

HOW CAN OTHERS HELP

(adapted from *Divorce Poison* by Dr. Richard Warshak, Ph. D.)

- Designate others who have your child's respect (this might include teachers, counselors, scout leaders, coaches, clergy, friends, parents of the child's friends, and family members) to intervene.
- Provide them with information on Parental Alienation.
- A person the child respects might invite both of you to the same function, making the child aware that the alienated parent will be there because that parent's company is enjoyable.
- Have these people look for opportunities to provide positive input about the alienated parent.
- Have them listen to the child, without negating what the child is saying, regardless of how outlandish it may be (that is the child's reality). Then, encourage the child to hear the other parent's point of view. Appeal to the child's maturity by saying that is the way mature people handle conflicts.
- Appeal to the child's intellect by encouraging them to carefully consider ideas or statements that are blatantly false or outlandish.
- Point out how persuasive advertising can influence a person's thinking and try to relate it to the child's thinking about the alienated parent.
- Certain books or movies can be a topic for discussion about the importance of both parents, the sadness of having only one parent, or about how thinking can be influenced.

WHAT IS PARENTAL ALIENATION?

Parental alienation is a group of behaviors that interfere with a relationship of a child and either parent. Most often, accompanying high conflict marriages, separation or divorce.

These behaviors, whether verbal or non verbal, cause a child to be mentally manipulated or bullied into believing the other parent is the cause of all their problems, and/or the enemy.

These behaviors can range from bad mouthing the other parent in front of the children, to interfering with time together, to pre-arranging activities for the children while they should be with the other parent.



Warning signs of Parental Alienation in children

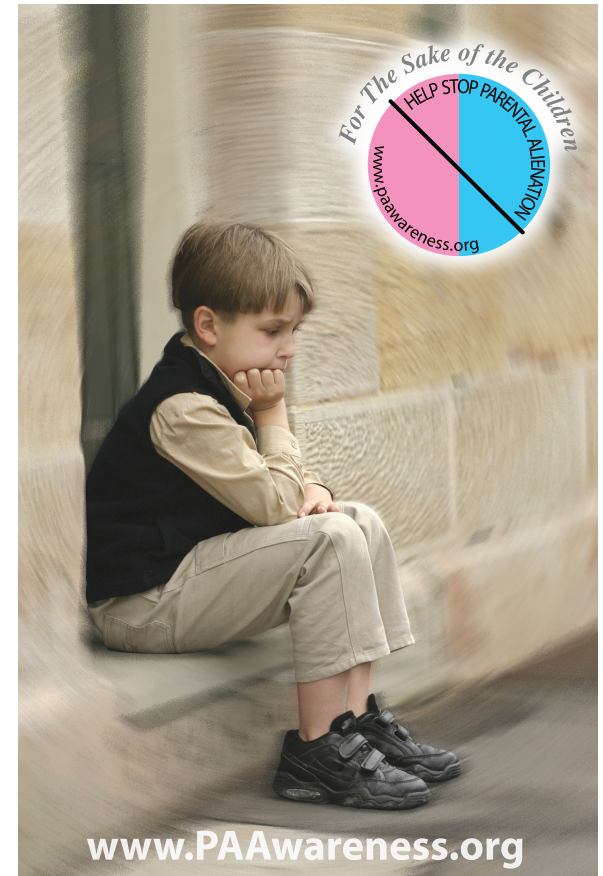
include: low self-esteem, self-destructive behaviors, anger, aggression, cruelty, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and may have suicidal tendencies.



**To find out more information
about Parental Alienation please visit**

www.PAAwareness.org

Parental Alienation



*Undermining and interfering with a
normal child-parent bond
is Parental Alienation*



WARNING SIGNS FROM THE ALIENATING PARENT

(Adopted from Dr. Douglas Darnall, Ph.D.)

- **G**iving the child a choice as to whether or not to visit with the other parent/letting the child believe this is his choice.
- **T**elling the child details about the marital relationship or reasons for it's breakdown.
- **R**efusing cooperation by not allowing the other parent access to school or medical records, and schedules of extracurricular activities.
- **O**ne parent blaming the other for financial problems, break up of the family, having a girl/boyfriend.
- **R**efusing to be flexible with visitation schedules or scheduling the child in so many activities that there is little time to visit.
- **R**escuing the child from the other parent when there is no danger. Creating a feeling of mistrust.
- **A** parent suggesting the child change names or the step-parent adopting the child.
- **U**sing a child to covertly gather information about the other parent.
- **A**rranging temptations that interfere with the other parent's visitation.
- **R**eacting with sadness/hurt if the child expresses pleasure at being with the other parent.
- **E**mphasizing the other parent's flaws.
- **R**e-writing history-such as telling the child the other parent never loved him/her, the other parent abandoned them, etc.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? (IF YOU ARE BEING ALIENATED)

- **A**lways call/pick up the child at scheduled times, even when painful or even if you know the child won't be available.
- **W**hen with your child, focus on positive activities, enjoyable for the child.
- **T**ry not to argue or get defensive with the child. Focus on talking openly about what your child is actually experiencing rather than what he has been told.
- **I**f possible, get counseling for the child, preferably with a counselor trained to treat parental alienation.
- **B**uild a support network of counselors, clergy, friends, family, support groups, and community resources.
- **G**ather as much information on Parental Alienation as you can.
- **A**tttempt to work constructively with the other parent, either directly or through mediation.
- **W**ork on improving your own parenting skills
- **B**e actively involved in providing information to those professionals working with your child.
- **T**ry to control your own anger and stay calm.



WHAT NOT TO DO!

- **D**on't ignore the problem... *it will not go away*
- **D**on't bad-mouth the other parent

WHAT CAUSES A CHILD TO BUY INTO THE ALIENATING PARENT'S MANIPULATIONS

- **T**he child feels the need to protect a parent who is depressed, panicky or needy
- **T**he child wants to avoid the anger or rejection of the dominant/custodial/more influential parent.
- **T**he child wants to hold onto the parent they are most afraid of losing, such as a parent who is self-absorbed, narcissistic, or not very involved with the child.

WHAT DOES AN ALIENATED CHILD LOOK LIKE?



Child will:

- **B**ad mouth the other parent with foul or rude language and inaccurate descriptions
- **O**ffer weak or frivolous reasons for his/her anger toward the target parent
- **P**rofesses to have only hatred toward the target parent/cannot say any positive things about them.
- **D**oesn't show empathy/guilt for hurting the target parent
- **W**ants nothing to do with the target parent's family/friends
- **P**arrots the alienating parent
- **M**ay not want to see or talk to the alienated parent.