

Shared Parenting in the Modern Family from a Feminist View

Hanna David

*Tel Aviv University (Emerita), Israel
hannadav@tauex.tau.ac.il*

Abstract: *There is a wide consensus that Shared Parenting after parental separation is beneficial for the children involved. We are to demonstrate that in most cases shared parenting is the preferred solution for women as well. This conclusion relies on the assumption that the best interest of the child is the best interest of the mother too. For mothers, the main advantage of shared parenting is that it helps preventing burnout and allows women more free time for themselves; shared parenting also improves father-child relationship, which is a feminist goal as well. From a financial point of view, shared parenting increases employment prospects, and improves work conditions for both mothers and children. Consequently, it contributes to the physical and mental well-being of children. Shared parenting rules out the guilt versus innocence concept in custody debates, which might be poisonous for children. It also rules out women's sexual behavior or appearance and discussions about their morality. It also enables mothers to establish new relationships in general and new intimate ones in particular. Shared parenting has a potential to help minority women, including women of color, women belonging to various religions, and women from traditional backgrounds; it has a potential to decrease women's abuse and divorce-related conflicts.*

Keywords: Shared parenting; Shared custody; Mothers' advantages; feminist issue

Introduction

Shared parenting, or joint physical custody, shared care, shared custody, etc. (Braver and Lamb, 2018) has been perceived by a large community of experts in child development as the most preferable choice for the well-being of children after separation or divorce. Shared parenting should be the rule, the default, as "Law's role is to impose order and it resists challenges which are likely to cause further conflicts" (Newnham, 2015, 144).

A good definition as well as description of shared parenting or custody in Sweden is found in contemporary scientific literature:

Joint physical custody (JPC) refers to children living alternatively and about equally with both parents after a parental separation or divorce. The practice has been debated in relation to child well-being because of the frequent moves imposed on children and

the potential stress from living in 2 homes. [...] Children in JPC report better well-being and mental health than children who live mostly or only with 1 parent. No Swedish studies have found children's health to be worse in JPC than in sole parental care from child age of 3 years and beyond. The existing literature cannot, however, inform us about the mechanisms behind the findings. The risks of selection effects into living arrangements are plausible. For this purpose, longitudinal studies are warranted (Fransson, Hjern, and Bergström, 2018, 769).

Legal custody refers to the right to make decisions regarding medical care, education, and religion, etc., of the child, whereas *physical custody* refers to the living arrangements, and rights and responsibilities for the daily care of the child (Stevenson, Braver, Ellman and Votruba, 2012).

Co-parenting or shared parenting does not necessarily mean 50-50% time division between parents, as is usually the case in Sweden. Bergström et al. (2015) have found, in a study that included all 6th and 9th grade Swedish students, aged 12 and 15 (N=147839), that children in joint physical custody suffered less from psychosomatic problems than those living mostly or only with one parent. This study has proved that shared parental custody benefits the children even when one of the parents initially opposes to it. As for the time division between the parents, it varies from one country to the other. For example: in the US, according to Nielsen (2017), shared parenting might be a 35-65% time division; in the UK it can even be 30-70% (Kaganas and Piper, 2002).

The last few years have brought a real revolution in the legal situation of parenting after divorce or separation. On October 2, 2015, the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Union has "called on the authorities of the member States of the European Union "to respect the right of fathers to enjoy shared responsibility" (Equality and shared parental responsibility: the role of fathers, 2015). The voting results were: 46 in favor, none against and 2 abstentions. The US legislation closes the gap with Europe gradually; the first state was Arkansas that adopted Shared parenting as the default choice in divorce cases in 2018 (The evidence behind shared parenting, 2018). In Israel, in spite of the public debates shared parenting has caused, and with full participation of Rabbinical Courts who are in charge of all marriages and divorces in the Jewish sector, a gradual change towards shared parenting as the preferred option is taking place (see Appendix I).

The main advantages of shared parenting for children

Shared parenting eliminates the possibility of a custodian parent who sabotages the child's relationship with the non-custodian one. In shared parenting the concepts of "losing custody" versus "winning custody" are not a part of the discourse. One of the most famous such cases is presented in the film: "Kramer vs. Kramer (1979)", based on the novel with the same name (Corman, 2012 [1977]). A custody war has a high potential of harming, even when collusions, manipulations, perjury and lies are quite expected in family courts, as has been shown for over 50 years (Bradway, 1962). But "[...] the idea that neither parent should

emerge as a victor following a custody determination presents a major change” (Brinig, 2001, 304), and the main outcome is that a “war situation” is quite rare in shared parenting. There is no dispute about: “who ‘deserves’ to be the custodian parent”; a parent cannot “lose the children” or even “lose custody” (Grossberg, 1983). Furthermore: insulting or offensive utterances such as: “letting the children see their father” or “the children were told not to meet their mother” have no place in shared parenting.

“With *sole physical custody*, the child lives primarily with one parent, with the other parent typically having visitation rights, such as on weekends, holidays, and vacations” (Stevenson, 2012, 380, italics are in the original, H.D.). In shared parenting the concept of “visitation rights” is replaced by “shared time” and the children do not perceive any of the parents as a visitor but rather as a partner in a two-parent partnership.

Shared parenting – with a small variation – is possible even in high conflict separations (Kruk, 2012). In the form of *joint custody* or *parallel custody* the parents do not have to meet during the school year, as one of them brings the children to school in the morning and the other takes them back. This arrangement of *parallel parenting* is ideal when the divorced or separated parents co-parent by disengaging from each other, and have limited direct contact (Brinig and Buckley, 1998; Eddy, 2012; Kruk, 2012).

The mystery: If shared parenting is the best option for both women and children why men usually fight for it while many women object to it?

