

EDUCATING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, JUDGES, LAWYERS AND EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH FAMILIES

Mental Health Professionals (MHP) must be fully qualified in parental alienation and family systems before being involved in any family court proceedings. No assessments should ever be done by a MHP without a full understanding of alienating behaviours in family systems and the life-long consequences that they have. Every MHP involved in families must understand how parents with a personality disorder or other mental health challenges may purport to be a protective parent but in reality they are abusive to their own children. They must understand that a parent often has a motive to autonomously move or relocate to another jurisdiction, relocate to another country, or return to their native country with the children who shall never want to return as children or adults. Mental Health Professionals must understand that such autonomous motives are rarely, if ever, best for the children.

Before commencing on work with families in court-ordered assessments, Mental Health Professionals must have undergone education that studies the vast array of alienating behaviours, and studies the harmful effects of alienating behaviours on children.

While Parental Alienation has serious ill effects on a targeted parent who may be traumatized by this form of abuse, a child is often affected with extremely detrimental life-long consequences. This form of abuse is very problematic because it teaches a child to hate. It teaches a child to fear. It teaches a child to be abusive. Thus, a child may be abusive to an intimate partner later in life. In turn, that parent may become alienated from their children, or they may alienate their children from their partner. This form of abuse happens within marriages, and often happens during separation or divorce at escalated voracity.

While alienating behavior may appear to be merely attacks against a former partner, they are attacks on the mental health of a vulnerable child. These behaviors are bad parenting; child abuse. The list below is a short list of an inexhaustible number of abuses that teach a child to fear, hate and abuse another human being:

1. **BAD-MOUTHING the other parent in front of the child or within earshot:** Bad-mouthing teaches a child to be verbally abusive.
2. **SCOLDING the child for saying something good about the other parent, or even talking about the other parent:** Inappropriate scolding or reprimanding teaches a child to be critical of others, and prevents the child from learning appropriate social skills.
3. **EXPOSING the child to parental conflict, whether in-person or on the phone:** Inappropriate conflict teaches a child to become conflictual with others; it prevents the child from developing appropriate conflict resolution strategies and effective communication skills.
4. **DIRECTING negative non-verbal communication at the other parent in front of the child:** Such gestures teach the child to use rude gestures, while avoiding effective conflict resolution strategies and effective inter-personal communication.
5. **JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS to condemn the other parent, instead of talking with the other parent to discuss parenting issues:** Jumping to conclusions teaches the child to do the same, while failing to mentor and instill rational thinking skills.
6. **ACCUSSING the other parent instead of discussing concerns:** Accusatory behavior teaches the child to accuse others without consideration of others or without consideration of reality.
7. **ALLEGING victimization of abuse or violence to third parties, getting restraining orders or going to shelters to build fear or sympathy with the child:** Such tactics not only teach children to do irrational things but often create mental health issues including Anxiety and

Depression, Parentification, and Cognitive Dissonance.

8. **BEING UNBALANCED; being the fun parent and diverging from the rules: Divergent parenting** sets into motion a cycle of resentment, hostility and a reluctance of the child to follow rules with both parents. [14]
9. **BEING OVERINDUGENT to children to win their admiration.** Such behaviors, or tactics, teach a child to manipulate others to win their favor; impulse control is diminished. [14]
10. **REFUSING TO COMMUNICATE with the other parent about the child and the child's well-being:** Refusing to communicate teaches the child to do the same.
11. **SHARING Grown Up Details With the Child:** Sharing grown-up details is a cause of parentification which is a role-reversal where children may struggle to regulate and cope with their own negative emotions, and may develop a high emotional reactivity and sensitivity that makes them susceptible to emotional outbursts.
12. **ALLOWING the child to make up their own mind whether they want to spend time with the other parent:** While the child knows the parent despises the other parent, allowing the child to 'choose' sides causes cognitive dissonance which means Anxiety and Depression issues.
13. **WITHHOLDING important information about the child's schooling, such as parent-teacher conferences, concerts, or activities;**
14. **SCHEDULING activities for the child during the other parent's scheduled parenting time without clearing it with that parent;**
15. **NOT GIVING access to the child's school, medical or religious records or providers;**
16. **NOT DISCUSSING decisions regarding medical care, education, or religious training with the other parent;**
17. **NOT LISTING the other parent's contact information on school/medical forms when required or appropriate;**
18. **NOT INVITING, OR DISALLOWING the other parent to attend events that are important to the child, such as birthday parties, sports banquets, recitals, etc.;**
19. **BEING INFLEXIBLE about reasonable requests for changes to the parenting time schedule;**
20. **USING CHILD CARE SERVICES, rather than giving the other parent the opportunity to spend time with the child;**
21. **BEING INTRUSIVE or interrupting the child's scheduled time with the other parent, e.g., by frequent, unnecessary phone calls;**
22. **MAKING IT DIFFICULT for your child to call, text, Skype, or FaceTime with their other parent;**
23. **REQUIRING the child to have all communications with the other parent on speaker phone, or otherwise denying them privacy to communicate with that parent;**
24. **TELLING the child not to call/write/text the other parent;**
25. **MAKING the child unavailable at scheduled call times with the other parent;**
26. **USING THE CHILD to convey messages to the other parent rather than communicating directly;**
27. **ASKING THE CHILD for information about the other parent or to "spy on" the other parent;**
28. **ASKING THE CHILD to keep secrets from the other parent;**
29. **DISCUSSING child support or financial issues with the child or blaming the other parent for financial difficulties;**
30. **LEAVING adult information (like copies of court motions) out where the child may have access.**

