

Parental Alienation: Traditional Therapy Will NOT Work

Published on July 18, 2017



Ashish Joshi
Owner, Joshi: attorneys + counselors 5 articles Following

Family law practitioners often suggest therapy to their clients. And often, judges' first tool of choice in trying to resolve a conflict in a parenting or custodial dispute is to send parties to therapy. In some cases, this may end up in resolving a situation. But in parental alienation cases, research demonstrates that traditional psychotherapy, while children remain under the care of their favored parent (or the alienator), is unlikely to repair the strained parent-child relationship and in fact, may make things worse. Why? Because as one expert, Dr. Richard Warshak, put it:

“One reason why phobia reduction techniques fail to overcome children’s refusal to spend time with a parent is that most of these children, except preschoolers, do not really fear their rejected parent. If they act frightened of the parent, often this is a ruse to avoid contact. The lack of genuine fear is evident in the children’s uninhibited denigration, expressions of hatred, and disrespect toward the rejected parent, as opposed to the obsequious or withdrawn behavior typical of children’s interactions with a feared adult.”(emphasis added)

While traditional therapy may work in other situations, in cases involving parental alienation, such therapy can magnify and solidify the animosity and hatred that the alienated child feels towards the target parent. It can make a bad situation far worse.

As former judge Michelle Lowrance (Cook County, Illinois) reminisced:

“I have seen traditional therapists allow the child to determine how long it will be (if ever) before they agree to see the target parent. Because the child is aligned with the alienating parent, they are emotionally required to keep rejecting contact with the target parent. Remember, alienated children are often told that if they are nice to the target parent, it could be used ‘against’ them in court.”

Effective therapy, in these circumstances, is reunification. Reunification, in contrast to traditional therapy, activates old positive memories and more importantly **challenges distorted thinking**. It is not uncommon to see false memories implanted in a child in a severe alienation case. And these false memories do not need to be validated; they have to be confronted and challenged, albeit in a therapeutic environment.

To learn more about parental alienation and how to fight it, visit <http://www.lorandoslaw.com/Parental-Alienation/>

Report this

Published by **Ashish Joshi**
Owner, Joshi: attorneys + counselors 5 articles Following
Published - 4y

Parental Alienation - Litigation - Ashish Joshi - Divorce Law - Family Courts - Matrimonial litigation - Therapy - Reunification

Like Comment Share 21 · 9 comments



9 Comments

Most relevant

Add a comment...

Linda Rosa · 3rd+
Executive Director, Advocates for Children in Therapy
How can you litigate on the grounds of parental alienation syndrome when that diagnosis is not accepted by the mental health professions, and the fact that it was rejected for inclusion in the DSM-V? For lack of research confirmation, wouldn't this be considered junk science?
Like · 1 Reply

Terry Bodin · 3rd+
Health Service Nurse at Charter, Public, Private & Special Needs Schools
I was informed by several attorneys & law firms that my custody case alleging PA by ex-wife did not require an expert to testify regarding P.A. The reason why is because this was the first case they had ever come across in which every definition regarding P.A. was easily proven by the documentary evidence I had collected which consisted of approximately 1-4 exhibits for each definition showing that my ex has or is currently engaged in PA AEB EXHIBIT 1a,2a&3 ...see more
Like Reply

Lorrie Eubanks (She/Her) · 2nd
Mother | Advocate | Consultant | Coach | Artist | Sewist | Volunteer | Fighter | Creator | Do-er | Achiever
Unfortunately "Parental Alienation" is a term created SOLELY to help abusers gain custody of their children.
Like Reply · 1 Reply

Ashish Joshi · 1st
Owner, Joshi: attorneys + counselors
I am so glad that more and more courts see through that smokescreen and are now acknowledging parental alienation as abuse.
Like · 1 Reply

Load more comments



Ashish Joshi
Owner, Joshi: attorneys + counselors

Following

More from Ashish Joshi

"Judges are not cruel; they just get used to things."
- G. R. Chastain, The Prosecutor 2016
Litigating Parental Alienation
Ashish Joshi on LinkedIn

Joshi
A new beginning at Joshi: attorneys + counselors
Ashish Joshi on LinkedIn

Parental Alienation is Domestic Violence
Ashish Joshi on LinkedIn

Enforce your Parenting Time
Ashish Joshi on LinkedIn

See all 5 articles