

# What We Know

## ARTICLES & INSIGHTS

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[Rose Stout](#) is a Board Certified Family Law Specialist by the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization. She concentrates her practice in the area of domestic law and represents clients in all aspects of family law, including divorce, custody, equitable distribution, child support and alimony. Rose has extensive trial experience at the district court level and has spoken at family law seminars on various family law issues.

## From the Mouth of Babes... “Mom, are you ready to be his friend?”

May 3, 2016 | by

April 25 is “Parental Alienation Awareness Day.” Perhaps, you haven’t heard of **Parental Alienation**. Unfortunately, many children and parents going through a divorce know it all too well.

Rosalind Sedacca, an international parenting expert of Child-Centered Divorce, says: *“Parental Alienation is the darkest, most damaging consequence of divorce done wrong. Its impact can last a lifetime — and the effects can boomerang in the years to come.”*

In *Psychology Today*, [Edward Kruk](#) finds that 11-15% of the children of divorcing parents suffer the effects of *implacable hostility* – which is where one parent refuses the other parent access to the children. In the UK, where roughly 250,000 divorces occur every year, that estimate would equate to some 50,000-75,000 children every year being impacted by implacable hostility.

Make no mistake about it parental alienation/implacable hostility is a form of abuse. Unfortunately, I do not have any training nor understanding of why this happens.

I suspect there are a myriad of reasons: **1) psychological trauma to the parent doing the alienating; 2) hatred of the other parent; 3) vindictiveness and revenge, etc.**

What I do know is that the results of parental alienation/implacable hostility are destructive. Children who endure parental alienation/implacable hostility may experience low self-esteem, sexual promiscuity, alcoholism, drug addiction, and poor interpersonal relationships. The obvious question is – why would anyone intentionally do this to his or her child? Life is already difficult enough as it is. Now, we are sending children out into the world who are alienated/estranged from their own mother or father. Can you imagine what the child must believe about himself? The world is a much different place today than it was 20 years ago and children these days are dealing with a lot more stress than previous generations. Divorce is rampant in our society, but not all divorce has to be unhealthy. Parents can and should make a concerted effort to protect their children. You should make it your goal to never, ever say anything negative about

the other parent. Why? Because your child deserves that; because your child becomes better able to face this world when he or she knows that they can love both parents freely; because they know that mom and dad have different strengths, and they are free to learn from both parents and to love both parents. If you divorce, the greatest gift you can give your children is the freedom to love both of you openly. That gift will in no way diminish your relationship with your child. I can assure you it will only strengthen your bond, and your child will grow to be successful and happy and free to love. Your child will grow up understanding how to handle conflict in a positive way. Your child will succeed.

From the mouth of babes – sometimes the greatest lessons can be learned!

Here is a cute [video clip](#) I received. I encourage you to view it through the eyes of a child. The little girl in this video clip will captivate you, as she did all of us, with the powerful wisdom she shares on how to get along.

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