The movement towards joint parenting or shared parenting started in the US in the context of the egalitarian goals of women's rights groups in the 1970s (Bartlett and Stack, 1986). Feminist critique against shared parenting started in the 1980s (ibid), and has become stronger since then. An interesting example of the situation where law decisions – both of civil family court and Rabbinical court – have ruled in favor of shared or joint parenting in the last decade (see Appendix I), while women's organizations have objected to it is the case of Israel. Strong objections to shared parenting have been expressed by the chairwoman of Na'amat, the largest women's organization in Israel (Livni, 2008); The Israeli Women's Network (2006) and Karmon (2017) as well as by female Members of the Israeli Parliament (M.P. Shuli Mu'alem, see Amiran, 2018; M.P. Merav Michaeli and M.P. Zehava Gal'on, see Megido, 2015). The only exception among Israeli activist feminists who has supported shared parenting is Tamar Har-Paz, from the Zionist Women Organization (Har-Paz, n.d). In the European Union each member has its own rules on custody and parental rights of dissolved marriages. Shared custody is the preferred solution only in *Belgium* and *Italy*. In *Spain*, a country with one of the highest rates of divorces in Europe, shared custody of children is granted in less than 20% of cases (Basterrechea, 2016).

I claim that shared parenting is a win-win situation for everybody involved: the children, the fathers, and the mothers. Here is a list of the ten main reasons that make *shared parenting in cases of parental separation or divorce the preferable choice for mothers of children at all ages*.

Shared parenting helps preventing burnout and allows women more free time for themselves

In shared parenting mothers have more free time than in any other agreement or settlement. Even when the time division between the parents is 30-70% – let alone when it is about 50-50% – it allows the mother some time for her personal life, when the father is in charge of the children. Bartlett and Stack (1986) discussed this subject both in terms of decreasing women's dependency, stemming from being the sole adult responsible of the children, and the difficulties mothers deal with in the work world. Roeters and Gracia (2016) focus on the fact that one of the main gender differences in the private sphere is leisure time, which decreases substantially after childbirth, resulting in different patterns of male and female time-spending. According to them, the decrease in leisure time or flexibility is likely to harm mothers' well-being, and relationships with partners and with friends. Single mothers are at a higher burnout risk, an issue that has been discussed until lately only in the context of child's disability or illness (Hubert and Aujoulat, 2018). Shared parenting is the best possible solution for minimizing this feeling if not eliminating it.

Shared parenting improves father-child relationship

Since the beginning of the 21st century the validity of the *mothers' instinct* assumption has been questioned. The term *maternal instinct* has been used for justifying the modern concept of the Tender Age Doctrine (Livni, 2008; Megido, 2015) or *the tender-years assumption* (Halloran McLaughlin, 2009). The origin of *the tender-years doctrine* goes back to 1839 Britain, when custody of children under 7 and from 1873 children under 16 was granted to mothers (Sherwood, 2017). In the first half of the 20th century custody was usually granted to the father, while in its second – to the mother (Brinig and Buckley, 1998). This was mainly based on the *mother instinct* assumption.

However, since feelings and instincts have been gradually become measured entities, and environment, education and culture have become crucial factors in the upbringing of children, *maternal instinct* has been proven to be just one phase of attachment, one possibility, one option. As has been shown in an Icelandic study (Símonardóttir, 2016), the law which forces fathers to take at least 3-month paid leave after the birth of their baby has contributed to child-father relationship. King (2002) has established the fact that the ability to maintain an exceptionally strong father-child relationship before and after the divorce is more influential in joint physical custody. A recently published Swedish study of first-time mothers (Thorstensson, Hertfelt Wahn, Ekström and Langius-Eklöf, 2012) found that “These feelings [of being prepared to do everything to protect the baby] made it difficult for mothers to leave the baby with anyone else, sometimes, even to the baby's father (p. 12)”.

Furthermore, Gordon et al (2010) examined 160 cohabitating mothers and fathers and their firstborn infant at home during the first postpartum weeks and again at 6 months later. Mothers' and fathers' level of plasma Oxytocin, which is a measure of the attachment potential, were similar across the first 6 months of parenthood. This *chemical proof* shows

that fathers re-wire their body to be as sensitive to their new-born babies as mothers. Thus, the argument about the potential *harm* that can be caused to babies and young children who sleep in their fathers' homes must be concluded by the statement "Children not only can sleep in two homes but rather should". This has been in the center of the tender age doctrine dispute in many countries until today (Fabricius and Suh, 2017). However, Warshak (2014), along with 110 other experts of children's development have come to a consensus about the importance of shared parenting for under 4 children of divorced and never-married parents. Here is a summary of this conclusion:

[...] in normal circumstances, the evidence supports shared residential arrangements for children under 4 years of age whose parents live apart from each other. Because of the well-documented vulnerability of father-child relationships among never-married and divorced parents, the studies that identify overnights as a protective factor associated with increased father commitment to child rearing and reduced incidence of father drop-out, and the absence of studies that demonstrate any net risk of overnights, policymakers and decision makers should recognize that depriving young children of overnights with their fathers could compromise the quality of developing father-child relationships (ibid, p. 46).

Even when shared parenting is imposed on the parents by a court law, its advantages are still obvious for all parties: parents and children. A New Zealand 2014 document has shifted the focus from forced court resolutions of parenting disputes to encouraging parents to reach agreements themselves (Family dispute resolution, 2018). It is quite interesting that in this document (ibid) neither the word "mother" nor "father" appears, but rather 38 diversions of "parent" (e.g. parent/s, parenting). Language has been proved to shape reality (e.g. Klemfuss, Prinzmetal, Ivry, et al., 2012; Maturana, 1988; Whorf, 1956; Zlatev, and Blomberg, 2015). Thus, as Bartlett (2001) wrote, the new terminology, which uses the term "custodial responsibility" and eliminates expressions such as the "visiting parents" and "win-lose situations" has contributed to a change in custodial disputes. We can conclude that shared parenthood should be the preferred option from the point of view of mothers' interest (Murphy and Singer, 2015).