Aside from trauma, suicide, and mental health problems experienced by targeted parents, the children may develop the following problems in their lives [12]:

- Clinical diagnosis of Anxiety and Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Sexual Promiscuity
- Psycho-Somatic Distortions
- Sibling Conflict (Including Violence)
- Heightened Fantasy Life
- Social Identity Problem
- Regressive Behaviors
- Memory Loss
- Conflicts in Relationships
- Diminished Impulse Control
- Self-Esteem Problems
- Personality Disorders
- Gender-Identity Problems
- Poor Differentiation of Self (Enmeshment)
- Aggression and Conduct Disorders
- Disregard for Social Norms and Authority
- Lack of Remorse or Guilt

The foregoing is the science behind this form of abuse. For a practical perspective we can look to adult children who have experienced this form of abuse, and although they were taught to fear, hate, and disdain their other parent, some have subsequently experienced a reality check. The following adult children reveal their struggles and pain and show the reality of alienating behaviors:

1. Alienation is often a cross-generational family dynamic. Deborah Shreffler was alienated from her father as a child, and she too became alienated from her children who were taught to hate and disrespect her.

Childhood Interrupted - Season 2 - Episode 5 with Deborah Shreffler

<https://youtu.be/AIVeLTOwpK0>

2. The Mullis sisters were both alienated for 23 years and suffered for numerous years with trauma.

Childhood Interrupted - Season 1 - Episode 6 with Devyn and Ryan Mullis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUDWIAr4ZQQ>

3. The Mullis sisters continue to tell their personal stories of alienation, and go further to discuss their current research and work on promoting understanding of Parental Alienation and equality in parenting.

Childhood Interrupted Season 2 - Episode 1 with Ryan and Devyn Mullis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NruXCMGLvSA>

4. Ryan Thomas talks about the manipulation and the betrayal that he experienced for 15 years. After 10 years of lost connection he sought to reconnect, and began to realize how he was cheated by the manipulation and betrayal.

Training Video #1: The 3 Keys to Alienation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQgY2kFmlMk&t=39s>

5. The Hero's Circle (TheHerosCircle.com) is an Alliance of Adult Children of Parental Alienation

<https://m.facebook.com/victimtohero/videos/491011662282425/>

6. Dorcy Pruter of the Conscious Co-Parenting Institute interviews Amanda Sillars. Alienation is often a cross-generational family dynamic. Amanda was alienated from her mother as a child, and she too became alienated from her children who were taught to hate and disrespect her.

Alienated Daughter Speaks Out

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBQ017-GeiU&t=1s>

7. Moses Farrow the adopted son of Mia Farrow explains how his younger sister was alienated by her mother from her father and continues to be alienated today. Likewise his brother Ronan Farrow still remains alienated today. He himself was alienated from his father for years but has since come to realize the truth. Due to his exposure to abusive behaviors by his mother, Moses Farrow the older of the children brings truth to the family dynamic. Moses has pursued a career in marriage and family therapy.

