current guidelines. The court considers "factors" when deciding custodial arrangements, and evidence, if or when offered, would often hardly stand up to the scrutiny of a jury trial or a criminal proceeding. The idea that there is guilt assigned and rights removed without due process is absurd, especially when it involves the relationship between a parent and a child.

SB 318 would replace this case by case, child by child, family by family evaluation with a onesize fits all approach. It would require judges to assume, rather than think, and to use the same timeshare proportion for all children and all families, despite their differences. It would pingpong children back and forth between parents, making them live halftime with each. Its "reasoning" has nothing to do with those children's interests, everything to do with aggrieved parents' selffocus.

There is no one size fits all approach as described, Section 1 (4)

Grant parents and courts the widest discretion in developing a parenting plan;

The court already assumes, rather than think of the consequences, of the current standard parenting plan that limits a child to only a limited, 4 day a month, part-time relationship with their "noncustodial" parent.

But both social sciences and common sense see things differently. In most instances, children are bestserved with one primary home; with routine; with stability.

“Regrettably we social scientists have done a poor job sharing the empirical research with other professionals or with divorcing parents. As a result, a handful of studies – often outdated or seriously flawed methodologically - are widely disseminated as “the research”

Dr. Linda Nielsen has been a Professor of Adolescent & Educational Psychology at Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, NC for 36 years., Parenting Time & Shared Residential Custody: Ten Common Myths, The Nebraska Lawyer, Jan/Feb 2013

“The vast majority of children who lived with their mothers after their parents’ divorce disliked having so little time with their fathers.”

Kelly, J. (2012) Risk and protective factors for children of divorce. In Parenting plan evaluations: Applied research for the family court (Kuehnle, K., and Drozd, L., Eds.) pp 145-173, Oxford University Press, New York.

“In contrast, the vast majority who have lived in shared residential parenting families say the inconvenience of living in two homes was worth it – primarily because they were able to maintain strong relationships with both parents.”

Nielsen, L. (2013) Shared Residential Custody: A recent research review. American Journal of Family Law (forthcoming issue).

You be the judge. Here are a few common fact patterns judges regularly see. In each scenario, would you want to provide the child an individualized schedule...or be stuck with 50/50 cookiecutter, halvesies, approach?

Babies and toddlers: Psychologists tell us that babies require a primary parental attachment, that it’s harmful to separate them from their primary parent for more than a few hours at a time, not to mention the devastating affects it would have on breastfed babies. Likewise, toddlers suffer if separated from their primary parent overnight. To those thinking of their own interests, what we know about children’s developmental tolerances is irrelevant. It doesn’t matter that harm is done to kids because, to its sponsors, this is about being “fair” to parents, not doing right by kids.

“The prevailing view among most contemporary attachment researchers and child development experts is that there is not one “primary” attachment figure. Instead, infants form strong attachments to both parents and at roughly the same time. Whatever initial preferences infants might have for one parent disappears by 18 months of age. This is not to say that all researchers agree on this point. Nevertheless, recent empirical research is undermining the traditional beliefs about primary and secondary parents – the belief that an infant’s relationship with the mother is more vital than with the fathers.”

Newland, L., Freeman, H., and Coyle, D. Emerging Topics on Father Attachment (2011) Routledge, New York.

The Paternity Case: Census data tells us approximately half of all children are born outofwedlock, many times to men who have moved on by the time they’re born. By the time a paternal relationship is legally

established, the child has usually been living with mom for over a year, maybe two, often more. By then, the child doesn't know dad from a stranger on the street.

The suggestion that a displaced biological parent should be permanently disbarred from a meaningful and fulfilling relationship with their child simply because it "took time" to establish legal paternity is unfounded. We as a people should encourage reunification, whenever possible and safe for the child. Similarly, a child born out of wedlock is entitled the same right to a meaningful relationship with their biological parent as those born to wed parents.

The Bad Divorce: Psychologists tell us that the single best predictor of how children in equal custody arrangements fare is whether their parents are civil and cooperative, or hostile and uncommunicative, with each other. Well, think about it. Which of these descriptions best match your understanding of most divorced couples? Are they divorced because of how well they worked together, or because they stopped working together?

"Unless there is a history of physical abuse or violence, for the reasons just presented, high verbal conflict should not be used as a reason to limit parenting time. Not only can much of this conflict be reduced through parenting programs, but the conflict generally declines by the end of the first year or so after separation. Especially during custody negotiations, conflict is not a reliable predictor of future conflict. Moreover, verbal conflict is associated with fewer negative outcomes for children than having too little fathering time."

Birnbaum, R., and Bala, N. (2010) Toward the differentiation of high conflict families: An analysis of social science research and Canadian case law. *Family Court Review* 48, 403-416.