Shared parenting increases employment prospects, and improves work conditions as well as women's financial situation

Shared parenting should be warmly adopted as means to help women to participate in the labor force, get high social status, advance academically and materialize their intellectual, social, creative, and political aspirations.

A major difference has occurred during the last two decades of the 20th century in the perception of shared parenting. In the 80ies "the 'mainstream' feminist view" (Erickson, 1984, 447), was that while court had almost always preferred granting custody to the mother, men had incentive to share childrearing responsibilities with women. At that time "mainstream" feminists aspired towards a future of non-sexist world, where parents would

equally share in their children's upbringing, and women would participate fully in the world of paid work (ibid). But this wishful prophecy did not prove exactly true, at least not in the US. According to Cabrera et al. (2000), participation of women in the work force has increased; fathers' involvement in intact family increased, but unfortunately absence of nonresidential fathers in the lives of their children has also substantially increased.

In spite of these changes, the conflict: children versus work, or children versus career has been one of the main ones in women's life around the world. The massive female participation in the work world since the 60ies has not resulted in a more gender balanced responsibilities in household and childcare time (Bianchi and Milkie 2010). In a contemporary study of 51632 women from 18 countries it was found that gender inequalities were especially blatant in the workplace (Verniers and Vala, 2018). For example, on average women were more likely to work part-time, be employed in low-paid jobs and not take on management positions (Arulampalam et al., 2007; European Union, 2014; Verniers and Vala, 2018). One common way to solve this conflict has been working part-time (in Australia, see Fujimoto et al., 2013, Rose et al., 2011; in India: Doble, and Supriya, 2010, Tewathia, 2014; in Malaysia: Ahmad, and Omar, 2008; in Belgium: Laurijssen and Glorieux, 2013, in the US: Gornick, 2012; in the UK: Plagnol, Scott and Schober, 2010; in Israel: Stier and Lewin-Epstein, 2000). Other ways to overcome this conflict have been choosing worse paid-, less prestigious jobs, with very limited horizons for advancement.

Brinig and Buckley (1998) found that joint-custody laws were significantly correlated with higher child-support ratios. Booth and Mclanahan (1989) had discovered that not only single mothers were financially disadvantaged, but also their children. According to these researchers, children in single mother families had higher prospects to become poor adults with less opportunities and lower socio-economic mobility than children living with both parents. Thus we can conclude that shared parenting has a potential to improve the financial situation of mothers and children without having to consent to such major compromises.

Shared parenting contributes to the physical and mental well-being of children

Though raising and educating a future generation of children – both girls and boys – that would become healthier, both mentally and physically, is an aim all women – including feminists – would agree upon, it is rarely perceived as a feminist issue in contemporary feminist literature. But it should be, as a more equal society strongly depends on the perceptions of the next generation, and women have a responsibility to shape it.

A recent study of 3656 Swedish 3-5-year old kindergartners (Bergström et al., 2018) found that children living in shared parenting, where the time sharing between parents was either equal or almost equal, had less psychological symptoms than children living mostly or only with one parent. Another Swedish research, done among 391 8-10-year old children in joint physical custody, 654 children in sole parental care and 3639 children in nuclear families (Fransson, Turunen, Hjern, Östberg and Bergström, 2016) found that children in joint physical custody did not report higher levels of psychological complaints than those in

nuclear families, while children in sole parental care reported elevated levels of complaints compared with those in joint physical custody.

Raising a new, better generation of men who share home-making responsibilities with their co-partners in general and rearing children in particular should become one of the main feminist goals. This is very hard to achieve for mothers who raise children without a male partner, as the role of a father, or a substitute father, has more influence on the children than any “feminist education”. While in 1960 only 6% of American children grew up without fathers, by the end of the 20th century they consisted of almost one quarter of all children; about 50% grew up with only mothers at least for a part of their childhood (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth and Lamb, 2000). This increase in father absence has been associated with poor school achievements, diminished involvement in the labor force, early childbearing, and heightened levels of risk-taking behavior (*Nurturing fatherhood: Improving data and research on male fertility, family formation, and fatherhood*, 1998). While both boys and girls have been badly affected by fathers’ absence, the influence on boys has been according to Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan (1986), much harsher.

Shared parenting rules out the guilt versus innocence concept in custody debates

“Custody innocent rule” means granting custody to the “innocent parent” because of the guilty parent's decision to move the child from her or his former home, town or country. The *guilty* parent might indeed be guilty of kidnapping, neglecting or abusing the child, but also a victim of false accusation (Kerns, 2015).

Shared parenting rules out the woman’s sexual “behavior” or “appearance” and discussions about her morality

Until the end of the 20th century, the “natural” or “socially accepted” way to bring up children after their parents’ divorce was by granting the mother full custody while the father had *visitation rights* (David, 1995; Murphy and Singer, 2015; Stevenson, 2012). At that time there was a common belief that “if the mother ‘lost custody’ she must have been either drug-addict or a prostitute” (Chavkin, 1990, 486).

This has been particularly true for women working in the sex industry. In the US, for example, it has been quite common, even at the end of the second decade of the 21st century, that women in the sex industry “lose custody of their children (Shrayber, 2016). Other countries have had similar rules. For example, according to The Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (2005), Portuguese sex workers “lose custody of their children through social services or family courts solely because of their occupation, and not based on any specific evidence of harm or incapacity to parent” (p. 2).

Even in non-divorcing families custody was denied from *unfit mothers* due to their *unacceptable behavior*, mainly regarding drug using and prostitution (Substance Abuse Treatment for Persons with Child Abuse and Neglect Issues, 2000). This legislation has been

the result of judges: “[...] the denial of custody to women whose conduct does not adhere to many judges' sexist notions about acceptable conduct by a mother” (Sack, 1991, 292) as well as that of the public. Shared parenting as the default choice can prevent such arbitrary decisions.

