

News
Release

Parental Alienation Syndrome expert
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Proposed New BC Divorce, Separation, Custody Laws put Child's Best Interest Front and Centre

For Immediate Release

Outdated 1978 provincial family laws given overhaul

Penticton, BC—While many families will benefit from the proposed new provincial family laws, some families may be put at greater risk. As reported, “The new Family Law Act is an effort to reduce costly legal battles by encouraging out-of-court settlements through mediation, arbitration or other means.”

“It’s important to remember that if the seeds of parental alienation syndrome have already been planted, it’s doubtful parents will be able to reach out-of-court settlements. In these cases, it’s imperative that families receive knowledgeable legal and psychological counselling for the benefit of the children involved,” says Dr. Kathleen Reay, Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) expert.

BC is definitely on track with these reforms, especially when it comes to taking a more serious approach to dealing with family violence.

“For those families dealing with PAS, the laws need to recognize it as a serious form of child abuse equivalent to family violence in terms of the damage it inflicts on families,” explains Reay.

Attorney General Shirley Bond states that breaching the new proposed protection order that addresses family violence would become a criminal offence.

"There's actually a definition of family violence now that includes things like psychological and emotional abuse. We've said if there is someone at risk, particularly in terms of family violence, a broader group of people can actually seek a protection order and the judge could then make a specific protection order," explains Bond.

“Psychological and emotional abuse are definitely major factors when it comes to PAS,” stresses Reay. “We need more trained professionals that can determine if PAS is present

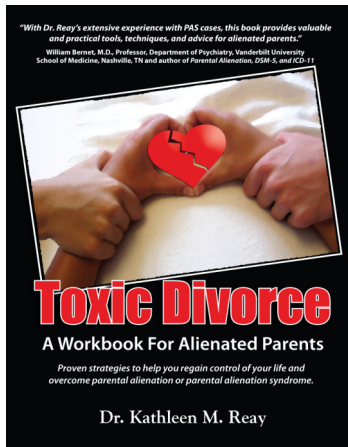
and who are able to take steps that will benefit the children and the dysfunctional families as a whole.”

When it comes to PAS, a couple of the more pertinent proposed reforms include:

- Making “children’s best interests the only consideration in parenting disputes” and allowing for the consideration of a child’s view.
- New penalties against parents who fail to show up for their allotted time with a child, or withhold access from another parent. Sanctions range from counselling to the removal of the child, to up to 30 days in jail.
- Giving judges new “conduct orders” to deal with so-called “high-conflict families” that are so acrimonious and hostile that they tie up the system and perpetuate conflict. The court may also appoint a lawyer for a child to help refocus the disagreement on the best interests of the child.

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Parental Alienation Syndrome expert, Dr. Kathleen Reay has written a book to help alienated parents rebuild loving relationships with their children. *Toxic Divorce: A Workbook for Alienated Parents* provides step-by-step directions and powerful strategies to deal with the ramifications of Parental Alienation or Parental Alienation Syndrome, including how to cope with grief and loss and how to overcome negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours.