
THE CANADIAN FAMILY FORUM

Open public forum about legal and social issues affecting Canadian families – Tuesday Aug 8, 2000

Young child forced into women's shelter cries and fights to see her Daddy!

Today, I had one of the most heart wrenching experiences of my life which drove me to tears.

This morning, I witnessed my daughter who is only three years of age, cry, scream and kick hysterically while being forced against her will by her mother to return back into the local women's shelter. She quite plainly did not want to go back in with the mother but only wanted to be with me. As my wife took my little girl back in the ominous building, I could see her talking angrily at my little girl and twisting her arm to keep her under control. I could hear my little girl crying "I want to see Daddy, I want to see Daddy." Only god knows what really happened to my little girl after that, once her mother got her back behind the closed doors of the women's shelter.

Even though the mother had to work that day from 10:00 in the morning to 6:30 at night, the mother said that it was not in the best interest of my daughter to be with me. She was going to leave our little girl with strangers at the women's shelter instead. Although it was a holiday Monday and I had the day off and the mother was employed in the retail sector and had to work that day, I thought it only made sense for me to watch our child, so I thought.

What I fail to understand the most is why my wife was allowed into the shelter in the first place. She definitely was not abused. She may have been unhappy with our marriage but certainly not abused. Her documents to the court did not mention one word about being abused. My wife's own friends and family testified that my wife had admitted to them that I was an excellent father to my daughter.

In my quest to understand why my wife would ever go to a women's shelter in the first place, I have learned that many women use their stay at a local women's shelter as one of their first steps to get the upper hand in family court. It is automatically assumed by most judges that the partner of a woman in a shelter is a wife batterer, so staying at a shelter is an easy way to get the court to paint a good loving father guilty without even having to say one word against him.

I have also learned that those who go into shelters get to jump to the front of the line for subsidized housing, so going to a shelter is often a good way to beat the honest and truly needy families on the waiting list. Plus add the free clothing, free furniture and other donations they get while in the shelter, it is a tempting offer few woman can refuse when they decide they want out of their marriage.

I have also noticed that since going into the women's shelter to abuse the system, my wife has become even more mean and vindictive than before. She is definitely not the same person she was before she went in. She has developed a real hatred for all men, not just me. Her hatred towards me is stronger than even her love for our daughter. She would rather force our daughter back into the clutches of strangers in the shelter who seem to have only one agenda – break up marriages and destroy father's relationships with their children. Strangers to my child, many with emotional problems of their own to deal with are now watching my daughter instead of her being cared for by a loving and willing father.

When will all this needless destruction of children and families be stopped? My young daughter is now the one made to needlessly suffer. All because of a mother who has decided to abuse the system and a women's shelter eager to help her do it, all at the expense of the taxpayers.

This writer who is from Ontario has requested to remain anonymous at this time as he is fearful of intimidation and reprisals by the court or the local woman's shelter for exposing his story. He has indicated, however, that he will be going public with his complaint about the local women's shelter once matters have been dealt with by the court.