Shared parenting enables mothers to establish new relationships in general and new intimate ones in particular

Women will benefit a lot if *no fault divorce* is applied not only during the separation process but years after the process has ended. *First of all – as double standards are still very common regarding female morality, women will no longer have to be afraid of dating somebody or dating the ‘wrong man’ as dating will have no influence upon shared parental custody.* In addition, mothers will no longer have the ability to use new romantic connections of the father of their children as weapon against him in a custody battle. This will help their children establish a better relationship with their father and benefit everybody involved.

For hundreds of years child custody has been denied of mothers who re-married, especially when the man belonged to a different religion or class of mothers who had several partners, and in many other cases of *improper behavior*. Here is an anecdote from my own divorce process, taking place at a civil court about 30 years ago, with a female presiding judge who, a decade later, headed the Israeli Committee for Children’s Rights. The hearing’s subject was the custody of my three sons. While I was interrogated on the witness stand, the father’s lawyer asked me: *do you go to the Mikvah?*¹ When a woman is asked about her Mikvah-going habits it is considered a vulgar question, intruding into the most intimate area of her life, as Jewish women achieve ritual purity after menstruation or childbirth before they may resume marital relations after immersion in the Mikvah. Thus, this question really meant: *did you and your ex-husband were having sex only about half of each month?* I automatically looked at my lawyer’s direction, waiting for her to object to this intrusive question, but she nodded at me and her lips signaled a voiceless *yes*, meaning I had to answer this question. My lawyer knew that the judge would allow this humiliating question about my *purity of the family* customs (Lamm, 2018), in spite of the fact that it had nothing to do with my parental abilities. No wonder that under such social and legal conditions, many women decide to freeze their personal happiness in order not to jeopardize their prospects of being the custodian parent. Shared custody eliminates both this risk and the humiliation many women face even if at the end of the process they are the sole custodian.

Shared parenting has a potential to help minority women, including women of color, women belonging to various religions, and women from traditional backgrounds

As much as shared parenting can help all women, it is especially advantageous for many minority groups who should adopt it warmly. Here are three examples.

¹A Mikvah is a bath used for the purpose of ritual immersion in Judaism to achieve ritual purity.

Afro-American women in the US:

The percentage of single-mothers in the Afro-American community is very high. While 74.3% of all white children under 18 live with both parents, only 38.7% of African-American minors can say the same (Prince, 2016). As shared parenting increases father's involvement in the child's life, helps her or him emotionally, psychologically and, financially, it should be highly recommended for Afro-American mothers.

Ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel and elsewhere

The Ultra-Orthodox community, especially in Israel and in the US but not exclusively, is very strict about its members who are *Off the Derech* (OTD), from the Hebrew word *derech* (meaning 'path'), namely members – male or female – who leave an Orthodox Jewish community. The term applies to a broad range of ex-Orthodox Jews, including those who leave Hasidic communities, ultra-Orthodox or Haredi communities, and Modern Orthodox communities. The ultimate punishment of fathers and mothers who are OTD is cutting them off from their children. One very famous such case is the story of Esti Weinstein (Weiner, 2016; Weinstein, 2017; the play based on this book: Kaye, 2018), who, after being cut from 6 of her 7 daughters, committed suicide. Levi (2018) has recently presented to the Israeli public two ex-Haredi fathers who were cut off from their children. One of these fathers also mentioned the possibility of taking his own life if this impossible situation did not change. It can be assumed, that if custody is not granted automatically to the parent who remains in the community and denied of the one who left it, but rather shared between both parents, it will be much more difficult for the Haredim to deny the other parent access to the children.

Muslims in Israel

A similar situation to that of religious Jews has been in Israel for Muslims, consisting of 20% of Israeli citizens.

In some matters of personal status, Israeli religious courts adjudicate in accordance with the personal law of the specific “community” to which the litigants belong. In matter of marriage and divorce, this jurisdiction is exclusive. In other matters related to family law, there are concurrent jurisdiction to family law court established since 1995. [...] There is a Shari'a court of Appeals sitting mainly in Jerusalem. As we will see in some cases, we can file petition against religious court in the Supreme Court of Israel sitting as High Court of Justice (Abou Ramadan, 2010, 275).

Abou Ramadan (2010) described, in his scholarly article, a variety of ways that Shari'a courts have been used in order to apply the best interest of the child principle rather than the original, strict laws. In one example the Shari'a Court of Appeals ruled that until the child reached the age of nine, the mother – had she been capable – was to be her custodian; if the

father wanted to prove her incapability, the burden of proof lied with him. As the father had not been able to supply such a proof, the child remained in her mother's custody. However, as has been the case in Rabbinical courts – had the default been joint custody, this dispute, that did not come to its end in the Shari'a Haifa court but rather escalated to the Shari'a Court of Appeals (located in Jerusalem) – could have been prevented, a better result for all three parties: the parents and the child.

Shared parenting has potential of decreasing women's abuse

The phenomenon of granting custody to the abusive father rather than to the battered mother has happened quite frequently in many countries and cultures (Campbell, 2017; David, 1995; Davis, O'Sullivan, Susser, Fields, 2011; Feresin, Anastasia, and Romito, 2017; Morrill, Dai, Dunn, Sung and Smith, 2005; Saunders, 2015). The main reason of it is that many a time the abusive father is stronger and wealthier than the mother, and thus capable of threatening her while she feels unable to fight against him without being exposed to further harassment and even more violence.

According to Haselschwerdt et al. (2010), two different kinds of abuse appear or even escalate during divorce processes: intimate terrorism and situational couple violence. It is presumed that situational couple violence occurs more often in general and in relation to separation in particular than so-called intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2008; Leone, Johnson and Cohan, 2007). However, as David (1995) has shown, in cases of physical, sexual, financial or social abuse of the husband, the divorce process, usually initiated by the abused wife, causes an escalation of the violence level. This Israeli finding of a qualitative study of 14 women who demanded divorce and in some cases had to give up custody – mainly of their sons – is in accordance with the findings of Hardesty and Ganong (2006), where the abuser had a motive to control his partner and as a result used violence as means to get common property, financial and other rights as well as child custody. Unfortunately in some cases of severe violent acts the judge either does not believe the wife (Myers, 2017; Saunders et al. 2015), and in others the violence performed is considered *normative* (Jasinski, 2001), so shared parenting, especially in the form of *parallel-parenting* (Halla, 2015), can help decrease the violence level during the divorce process and after it.