A SON SPEAKS OUT By Moses Farrow

<http://mosesfarrow.blogspot.com/2018/05/a-son-speaks-out-by-moses-farrow.html>

8. The Story of Lisa Goodpaster: a child who was alienated by her step-mother against her mother. She suffered trauma.

<https://www.stephoodproject.org/new-page>

9. Lisa Goodpaster speaks about how she was 'hijacked' by her step-mother to fear and hate her mother.

Through the Eyes of a Alienated Child with Lisa Goodpaster

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGYHiWn7zPY>

10. Steven Hassan, PhD, MA, MEd, LMHC, NCC interviews Dana Laquidara who was alienated from her mother from an age of 4 into adulthood. She explains her traumatization.

Alienated from her Mother at Age 4, Parental Alienation and Patterns of Cult Mind Control

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4xWijrhLA4&t=119s>

11. Sometimes a foreign immigrant who wishes to return to his or her native country will launch a campaign to emotionally and possibly physically abduct a child. Sean Goldman, was a young New Jersey boy who suffered physical and emotional abduction by his Brazilian mother, and his maternal grandparents and his step-father:

Bring Sean Home: The Untold Story

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/34773680/ns/dateline_nbc-international/t/bring-sean-home-untold-story/

12. As a young adult, Sean Goldman, who was a young New Jersey boy when he suffered physical and emotional abduction by his Brazilian mother and maternal grandparents and step-father, explains his alienating manipulation experiences:

David Goldman, Son Sean Look Back On Infamous Abduction Case | TODAY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEHZcg1h-Ug>

Allegations of abuse are often a red flag for alienation. Allegations that are speculative and not based on verifiable fact may in fact be a form of domestic abuse and child abuse by a parent who may suffer from mental illness or have a personal motive. Karen Woodall, a world renowned psychotherapist who is a specialized expert in family dynamics involving separation, divorce and high conflict, has recently written this article that explains the psychology between Domestic Violence advocates, and the realities of Induced Psychological Splitting in children (which is the explanatory psychology term for Parental Alienation).

UNDERSTANDING PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOURS SEEN IN CASES OF ALIENATED CHILDREN – the split debate of DA vs PA

<https://karenwoodall.blog/2021/05/03/understanding-patterns-of-behaviours-seen-in-cases-of-alienated-children-the-split-debate-of-da-vs-pa/>

Allegations of abuse are often a reflection of a criminal mind by an allegedly protective parent who

may suffer from mental health problems. Gianna and Samantha Rucki were 13 and 14 years old, when they were absconded by their mother, taken from their father, and were reported as missing for 2 1/2 years before being found at a Ranch in Minnesota. The following ABC video shows how abduction and alienation are much the same, and false allegations of abuse are common themes in these cases.

Minnesota sisters whose mother was convicted of hiding them for over 2 years readjusting well, father says

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/minnesota-sisters-mother-convicted-hiding-years-readjusting-father/story?id=46335093>

Many lobbyists, detractors of Parental Alienation, tend to lack in-depth understanding of mental health, psychology, family dynamics and the strong science behind Parental Alienation, including Emotional Abduction, Parentification, Loyalty Binding, Coercive Control, Denigration, Badmouthing, Manipulation, Brain Washing, Parent/ Child Alignment, Cross-generational Coalitions , Child Affected By Parental Relationship Distress (CAPRD), Caregiver-Child Relationship Problem, Induced Psychological Splitting, and Resist-Refuse Dynamics. All these terms have been discussed in the preceding disclosures, videos, links, and citations. Parental Alienation is the equivalent of both Domestic Violence and Child Abuse. Parental Alienation is the term used by Mental Health professionals who are qualified in family dynamics and Personality Disorders when one parent coercively manipulates the mind of a child to fear, hate, and often abuse a parent.