Lamb, M. (2012) Critical analysis of research on parenting plans and children's well-being. In *Parenting plan evaluations: Applied research for the family court* (Kuehnle, K., and Drozd, L., Eds.) pp 214-246, Oxford University Press, New York.

The Primary Caretaker: Most couples develop portfolios of responsibility. For many, when it comes to parenting, one party takes a strong lead, maybe even gives up the employed life to devote all energies to tending kids. Maybe the other parent is a workaholic, giving first priority to career. When those parents live a life based on one taking the primary parenting role, upon separation shouldn't the kids continue in that parent's primary care?

First, most married couples are more equally sharing the parenting time. Employed fathers spend roughly 60 minutes on weekdays with the children while employed moms spend 90 minutes. This would be the equivalent of 120 overnights with a father after divorce. Fathers under the age of 30 do only 45 minutes less childcare on workdays than mothers do. In two national surveys with 2000 parents, dads spent 33 hours a week with the children and mothers spent 50. Children under the age of 6 require 3 times as much parenting time as older children. And whichever parent gets home from work first or works the fewest hours generally does more of the childcare. The more time the mother works outside the home, the more time the father spends with the children. But the mothers who are most likely to stay home full time with preschoolers are the most poorly educated women who could not earn

enough, if working, to pay for child care. Second, married parents' arrangements for their young children are temporary – they are not intended, as are custody orders, to remain in place until the children turn 18. Third, childcare hours are not synonymous with parenting. The fact that one parent spends more time with the children does not mean that the other parent is doing less parenting or that his or her daily presence is any less beneficial and essential.

Bianchi, S., Robinson, J., and Milkie, M. Changing rhythms of the American family (2006) Sage, New York.

Domestic Violence: A recent study by Women's Foundation of Oregon and Count Her In found that over 1 million Oregon women and girls have experienced sexual or domestic violence. Oregon is one of the top three states in the nation for violence against women. These alarming statistics were recently published in the Oregonian and presented to Governor Kate Brown. Many victims endure domestic violence and stay in harmful situations and relationship to protect their children. How can they protect their children from an abuser if they are not there with them 50% of the time?

SB 318 would not change considerations for the safety and wellbeing of all parties involved, children and parents. Domestic violence is a problem in Oregon, but not everyone alleged of these criminal acts is in fact guilty. FAPA restraining orders may be issued with a mere allegation of "fear", without an act of violence ever having occurred. The idea that a parent is guilty simply because they have been accused is unfounded anywhere else in U.S. law. This may contribute to high occurrences of false allegations in order to gain an upper hand in custody battles, often referred to in legal circles as "the silver bullet".

"False statements in domestic violence cases are a significant problem and considered an epidemic with an estimated 40 to 90 percent of domestic violence victims recanting."

Tom Lininger, Prosecuting Batterers After Crawford, 91 VA. L. REV. 747, 768 (2005)

We encourage those who represent us to vote AGAINST OR SB 318 and to SUPPORT H.Con.Res.150 — 114th Congress

Official Title as Introduced: "Expressing the sense of Congress that child safety is the first priority of custody and visitation adjudications, and that state courts should improve adjudications of custody where family violence is alleged."

SB 318 includes provisions that account for children's and parents safety in custodial arrangements. The problem that "alleged" is all it takes for a child-parent relationship to be legally severed and both parental and the child's rights restricted. All violent Crimes should be prosecuted, but the constitution grants those alleged of a crime Due Process, this is not the case in our family courts.

I hope the Oregon law makers and judges will be like the wise king and judge of old. When a child's fate was in his hands, he knew better than to actually cut it in half. When that moment arrives, don't be suckered by the attractive phrase "equal parental rights." In this instance, "equal" means "half" and is not in anyone's best interest, especially the children's.

SB 318 does not create a cookie cutter approach to parenting plans; it does however make an equitable custodial arrangement the starting point. It allows for parents to develop plans that are appropriate given their circumstances and come to a more unbiased arrangement with their children. Under current law, a disagreement on any one issue can lead to one parent being subjected to the standard 80/20 parenting plan that is used routinely in Oregon Courts, regardless of that parent's fitness and ability as a parent. The presumption that a 50/50 parenting plan is rebuttable under SB 318, which means if the court finds sufficient grounds for granting less time to one parent or the other, the bill also grants the highest discretion in developing a plan that is in the best interest of the child.

Twelve reasons why 50/50 parenting plan is a bad idea:

1. It pin pongs children back and forth and creates instability in their lives and with schooling, especially if the parents live at a distance. As Sean Onderick, A family law attorney says, "A child, it seems to me, should have a stable environment which minimizes disruptions in their routine during the school year and one that is most conducive to their achieving the best academic results possible."