Shared parenting contributes to decrease of the divorce conflict

According to many studies, women tend to compromise rather than insist on their opinions in conflictual situations. Holt and DeVore (2005) have found in a meta-analysis based on 123 paired comparisons in 36 empirical studies that in individualistic cultures, compromising is endorsed more frequently by females; males are more likely to report using forced arrangement. It has been shown that parental conflict is more predictive of child maladjustment than the type of custody or living arrangements for the child post-divorce (Bernet, 2015). Raising children with less conflictual situations is a feminist issue as whether in sole- or shared parenting women can better materialize their aspirations when they do not have to invest so much in the mental health of their suffering, even traumatized children.

Shared parenting has proven in all studies to decrease the parental conflict and even eliminate custody wars (Breivik and Olweus, 2006; Kaltenborn and Lempp, 1998). As much as it is important for parents in general and for mothers in particular to avoid conflicts between them, it is even more important for their children. One of the main results of shared parenting is avoiding *Parental Alienation Syndrome* (PAS).

Children in many high conflict divorces find themselves quite often in a loyalty conflict between their parents (Jaffe, Thakkar and Piron, 2017; Moné and Biringen, 2012) which might cause PAS, the term first used by Gardner (1985) and widely argued in the research literature (O'Donohue, Benuto and Bennett, 2016; Walker and Shapiro, 2010; Warshak, 2001). It is accepted by the scientific community of developmental psychologists that under no circumstances should a child be punished for being alienated from one parent by the other who has manipulated her or him. Some of the strongest opponents to Parental Alienation Disorder (PAD) have been Pepiton, Alvis, Allen and Logid (2012) who argue both against the original research of Gardner (1985), "the father of PAS", and the implications of including PAD in the official psychiatric manual. Walker and Shapiro (2010) have gone even further by arguing against the inclusion of PAD in the new proposed Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-V) creates a host of problems.

According to Dallam and Silberg (2016), children who have been suffering from a divorce dispute are victims rather than the guilty party of the Parental Alienation syndrome (PAS), and in many cases they have been traumatized for life. Thus forced reunification might cause further trauma or *just* feeling of helplessness, being torn between loyalty to the custodian parent and obeying a higher authority, such as social worker of judge when disobeying results in punishment – either of the custodian parent or of both child and [custodian] parent.

Summary and conclusions

The conclusion of all studies published in the first decade of the 21st century has been that shared parenting has many advantages and not even one single disadvantage over single-parent custody for the children involved. In the current study I shifted the focus to the mothers; it has shown that mothers can benefit from shared parenting even in cases of high-conflict separation or divorce, and that it should be the default choice both legally and socially. I hereby suggest, that only in cases of high risk, namely, when a parent presents an actual risk of the child's physical, sexual or mental wellbeing, most cases of custody wars can, and should be prevented by shared parenting.

References

- About Ramadan, M. (2010). The recent developments in custody law for Muslims in Israel: Gender and religion. *Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World*, 8(3), 274-316.

- Amiran, R. (2018, January 29). When coalition gets a divorce. The battle on the tender age doctrine (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://www.ha-makom.co.il/post/revital-child-custody>
- Ahmad, A., & Omar, Z. (2008). Gender differences in work-family conflict and family-friendly employment policy practices. *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*, 6(3), 15-26.
- Arulampalam, W., Booth, A. L., & Bryan, M. L. (2007). Is there a glass ceiling over Europe? Exploring the gender pay gap across the wage distribution. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 60(2), 163-186.
- Bartlett, K. T. (2001). Principles of the law of family dissolution: Analysis and recommendations. *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy*, 8(1), 1-85.
- Bartlett, K. T., & Stack, C. B. (1986). Joint custody feminism and the dependency dilemma. *Berkeley Journal of Law, Gender and Justice*, 2(1), Article 2. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.15779/Z38HK3W>
- Basterrechea, B. B. (2016). EU child custody laws need updating. Retrieved from <https://www.euractiv.com/section/social-europe-jobs/opinion/eu-child-custody-laws-need-updating>
- Bauserman, R. (2002). Child adjustment in joint-custody versus sole-custody arrangements: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 16(1), 91-102.
- Bergström, M., Fransson, E., Fabian, H., Hjern, A., Sarkadi, A., & Salari, R. (2018). Preschool children living in joint physical custody arrangements show less psychological symptoms than those living mostly or only with one parent. *Acta Paediatrica*, 107(2), 294-300.
- Bergström, M., Fransson, E., Modin, B., Berlin, M., Gustafsson, P. A., & Hjern, A. (2015). Fifty moves a year: Is there an association between joint physical custody and psychosomatic problems in children? *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 69(8), 769-774.
- Bernet, W. (2015). Children of high-conflict divorce face many challenges. *Psychiatric Times*, 32(10), 9, 12-15.
- Bianchi, S. M., & Milkie, M. (2010). Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 705-725.
- Bradway, J. S. (1962). Collusion and the public interest in the law of divorce. *Cornell Law Review* 47(3), 374-394.
- Braver, S., & Lamb, M. E. (2018). Shared parenting after parental separation: The views of 12 experts. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 59(5), 372-387.
- Breivik, K., & Olweus, D. (2006). Adolescent's adjustment in four post-divorce family structures: Single mother, stepfather, joint physical custody and single father families. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 44(3/4), 99-124.
- Brinig, M. F. (2001). Feminism and child custody under chapter two of the American law institute's principles of the law of family dissolution. *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*, 8, 301-321. Retrieved from http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/law_faculty_scholarship/479

