

## Israeli Fathers Fighting Discrimination in Family Courts

***The plight of men in Israel, who are denied visitation rights with their children, is now subject to Israeli Supreme Court review. A Petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice in Jerusalem was launched against the Israeli Ministry of Welfare and Social Services on March 15, 2011 by a father who has not seen his child in two years, seeks to enjoin Moshe Kachlon, the Minister of Welfare and Social services from practicing discriminatory policies designed to disengage fathers from their children.***

**Online PR News – 21-March-2011**– According to the Petition, A minor v. Moshe Kachlon, Minister of Welfare and Social Services (Bagatz 2111/11), the Family Courts in Israel have completely divested themselves from any judicial role in areas of custody and visitation rights, and instead of conducting trials, they merely appoint a social services agent, as Court-aides to determine whether a father may be granted rights of visitations to the children. According to Petitioner, the social workers automatically send non-custodian fathers to supervised contact centers, where the fathers are allowed one hour a week. The petition alleges that the waiting list on the social workers caseload may take 6 to 9 months during which no access or visitation rights are allowed. Once the social worker starts working on the case, “all hell breaks loose”. The social workers humiliate fathers, collect tidbits of libel and defamation and puts them in writing, instigate the mothers and motivate them to file false domestic violence claims in order to rule out any option of joint custody, and it is alleged that the social workers in general are biased against men, and are systematically indoctrinated into an anti-male climate of “feministic Jihad proportions” against men.

The Petition seeks to declare the policy of automatic referrals of fathers to a supervised “contact center” unconstitutional. It is claimed that Israel is signatory to international treaties whereby the State guarantees protection of the right to family life, but in reality, the right to family life is not interpreted in Israel in the same way it is interpreted by Western nations. In Europe, for example, the right to family life is interpreted to include parental rights to access to the children without institutionalized intervention, or with minimal intervention by the State. Israel, on the other hand, still does not recognize a parental right to access to the children, and thus fathers are relegated to the task of convincing the social workers that it is the best interest of the child that he sees the father, as a matter of judicial grace, and not as a matter of a natural indelible right.

It is stated in the Petition that it is enough for the custodian mother to refuse visitation rights to trigger the automatic referral to supervised visitations, and that in the process; social workers subject fathers to an illegal “Dangerous Propensities Test”, which is so non-scientific and wholly subjective, no man can pass the test without being branded as “dangerous”. Social Workers are instructed to grade fathers between 0 to 36 point, when 10 points yields a level of “dangerous Propensity”.

The points can simply be accumulated depending on the theatrical degree of the complaining

woman, and biased level of the social worker, on subjective questions such as: extreme jealousy (2 points), extreme possessiveness (2 points), the attacker experiences severe loss (3 points), the attacker in the absence of alternative to loss (1 pt), obsessive preoccupation with the woman (2 points), woman is determined to make a change (1 points), woman feels she is in danger (3 points), woman unable to defend herself (2 pts.).

“It is sufficient to score high on these eight questions to produce a score of 16 points, and with little drama, theatrical sense and legal coaching, any woman can easily convince the social worker to give high scores on these factors, and the man is immediately branded as “dangerous”, and loses his right to see or access his children. No man in any Western society is subjected to this kind of degrading and humiliating treatment when seeking to see his children, except in Israel”, says the Petitioner. In addition, the father claims Social workers compelled him to undergo psycho-therapeutic sessions, without his consent, as a condition to approving his right to see the child, and then they used the information extracted from him to paint him negatively in the court, simply because the woman announced that ideologically the child does not need to grow up with a father figure.

Militant journalist, Laurie Shem Tov, states that Social Workers in Israel created an autonomous system that denies parents’ real access to Courts and is totally immune from judicial scrutiny. “They set new rules that contradict the laws of equality and modern disciplines of social work”. The solutions offered are radical and extreme: men are sent to supervised contact centers, and women who do not play by the rules find their children kidnapped to foster care, based solely on "impressions", "feelings", "intuitions" and "future risk probabilities" that have no scientific or legally probative value. “The social Services system in Israel is a corrupt and malicious system based on intoxicated power egos, and systematic feeding of business to social workers, foster home operators, and “parental suitability” test institutions, while the children are routinely disconnected from loving parents and this is all cloaked under “best interest of the child” slogans.

The fight of fathers to recognition of their rights to undisrupted visitation rights with children has also reached the Knesset. Member of Knesset Yulia Shamalov-Berkovich has started a forum against feministic Jihad seeking to restore the balance of power and fair play between the sexes. The recent Petition to the Supreme Court has been inspired by the momentum created by Shamalov-Berkovich. The minor and his father are represented by attorney Chaim Arbel of Tel Aviv and assisted by Tamar Tesler of Haifa.

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