Discretion in creating parenting plans would allow courts to take into account school schedules, work schedules, and distance from the other parent into consideration when developing a parenting plan. And an opinion from any family law attorney is inherently biased due to the fact that they are trained in the status quo and any subsequent change to their current subscribed dogma would have potentially adverse effects on the profitability of the family court industry, it is in the family law attorneys best interest to keep things status quo for their own self focus.

2. Studies have shown that children do best with one primary caregiver.

Shared Physical Custody: Does It Benefit Most Children? Linda Nielsen - 2015

http://aaml.org/sites/default/files/MAT111_1.pdf

Regarding the wellbeing of kids with divorced parents, the debate over what kind of custody arrangement is best rages on. But a new study, published Monday in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, suggests that children fare better when they spend time living with both of their parents.

<http://time.com/3836627/divorced-parents-joint-custody/>

Equal Parenting and the Quality of Parent-Child Attachments – The link between Quantity of Time and quality of parent-child relationships – Edward Kruk Ph.D. 2013

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/co-parenting-after-divorce/201303/equal-parenting-and-the-quality-parent-child-attachments>

Research Consensus Statement on Co-Parenting After Divorce – Conclusions of the First International Conference on Shared Parenting. – Edward Druk Ph.D. 2014

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/co-parenting-after-divorce/201407/research-consensus-statement-co-parenting-after-divorce>

Should Infants and Toddlers Have Frequent Overnight Parenting Time With Fathers? The Policy Debate and New Data – *William V. Fabricius and Go Woon Suh*
<http://psycnet.apa.org/?&fa=main.doiLanding&doi=10.1037/law0000108>

3. 50/50 is one of the threats that abusive parents make to keep the other parent in the relationship. Do not discount this it is very common and do not make this threat legitimate. The reality is that children are often used as a weapon in divorce and custody, and we should assume that a parent acts faithfully in their duty as a parent, investigate misdeeds and when appropriate modify outcomes to reflect the findings. The presumption of equality should never be considered a weapon, especially when it involves a parent-child relationship.
4. This does not take into consideration many family oriented religious institutions and communities nor their religiosity in family practice. The first amendment protects freedom of religion, if both parents subscribe to differing religions, a child should be allowed the right of spiritual guidance from both parents, the court has no authority in deciding a more or less worthy spiritual path.
5. Studies have also shown how detrimental, physically and psychologically, it is to keep breastfeeding babies and toddlers from their mothers for more than a few hours. "There are only seven studies that have assessed overnighting and non-overnighting infants and preschoolers. None of them found statistically significant differences in irritability or other measures of maladjustment related to overnighting per se. Given the confusion and debate on this issue, it is worth providing more details of these studies."
Dr. Linda Nielsen, Parenting Time & Shared Residential Custody: Ten Common Myths, The Nebraska Lawyer, Jan/Feb 2013
6. It discounts the statics of domestic violence and child abuse in family court. In an alarming number of family courts domestic violence and child abuse are not even considered with deciding custody. Using statistics to make overarching assumptions about individual cases is not justice, and domestic violence is an acknowledged factor is nearly every family court outcome. In Oregon, courts are not allowed grant custody to an abusive parent when that parent is found to be abusive.
7. It makes things much harder for working parents and career parents to coordinate work schedules. Parents often develop portfolios of responsibility. For many, when it comes to parenting, one party takes a strong lead while one focuses on a career. This will have consequences on economy and society. This would drastically increase the demand and cost for day care. It would be better and most cost effective for one parent to be a primary care giver rather than pay expensive day care providers. The same would be true had those same two parents been able to work out their marital and relationship problems, time management is no excuse for restricting a meaningful and

continued parent-child relationship. In fact, encouraging co-parenting may decrease the need for child care when parents are encourage to for a more equitable time allocation of custodial time, how often are children in daycare when they could be spending time with their other parent?

8. It discounts children's rights, wishes, and safety and reemphasizes the false notion that children are property to be split in half like the family savings and debt.

"The vast majority of children who lived with their mothers after their parents' divorce disliked having so little time with their fathers. In contrast, the vast majority who have lived in shared residential parenting families say the inconvenience of living in two homes was worth it – primarily because they were able to maintain strong relationships with both parents."

Dr. Linda Nielsen, Parenting Time & Shared Residential Custody: Ten Common Myths, The Nebraska Lawyer, Jan/Feb 2013

9. Children with developmental delays such as autism suffer greatly with the instability of multiple residences and no primary caregiver.

I'm hard-pressed to find the evidence to support such a claim, very little research has been done regarding this specific situation, and again these outlying scenarios should not be assumed on the majority of the well adjusted and healthy parents and children.

10. Currently 90% of all divorces are settled outside of court. If couples already have a plan worked out for their family, then don't interfere and don't create a default plan which will make it easier for couples to give up on mediation.

"In the studies that have examined how parents arrived at their shared residential parenting plan, from 20% - 85% of the parents had not initially wanted to share. For many families where the children were successfully living in two homes, the shared parenting plan was a compromise brought about through mediation, litigation, or lawyers' negotiations."

Nielsen, L. (2011) Shared parenting after divorce: A review of shared residential parenting research. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage 52, 586-609.

11. Many children are born out of wedlock and do not actually meet their fathers until they are older. This would be in extreme bad taste to take a child away from their lifetime primary care giver and place them 50% of the time with a man who is a stranger.

The suggestion that a displaced biological parent should be permanently disbarred from a meaningful and fulfilling relationship with their child simply because it "took time" to establish legal paternity is unfounded. We as a people should encourage reunification, whenever possible and safe for the child. Similarly, a child born out of wedlock is entitled the same right to a meaningful relationship with their biological parent as those born to wed parents.

12. Oregon is one of the most unique states in the country. We have such diversity and especially diversity in our families. There is no one size fit all parenting plan!

Current law already creates a "standard parenting plan" that is destructive to the parent child relationship of the parent the court decides to be considered "noncustodial".

From studying the statistics and other areas that have implements 50/50 custody I warn that SB 318 will:

1. Increase domestic violence and perpetuated domestic violence to the next generation.
It may have increased allegations of abuse in states where 50/50 has taken root, because it is still a common tool to assure a win for one party over the other in custody cases, but a 50/50 rebuttable presumption does not create a cultural explosion of domestic violence.
2. Increase number of single parents on welfare and public assistance.
There is no correlation to shared parenting legislation and an increase in need for public assistance. Many economic factors contribute to fluctuations in welfare participation.
3. Increase number of children who are failing in school systems.
71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average. (National Principals Association Report)
4. Dramatically increase the cost and need for day care as primary parental care and nurturing is abolished.
SB 318 may in fact decrease the need and cost of child care, since more familial resources will be available to furnish care for the children. Encouraging co-parenting and equity in responsibility, over time will foster a cultural shift in child rearing, involving more of a child's extended family as resources that can be harnessed for the benefit of the child.
5. A decrease of ability and duration for mothers to breastfeed which no one is going to dispute the benefits of.
Technology has already created a solution for breastfeeding mothers in the form of a breast pump, these are already subsidized by the department of health and widely used by breastfeeding mothers to augment feeding schedules to meet the needs of their infants.

These are just a few of the detrimental effects of a government opposed one size fit all parenting plan for divorced parents.

In my extensive nationwide research of divorce psychology I have found that we are seeing terrible patterns of corruption in family court designed to drain families of their finances, perpetuate conflict, drive couples further apart so that coparenting is almost impossible, judges and lawyers are profiting by racketeering.

Cannot dispute, family court and the incentives of the current rules that govern decisions made within are and do perpetuate conflict, that's why the time for changes is now!

According to the Center for Public Integrity, Oregon gets a great F in judicial accountability. In such a liberal state that focuses so much on human rights we are failing our people in creating a justice system that is for the people by the people. Rather we have our people being told that they can have as much justice as they can afford. Our state is ranked one of the lowest in providing justice and judicial accountability and our ranking is dropping. When is a grade F ever acceptable?

Cannot dispute, judicial accountability needs to be addressed, sweeping reform in the way family law is conducted in our state and throughout the country needs to be addressed, however a step in the right

direction should never be avoided, you can't fix what's broken until you address the pieces that are missing, SB 318 does just that.

1. In all divorces every participant including parents, therapists, judges, legal professionals, custody evaluators, law enforcement, mediators and every other party involved will honor the child's rights as the highest right when deciding residency and making other crucial decisions. Child's rights include:

- The Right to be informed on an age appropriate level.
- The Right to unhampered progress in school and educational pursuits
- The Right to engaging in age appropriate activities and social experiences.
- The Right to have liberal access to siblings, half siblings and step siblings.
- The Right to interact freely with all parents, step parents, grandparents and other close relatives in person, or through digital and other means.
- The Right to see, touch and express affection to all relatives.
- The Right to set boundaries in relationships.
- The Right to express thoughts, desires, concerns, and to have those considered, and respected by parents and professionals.
- The Right to choose their own religion.
- The Right to pursue age appropriate goals.
- The Right to be safe and protected by parents and professionals.
- The Right to have financial, medical, physical, physiological, and all other basic needs met.
- The Right to stability.
- The Right to age appropriate privacy.
- The Right to be included in decisions about where the child would like to live.
- The Right to see a split family therapist or any other mental health professional that they may confide in.

The rights of our children need to be at the forefront of any family court decision, but more and more those rights are infringed upon by these courts. Subjected to limited time with a parent, restricted through no fault of their own, yet a child's rights are rarely, if ever represented in family court.

(1) Assure minor children of frequent and continuing contact with parents who have shown the ability to act in the best interests of the child

