

## Promoting Responsible Fatherhood

### We are Part of the Change

Since we are all "so familiar" with PAS, we have all too often experienced the same problem whereby the other party will not abide by one or another of the court stipulations.

I'm sure we have all thought about what we'd like to see happen to our ex's that are found in contempt of court .

Other than the obvious malicious things we can't talk about in public, what positive steps can we think of? For example, when an ex is found in contempt they usually get their hands slapped, told not to do it again and are gone from the court room, only to be back next year or next month to get their hands slapped again.

I've been informed by people that are aware of this problem that the reason it is handled this way is because to enforce the current penalties is to costly.

In WI for example, when found in contempt for interference with custody and parental rights, the following punishment is on the books: "may be punished by a fine of not more than \$ 10,000 or imprisoned not more than two years or both".

But this is rarely enforced due to the following reasons:

) our jails are overcrowded and we need to keep the space for more serious offenders and  
) to have someone pay a fine (which is usually the mother) is seen as inflicting too hard a strain on her already tight budget and thus the argument continues that she will not be able to support her children properly.

The above are the reasons for enforcing the contempt motion with a slap of the hand. No pressure. So who would stop? Sometimes I think I'm the only sane person in the world. O.K. so the punishments have no teeth, wouldn't it be a novel idea to set some new "reachable/achievable" punishments?

So I'm asking you to think of alternative ways to punish the offenders and send them to your legislative representative. I would eventually like to publish this new version and you could contribute your own ideas.

Some of my ideas:

1. If kept from non-custodial parent or custodial parent for x amount of hours or days, an exact portion (converted to dollars) will be deducted from the next child support check. And at the same time your visitation will increase for time lost. Thus if your visitation increases you will need more money for food, clothes, etc... which will be met by your reduced payments.

2. Community service. When your children are with you the other parent can do community service, number of hours can coincide with the number of hours children were withheld from you.

Can you think of some other creative ways to punish without throwing offenders in jail or paying fines? I'd like to hear your opinions.

Granted, the ones already on the books are great but if there not being enforced we need to come up with new ones that will be.

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