



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01790**

### **Name of petitioner**

Samantha Kerr

### **Petition title**

Parental and familial alienation

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to recognise parental and familial alienation as a specific and serious form of pathological psychological child abuse.

### **Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

I have discussed this issue with Neil Findlay MSP and the Scottish Government.

### **Petition background information**

Induced parental alienation is a specific form of psychological child abuse, which is listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

Untreated induced parental alienation can lead to long-term traumatic psychological and physical effects in the children concerned.

I believe the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 does not go far enough to safeguard partners, ex partner's and children from coercive, controlling psychological and emotional abuse.

There is a huge phenomenon breaking familial bonds apart and inflicting further unnecessary suffering on the victims that is not being picked up on by Scotland's frontline professionals. This phenomenon is called coached children and parental alienation (including Familial Alienation). I believe Police Scotland, social work and frontline services are not equipped or trained to deal with this.

By not having adequate knowledge, training and awareness of this form of child abuse, I believe frontline professionals in social work and policing are failing to recognise the signs and are unwittingly perpetuating the child abuse by siding with the perpetrator(s), who do not necessarily have to be a partner (only in the context of Domestic Abuse and Psychological Coercive Control). A coached child can be heavily influenced by any

member of the family, especially step parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles.

Specific funding for early intervention referrals to specialised family practitioners to be available to work with families and children of this phenomenon in good time is a much required resource that Scotland's children require if you want to get it right for every child. Right now frontline services have happily left children in the care of their abusers as they do not have the adequate time, resource or training to spot the signs.

Therefore the alienated parent is condemned sometimes falsely arrested and have to proceed to the criminal justice system, but even at the end of that if acquittal is achieved, they are coming against a brick wall trying to gain access which has been deliberately withheld from them by triangulation proxy.

Parental & Familial Alienation and Domestic Abuse including psychological coercive control of children by the abuser and third parties are intrinsically linked and the 'home' and those closely connected to the child can be the very source and trigger for Children's Mental Health issues.

That can range from mild psychological splitting to extreme pathological psychological splitting by coercion and cannot be treated using conventional methods of therapy.

No child should have to hear an adult speak disparagingly about a parent at any point. Moreover the consequences of sustained and pre-meditated character assassination of the targeted parent over a significant period of time is worse when it is twisted and premeditated and those lies lead to serious consequences.

False accusations equate to false arrest, which can lead to a witch hunt to criminalise the target who has been innocent all the way through.

Victims - adult and children alike require to be aware of what the actual problem they are experiencing is, as always education and public awareness is crucial to changing the forthcoming society for the betterment and better mental health for our children.

Further information on Understanding and working with the alienated child can be found here: <https://peacenotpas.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/understanding-and-working-with-the-alienated-child.pdf>

#### **Unique web address**

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01790>

#### **Related information for petition**

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

**YES**

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

03 / 03 / 2020

**Comments to stimulate online discussion**



- Should parental and familial alienation be recognised as a specific and serious form of pathological psychological child abuse?
- Do frontline services require more training on recognising the signs of parental and familial alienation?
- Should there be specific funding for early intervention referrals to specialised family practitioners?