- Brinig, M. F., & Buckley, F. H. (1998). Joint Custody: Bonding and Monitoring Theories. *Indiana Law Journal*, 73(2), Article 1. Retrieved from <http://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/ilj/vol73/iss2/1>
- Cabrera, N. J., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Bradley, R. H., Hofferth, S., & Lamb, M. E. (2000). Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development*, 71(1), 127-136.
- Campbell, E. (2017). How domestic violence batterers use custody proceedings in family courts to abuse victims, and how court can put a stop to it. *UCLA Women's Law Journal*, 24(1), 41-66.
- Chavkin, W. (1990). Drug addiction and pregnancy: Policy crossroads. *Public Health and the Law*, 80(4), 483-487.
- Corman, A. (2012 [1977]). *Kramer vs. Kramer*. New York: Open Road Integrated Media.
- Dallam, S., & Silberg, J. (2016). Recommended treatments for “parental alienation syndrome” (PAS) may cause children foreseeable and lasting psychological harm. *Journal of Child Custody*, 13(2-3), 134-143.
- David, H. (1995). *The divorcing woman: Prejudices, truths and half-truths* (in Hebrew). Tel Aviv: Yaron Golan Publishing House.
- Davis, M. S., O'Sullivan, C. S., Susser, K. & Fields, M. D. (2011): Custody evaluations when there are allegations of domestic violence: Practices, beliefs and recommendations of professional evaluators. Final Report submitted to the National Institute of Justice, November 29, 2010. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/234465.pdf>
- The Declaration of the rights of sex workers in Europe (2005). European Conference on Sex Works, Human Rights, Labour and Migration, 15-17 October 2005, Brussels. Retrieved from http://www.sexworkeurope.org/sites/default/files/userfiles/files/join/dec_brussels2005.pdf
- Doble, N., & Supriya, M. V. (2010). Gender differences in the perception of work-life balance. *Management*, 5(4), 331-342.
- Eddy, B. (2012). Thoughts on shared parenting presumptions. Retrieved from <https://www.highconflictinstitute.com/free-articles/2018/3/7/thoughts-on-shared-parenting-presumptions>
- Equality and shared parental responsibility: The role of fathers (2015). *Assembly debate* on 2 October 2015 (36th Sitting) (Doc. 13870, report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Françoise Hetto-Gaasch; and Doc. 13896, opinion of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr Stefan Schennach). Retrieved from <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=22220>
- Erickson, N. S. (1984). The feminist dilemma over unwed parent's custody rights: The mother's rights must take priority. *Law & Inequality: A Journal of Theory and Practice* 2(2), 447-472.
- European Union (2014). Tackling the gender pay gap in the European Union. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved from <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/12106bd8-f56c-4c42-80ee-f80fd3e035d5/language-en>

- The evidence behind shared parenting (2018). In Arkansas Advocates for Parental Equality.* Retrieved from <http://parentalequalityar.org/shared.html>
- Fabricius, W. V., & Suh, G. W. (2017). Should infants and toddlers have frequent overnight parenting time with fathers? The policy debate and new data. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 23(1), 68-84.
- Family dispute resolution (2018). Australian Government, Australian Institute of Family Studies. Retrieved from: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/bibliography/family-dispute-resolution>
- Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (1998). *Nurturing fatherhood: Improving data and research on male fertility, family formation, and fatherhood.* Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Author.
Retrieved from https://www.childstats.gov/pdf/other_pubs/nurturing_fatherhood.pdf
- Feresin, M. F. A., & Patrizia, R. (2017). La mediazione familiare nei casi di affido dei figli/e e violenza domestica: contesto legale, pratiche dei servizi ed esperienze delle donne in Italia [Family mediation in child custody cases and domestic violence: Legal contexts, logic of services and women's experience in Italy]. *Rivista di Criminologia, Vittimologia e Sicurezza*, 11(2), 13-28.
- Fransson, E., Hjern, A., & Bergström, M. (2018). What can we say regarding shared parenting arrangements for Swedish children? *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 55(5), 349-358.
- Fransson, E., Turunen, J., Hjern, A., Östberg, V., & Bergström, M. (2016). Psychological complaints among children in joint physical custody and other family types: Considering parental factors. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 44(2), 177-183.
- Fujimoto, Y., Azmat, F., & Hartel, C. (2013). Gender perceptions of work-life balance: Management implications for full-time employees in Australia. *Australian Journal of Management* 38(1), 147-170.
- Gardner, R. A. (1985). Recent trends in divorce and custody litigation. *Academy Forum*, 29(2), 3-7.
- Gordon, I., Zagoory-Sharon, O., Leckman, J. F., & Feldman, R. (2010). Oxytocin and the development of parenting in humans. *Biological Psychiatry*, 68(4), 377-382.
- Gornick, J. C. (2012). For real utopia proposal session: Work-family reconciliation policies and gender equality. Retrieved from <https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~wright/ASA/Gornick%20Real%20Utopia%20Proposal%20--%20Family%20Division%20of%20Labor.pdf>
- Grossberg, M. (1983). Who gets the child? Custody, guardianship, and the rise of a judicial patriarchy in nineteenth century America. *Feminist Studies*, 9(2), 235-260.
- Halla, M. (2015). Do joint custody laws improve family well-being? *IZA World of Labor*, 147. Retrieved from <https://wol.iza.org/articles/do-joint-custody-laws-improve-family-well-being>
- Halloran McLaughlin, J. (2009). The fundamental truth about best interest. *Saint Louis University Law Journal*, 54, 113-165. Retrieved from <https://www.wyoguardians.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Fundamental-Truth-About-Best-Interests-Professor-Julia-McLaughlin.pdf>

