

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM JAYNE WHITE

I would like to submit my comments to the Justice Committee with regards to the **Children (Scotland) Bill 2019**.

- The starting point for the Children (Scotland) Bill should be equal 'Shared Parenting' when parents separate. This should only not be the case where there is proven domestic abuse or alcohol problems.
- Currently the Children (Scotland) Bill still operates on the assumption that there is one 'resident' parent and one 'contact' parent. This is not in the best interests of the Child(ren) as it results on the 'resident' parent dictating what time the child can spend with the 'contact' parent and gives the resident parent some sort of 'belief' they are allowed to make important decisions without consulting the 'contact' parent.
- In todays' society equality in all aspects of life is high, therefore the Children (Scotland) Bill should also take the same approach. Currently many sheriffs still view family life as "traditional" where the mother stays at home and the father earns the money. This is not the case anymore and many females have careers and highly paid jobs, while fathers are now hands on and very capable of doing child care on their own. The current proposal in the Children (Scotland) Bill does not address this.
- The voice of the Child should be paramount in the decisions made in Court for how much time they want to spend with each parent. Children should not be made to feel like they are "choosing" between parents but that are allowed to have relationship with them both and not feel guilty for it.

Jayne White
15 November 2019