CITATIONS:

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2. Ginger Gentile, Director & Producer, Erasing Family Documentary. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLCsbtS9dUA&t=43s>
3. Wikipedia. Allen v. Farrow. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen_v._Farrow
4. *Abid, Rahman (February 21, 2021). "Woody Allen, Soon-Yi Previn Respond to 'Allen v. Farrow' Filmmakers: "These Documentarians Had No Interest in the Truth"". The Hollywood Reporter. Retrieved February 21, 2021.*
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A_30-year_investigation_of_the_malleability_of_memory

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2011.08.004>
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Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maggie-Bruck/publication/13739429_Reliability_and_Credibility_of_Young_Children.pdf
10. Harman & Lorandos (2020). Preprint of Allegations of Family Violence in Court: How Parental Alienation Affects Judicial Outcomes. <https://doi.org/10.1037/law0000301> Retrieved from: <https://osf.io/zm2kf/>
11. Woodall, Karen. November 23 2020. Blog: The Harman & Lorandos Study: Exposing misleading information in ideological narratives of alienation. Retrieved from: <https://karenwoodall.blog/2020/11/23/the-harman-lorandos-study-exposing-misleading-information-in-ideological-narratives-of-alienation/>
12. PSYCHLAW.NET, PLLC. Blog: What are the Symptoms and Consequences of Parental Alienation? Retrieved from: <https://psychlaw.net/what-are-the-symptoms-and-consequences-of-parental-alienation/>
13. Jennifer J. Harman, Sadie Leder-Elder, Zeynep Biringen, Prevalence of adults who are the targets of parental alienating behaviors and their impact, *Children and Youth Services Review*, Volume 106, 2019, 104471, ISSN 0190-7409, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2019.104471>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740919306164>)
14. Brown, Ashley (Bsc Psychology). Article: The Dangers Of Indulgent Parenting. Updated March 31, 2021; Medically Reviewed By: Karen Devlin, LPC. Retrieved from: <https://www.regain.us/advice/parenting/the-dangers-of-indulgent-parenting/>

FURTHER READING:

CONSEQUENCES OF PARENTAL ALIENATION – SHORT TERM

1. **Johnston, Janet R., Marjorie G. Walters & Nancy W. Olesen (2005). The Psychological Functioning of Alienated Children in Custody Disputing Families: An Exploratory Study****M-FORENSIC. *American Journal of SYCHOLPsychology* 23: 39.** This study used parents' ratings of the children's emotional and behavioral issues via the Child Behavior Checklist, which found an increase in these areas with alienated children. Using the Rorschach test, they found that alienated and nonalienated children's perception and processing of information differed as well as their coping mechanisms. Some unexpected results also were found.
2. **Lampel, Anita (1996). Child's Alignment with Parents in Highly Conflicted Custody Cases****AM. *Family and Conciliation TsEVCourts Review* 34: 229.** This case study found that aligned children were more rigid, blindly defended and had less emotion than unaligned children. Aligned children seemed less capable of understanding convoluted issues than nonaligned. Nonaligned children seem to be more self-confident.
3. **Johnston, Janet (2003). Parental Alignments and Rejection: An Empirical Study of Alienation in Children of Divorce. *Journal of American Academy of Psychiatry & Law* 31:**

158. The study analyzed rejection of a parent in the child-parent alignments and how they fit together. Findings found that children's beliefs or attitudes toward a parent ranged from positive to negative depending on their alignment with a parent.