- Har-Paz, T. (n.d.). A divorce does not mean that the child has no father. Women's organizations against the child's well-being (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://www.onlife.co.il/general/31406>
- Hardesty, J. L., & Ganong, L. H. (2006). How women make custody decisions and manage coparenting with abusive former husbands. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 23(4), 543-563.
- Haselschwerdt, M. L., Hardesty, J. L., & Hans, J. D. (2011). The effects of domestic violence allegations on custody evaluators' recommendations. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 26(8), 1694-1719.
- Hetherington, E. M., & Stanley-Hagan, M. (1986). Divorced fathers: Stress, coping, and adjustment. In Lamb, M. E. (Ed.), *The father's role: Applied perspectives* (pp. 103-134). New York: Wiley.
- Holt, J. L., & DeVore, C. J. (2005). *Culture, gender, organizational role, and styles of conflict resolution: A meta-analysis*. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(2), 165-196.
- Hubert, S., & Aujoulat, I. (2018). Parental burnout: When exhausted mothers open up. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9.
Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6028779>
- The Israeli Women's Network (2006). Abolition of the tender age doctrine (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <http://www.haderech.co.il/parliament153.html>
- Jaffe, A. M., Thakkar, M. J., & Piron, P. (2017). Denial of ambivalence as a hallmark of parental alienation. *Cogent Psychology*, 4. Retrieved from <https://www.cogentoa.com/article/10.1080/23311908.2017.1327144>
- Jasinski, J. L. (2001). Theoretical explanations for violence against women. In Renzetti, C. M., Edleson, J. L., & Bergen, R. K. (Eds.), *Sourcebook on violence against women* (pp. 8-15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Johnson, M. P. (2008). *A typology of domestic violence: Intimate terrorism, violent resistance, and situational couple violence*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Kaltenborn, K. F., & Lempp, R. (1998). The welfare of the child in custody disputes after parental separation or divorce. *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 12(1), 74-106.
- Karmon, T. (2017). The new law ignores reality (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://www.davar1.co.il/47802>
- Kaganas, F., & Piper, C. (2002). Shared parenting – a 70% solution? *Child and Family Law Quarterly*, 14(4), 365-379.
- Kaye, H. (2018). Doing His will. Retrieved from: <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Culture/Doing-His-Will-542980>
- Kerns, R. W. (2015). Crying wolf: The use of false accusations of abuse to influence child custodianship and a proposal to protect the innocent. *South Texas Law Review* 56(4), 603-636.
- King, V. (2002). Parental divorce and interpersonal trust in adult offspring. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3), 642-656.

- Klemfuss, N., Prinzmetal, W., & Ivry, R. B. (2012). How does language change perception: A cautionary note. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 3, article 78. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00078>.
- Kruk, E. (2012, May). Co-parenting and high conflict. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/co-parenting-after-divorce/201205/co-parenting-and-high-conflict>
- Lamm, M. (2018). *Mikvah: Jewish family purity*. Retrieved from https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/465166/jewish/Mikvah-Jewish-Family-Purity.htm
- Laurijssen, I. & Glorieux, I. (2013). Balancing Work and Family: A Panel Analysis of the Impact of Part-Time Work on the Experience of Time Pressure. *Social Indicators Research*, 112(1), 1-17.
- Leone, J. M., Johnson, M. P., & Cohan, C. L. (2007). Victim help seeking: Differences between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence. *Family Relations*, 56(5), 427-439.
- Levi, A. (2018). Real face. Haredi [=Ultra-Orthodox] divorcees (in Hebrew). Chanel 10, the Israeli Television. Retrieved from: <http://10tv.nana10.co.il/Article/?ArticleID=1304338>
- Livni, T. (2008). The tender age doctrine and the trick (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3536580,00.html>
- Luhmann, N. (1989). Law as a social system. *Northwestern University Law Review*, 83(1&2), 136-150.
- Maturana, H. R. (1988). Reality: The search for objectivity, or the quest for a compelling argument. *Irish Journal of Psychology*, 9(1), 25-82.
- Booth, K., & McLanahan, S. S. (1989). Mother-only families: Problems, prospects, and politics. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 51(3), 557-580.
- Megido, G. (2015). Foiling of the bill of abolition the tender age doctrine. What is the best interest of the child? (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1001079022>
- Morrill, A. C., Dai, J., Dunn, S., Sung, I., & Smith, K. (2005). Child custody and visitation decisions when the father has perpetrated violence against the mother. *Violence Against Women*, 11(8), 1076-1107.
- Myers, J. E. B. (2017). *Legal issues in clinical practice with victims of violence*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Moné, J. G., & Biringen, Z. (2012). Assessing parental alienation: Empirical assessment of college students' recollections of parental alienation during their childhoods. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 53(3), 157-177.
- Murphy, J. C., & Singer, J. B. (2015). *Divorced from reality: Rethinking family dispute resolution*. New York: New York University Press.
- Newnham, A. (2015). Shared parenting, law and policy: Considering power within the framework of autopoietic theory. *International Journal of Law in Context*, 11(4), 426-443. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744552315000282>
- Nielsen, L. (2015). Shared physical custody: Does it benefit children? *Journal of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers*, 28(1), 79-139.

