

A man with a beard and two children are lying on a carpeted floor, looking at something together. The man is on the left, and the children are on the right. The background shows a living room with a white cabinet and chairs. The image is dimmed and has a blue tint.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR EX FROM TURNING THE KIDS AGAINST YOU



THE MICKLIN LAW GROUP^{LLC}

EMPOWERING MEN IN DIVORCE & FAMILY LAW ISSUES

Divorce is scary enough as it is for children. It's a huge change for them, and they may not understand everything that is happening around them. When children are also subjected to what psychologists call Parental Alienation, it becomes terrifying. They are made to feel guilty about loving their dad. It's heart wrenching for anyone to hear them talk about their confusion and complicated feelings, and it takes an especially terrible toll on the father.

Do you suspect your ex of turning your children against you? Here are some telltale signs to look out for and what you can do to stop parental alienation.



HOW TO RECOGNIZE WHEN YOUR EX IS TURNING YOUR CHILD AGAINST YOU

It can be difficult to recognize parental alienation, but there are some signs you should watch out for before things get out of control. First, take a look at your ex's social media. If her pages are filled with derogatory comments about you to her family and friends, chances are pretty good she is making similar remarks to your children. You may need to prove alienation in court later on, so make sure to take screenshots and save them. Don't go back and forth with your ex on social media; judges do not take kindly to nasty behavior between co-parents, whether online or in person. But we can use your screenshots as evidence if needed when negotiating visitation, custody, and support issues with her attorney – and in court if it becomes necessary. Most judges are coming around to the idea of men's and fathers' rights and will do what they can to prevent the alienation from getting worse.

Remember that even if she isn't posting anything on social media, there are other telltale signs that your ex may be trying to alienate your children from you. It may be marked by a sudden change in the kid's attitude towards you, but you can stop things before they get to that point by paying attention to these behaviors:

- **You or friends overhear her speaking poorly of you**
- **She tries to limit the children's contact with you**
- **She tries to interfere with your communication with the kids**
- **She emotionally punishes the child when they say anything positive about you**
- **And the worst is that she tells your children that you do not love them**

There are no official studies to be cited about how often mothers alienate their children from fathers, but reams of anecdotal evidence indicate that it happens to fathers who are the custodial or co-parent of a child even after the divorce is finalized. Sadly, it is done to children as young as toddlers and preschoolers as well as to teens well into their high school years. Even adult children aren't immune to parental alienation if their parents get a gray divorce, but unfortunately, nothing can be done at that time.



MEN'S RIGHTS AFTER SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

Regardless of how far along your divorce is in the process or if you've been divorced for some time, my divorce advice to fathers in New Jersey who are dealing with parental alienation is consistent. There are several key things to remember.

Before you do anything drastic or get into an argument with your ex, call one of our family law attorneys for men and fathers in New Jersey. Keep us informed of all attempts by your ex to alienate your children from you. Even if we did not handle your original divorce, we will not only provide you with advice on how to proceed but can develop a strategy to take to a judge to obtain an order to stop her from continuing her destructive behavior.





Here are some additional tips for fathers who know there's parental alienation afoot:

1. **Keep in mind that your kids are a victim of your ex – none of this is their fault.**
2. **Don't stoop to their mothers' level by badmouthing her, neither to the kids nor to other adults.**
3. **Be mindful of the time you're with your kids. Don't be late for visits or cancel time with them except in extraordinary circumstances. You can show your kids how much you love them by making them your priority.**

If you follow these tips while working with your attorney to stop your ex's inappropriate behavior, the judge is more likely to believe your side of the story.

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR KIDS

So, you know how to handle your ex's attempts at parental alienation, but how can you maintain a healthy relationship with your kids while your lawyer handles their mother's poor behavior? First, remind your children that you love and support them unconditionally. This might seem obvious to you, but your kids may question your love if their mom is trying to convince them you don't care.

Take time to reminisce with your kids and remind them of the good times you have shared. Younger children might not remember what your relationship was like before the divorce. Spend some time with them going through photo albums or reminiscing about family vacations so your kids don't lose those memories and succumb to the false information your ex is providing.

Above all else, always stay true to yourself and your morals. It's difficult to be the bigger person when you see your children becoming more and more distant, but it will ultimately pay off when you successfully salvage (and even strengthen) your relationship with your kids. To that end, don't try using emotional manipulation or bribes to gain your children's favor. This could backfire long term as your children grow up and realize what you were doing. Avoid the temptation to stoop to your ex's level and keep your focus on the positive.



A man in a white shirt and cap is gesturing with his right arm towards two children on a golf course. The children are standing on the grass, and the background shows a golf course with trees and a body of water under a clear sky.

CONTACT A DIVORCE LAWYER FOR MEN IN NEW JERSEY

As a parent, it's crucial to not play the game that an angry ex-spouse seems intent on playing. Any dad's first instinct is to fight for his children at any cost. But when you stop to think about it, this is a self-defeating strategy. It makes the children victims of the fight between you and your ex in addition to being the targets of parental alienation.

It can be heartbreaking when an ex wife turns a child against the father. It can also be tempting to take drastic actions to keep your children close. But remember, the best way to handle your trouble with your ex is in court. Judges don't want to see children alienated from either parent, so the odds are good that your kids will eventually see you as the loving father you are.

If you're having trouble with your ex-wife trying to alienate your children from you, please feel free to reach out to The Micklin Law Group's divorce lawyers for men in New Jersey. We will help you create a strategy to put a stop to her bad behavior. Reach us at our Nutley office by calling 973-562-0100.



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