CONSEQUENCES OF PARENTAL ALIENATION – LONG TERM

1. **Baker, Amy J. L. & Maria Cristina Verrocchio (2013). Italian College Student Childhood Exposure to Parental Alienation: Correlated with Well-Being. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 54: 609.** Two hundred and fifty-seven undergraduate students completed a survey about their recollection of their childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) as well as measures of current functioning. Results revealed statistically significant associations between exposure to parental alienation and current self-esteem, depression, alcohol abuse, self-direction, and cooperation.
2. **Verrocchio, Maria Cristina, Amy J. L. Baker & William Bernet (2016). Associations between Exposure to Alienating Behaviors, Anxiety, and Depression in an Italian Sample of Adults. *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 61(3): 692-8.** Exposure to alienating behaviors was associated with maltreatment, which was associated with parental bonding, which was associated with each of the three mental health outcomes: depression, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. The authors conclude that exposure to alienating behaviors in childhood represents a risk factor for subsequent poor mental health. Adults completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ). The study found that exposure led to mental health outcomes including depression & state and trait anxiety.
3. **Baker, Amy J. L., Maria Cristina Verrocchio & Daniella Marchetti (2018). Adult Report of Childhood Exposure to Parental Alienation at Different Developmental Time Periods. *Journal of Family Therapy* 40: 602.** Five hundred and nine adults in Italy completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) and measures of current anxiety and depression. Exposure to alienating behaviors was associated with psychological maltreatment, which was associated with parental bonding, which was associated with the mental health outcomes of depression and anxiety.
4. **Ami, Naomi Ben, & Amy J. L. Baker (2012). The Long-Term Correlates of Childhood Exposure to Parental Alienation on Adult Self-Sufficiency and Well-Being. *American Journal of Family Therapy* 40: 169.** One hundred and eighteen adults completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by their parents (BSQ) as well as measure of current functioning. Results indicated statistically significant associations between rates of exposure and lower self-sufficiency, higher rates of depression, lower self-esteem, and insecure attachment style.
5. **Baker, Amy J. L., & Maria Cristina Verrocchio (2013), Italian College Student Childhood Exposure to Parental Alienation: Correlated with Well-Being. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 54: 609.** Two hundred and fifty-seven undergraduate students completed a survey about their recollection of their childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) as well as measures of current functioning. Results revealed statistically significant associations between exposure to parental alienation and current self-esteem, depression, alcohol abuse, self-direction, and cooperation.
6. **Bernet, William, Amy J. L. Baker & Maria Cristina Verrocchio (2015). Symptom-Checklist-90-Revised Scores in Adult Children Exposed to Alienating Behaviors: An Italian Sample. *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 60(2): 357-62.** Seven hundred and thirty-nine adults in Italy completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) and a survey of their current psychiatric symptomatology. The results revealed strong and statistically significant associations between exposure to parental alienation and reports of current symptoms.

7. **Verrocchio, Maria Cristina, Amy J. L. Baker & William Bernet (2016). Associations between Exposure to Alienating Behaviors, Anxiety, and Depression in an Italian Sample of Adults. *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 61: 692.** Five hundred and nine adults in Italy completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) and measures of current anxiety and depression. Exposure to alienating behaviors was associated with psychological maltreatment, which was associated with parental bonding, which was associated with the mental health outcomes of depression and anxiety.

PARENTAL ALIENATION IS A FORM OF CHILD PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

1. **Baker, Amy J. L. (2010). Adult Recall of Parental Alienation in a Community Sample: Prevalence and Associations with Psychological Maltreatment. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 51: 16-35.** Two hundred and fifty-seven adults working in a New York child welfare agency reported on their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent as well as completed six different measures of childhood psychological maltreatment. Exposure to parental alienation by a parent was statistically associated with reports of parental psychological maltreatment.
2. **Baker, Amy J. L. & Naomi Ben Ami (2011). To Turn a Child against a Parent Is to Turn a Child against Himself. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage* 52: 472-489.** One hundred and eight-teen adults completed a survey of their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors by a parent (BSQ) as well as measures of self-esteem, self-sufficiency, depression, and attachment. Results revealed that there was a strong and statistically significant association between exposure to alienation and experience of being psychologically maltreated.
3. **Baker, Amy J. L. & Maria Cristina Verrocchio (2015). Parental Bonding and Parental Alienation as Correlates of Psychological Maltreatment in Adults in Intact and Non-Intact Families. *Journal of Child & Family Studies* 24(10).** Seven hundred and thirty-nine Italian adults completed a survey about their recollection of childhood exposure to alienating behaviors of a parent (BSQ) as well as measures of parenting capacity and experience of psychological maltreatment. Exposure to parental alienation was associated with the experience of psychological maltreatment over and above the perceived parenting capacity of each parent.
4. **Felitti, Vincent J. et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14: 245.** This study measured the adverse effects of childhood experiences on the physical and mental health of children. This study correlates the untimely or early signs of failed health both physical and mental to negative childhood life experiences.
5. **Spinhoven, Philip. et al. (2010), The Specificity of Childhood Adversities and Negative Life Events Across the Life Span to Anxiety and Depressive Disorders. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 126: 103.** This study explores further how life adversities and multiple diagnoses affect relationships and lives. It also highlights that children go on to develop 'life-time affective disorders'
6. **Spinazzola, Joseph, et al. (2014). Unseen Wounds: The Contribution of Psychological Maltreatment to Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Risk Outcomes. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 6(Suppl 1), S18-S28.** This study reviews and measured the psychological trauma of children and how it affects their lives. It was compared against sexual and physical abuse, which showed higher levels of behavioral problems, symptoms and disorders in the psychologically abused. This study also discusses these implications in the context of mental health treatment.