- Nielsen, L. (2017). Re-examining the research on parental conflict, coparenting, and custody arrangements. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 23(2), 211-231.
- O'Donohue, W., Benuto, L. T., & Bennett, N. (2016). Examining the validity of parental alienation syndrome. *Journal of Child Custody*, 13(2-3), 113-125.
- Pepiton, M. B., Alvis, L. J., Allen, K., & Logid, G. (2012). Is parental alienation disorder a valid concept? Not according to scientific evidence. A review of parental alienation, DSM-5 and ICD-11 by William Bernet. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 21(12), 244-253.
- Plagnol, A. C., Scott, J., & Schober, P. (2010). Gender equality in paid and unpaid work: Priorities for UK policy intervention. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 29(7), 711-715.
- Prince, Z. (2016). Census Bureau: Higher percentage of black children live with single mothers. Retrieved from <https://www.afro.com/census-bureau-higher-percentage-black-children-live-single-mothers>
- Roetes, A. & Gracia, P. (2016). Child care time, parents' well-being, and gender: Evidence from the American Time Use Survey. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25(8), 2469-2479.
- Rose, J., Hewitt, B. & Baxter, J. (2011). Women and part-time employment. Easing or squeezing time pressure? *Journal of Society*, 49(1), 41-59.
- Sack, L. (1991). Women and children first: A Feminist analysis of the primary caretaker standard in child custody cases. *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, 4(2), Article 4. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yjlf/vol4/iss2/4>
- Saunders, D. G. (2015). Research based recommendations for child custody evaluation practices and policies in cases of intimate partner violence. *Journal of Child Custody*, 12(1), 71-92.
- Saunders, D. G., Faller, K. C., & Tolman, R. M. (2015). Beliefs and recommendations regarding child custody and visitation in cases involving domestic violence. A comparison of professionals in different roles. *Violence Against Women* 22(6), 722-744.
- Sherwood, Y. (2017). *The bible and feminism: Remapping the field*. Oxford University Press.
- Shrayber, M. (2016). This woman is fighting the stigma of sex work in America in hopes of getting her child back. Retrieved from <https://uproxx.com/life/finley-fawn-sex-work-custody>
- Simonardóttir, S. (2016). Constructing the attached mother in the “world's most feminist country”. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 56(3), 103-112.
- Stevenson, M. M., Braver, S. L., Ellman, I. M. & Votruba, A. M. (2012). Fathers, divorce, and child custody. In Cabrera, N. J., & Tamis-LeMond, C. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of father involvement: Multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 379-396). New York: Psychology Press.
- Stier, H., & Lewin-Epstein, N. (2000). Women's part-time employment and gender inequality in the family. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21(3), 390-410.

- Substance Abuse Treatment for Persons with Child Abuse and Neglect Issues (2000).
Chapter 6 – Legal Responsibilities and Recourse. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 36. Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US). Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64892>
- Tewathia, N. (2014). Work-life balance in the IT sector: A case study of Delhi. *International Journal of Advancements in Research & Technology* 3(7), 89-93.
- Thorstensson, S., Hertfelt, W. E., Ekström, A. & Langius-Eklöf, A. (2012). Evaluation of the mother-to-infant relation and feeling scale: Interviews with first-time mothers' for feelings and relation to their baby three days after birth. *International Journal of Nursing and Midwifery*, 4(1), 8-15.
- Verniers, C., & Vala, J. (2018). Justifying gender discrimination in the workplace: The mediating role of motherhood myths. *PLOS ONE* 13(1), e0190657. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190657>
- Walker, L. E., & Shapiro, D. L. (2010). Parental alienation disorder. Why label children with a mental diagnosis? *Journal of Child Custody*, 7(4), 266-286.
- Warshak, R. A. (2001). Current controversies regarding parental alienation syndrome. *American Journal of Forensic Psychology*, 19(3), 29-59.
- Warshak, R. A. (2014). Social science and parenting plans for young children: A consensus report. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 20(1), 46-67.
- Weiner, S. (2016). Before suicide, woman penned book about her ordeals in ultra-orthodox world. Retrieved from <https://www.timesofisrael.com/before-suicide-woman-penned-book-about-her-ordeals-in-ultra-orthodox-world>
- Weinstein, E. (2016). Osah Kirtzono [=she is doing what he wants her to] (in Hebrew). Retrieved from <https://izraelinfo.files.wordpress.com/2016/06/eszti-estee-weinstein-akarata-szerint-cselekszik.pdf>
- Whorf, B. L. (1956). Science and linguistics. In: Carroll, J. B. (Ed.), *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* (pp. 207-219). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Zlatev, J., & Blomberg, J. (2015). Language may indeed influence thought. *Frontiers in Psychology* 6, article 1631. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01631>

Paper Received March 17, 2019; Accepted August 6, 2019; Published November 2, 2019

Appendix I

A short list of Rabbinical and Family courts deciding in favor of shared or joint custody

- 28/4/2011, The Family Court in Tiberias, case 12148-04-10, Judge: Assaf Zagoori. Decision: joint custody.
- 16/6/2011, The Family Court in Kfar-Saba, case 11657-03, Judge: Zvi Weizman. Decision: joint custody.

- 30/7/2013, The Family Court in Nazareth, case 4126-01-12 and 53207-12-11, Judge: Assaf Zagoori. Decision: joint custody.
- 10/2/2014, Family Court in Tel Aviv, case 4881-10-12, Judge: Tamar Snunit Fore, Decision: joint parental responsibilities
- 12/3/2014, The Family court in Rishon Leziyyon, case: 53472-12-11, Judge: Dr. Varda Ben-Shahar, Decision: joint custody.
- 10/4/2014, Family Court in Petah Tikvah, case 12-09-603 and 32686-10-12, Judge: Navah gadish, Decision: joint custody.
- 28/9/2014, Family court in Hadera, case 28124-07-12, Judge Tal Peperni. Decision: Joint parental responsibilities.
- 6/1/2015, Family court in Ashdod, case 1360-07-12, Judge Rotem Kodler Ayash. Decision: Joint parental responsibilities.
- 7/12/2015, The Family Court in Haifa, case 30017-05-13, Judge: Shoshana Glick. Decision: joint custody.
- 2016, The Family Court in Petah Tikvah, case 59099-11-14, Judge: Eliya Nuss. Decision: joint custody.
- 23/11/2016, The Rabbinical Court in Haifa, case 995674/8, the presiding rabbi of a *beth din*: Rabbi Yitzhak Ushinsky. Decision: joint custody.
- 22/1/2016, Family Court in Petah Tikvah, case 22141-07-11, Judge: Binyamin Izre'eli, Decision: joint parental responsibilities.
- 2017, The Rabbinical Court Law in Haifa, Case 884693/5, the presiding rabbi of a *beth din* (rabbinical court), and the posek ("decisor" of Halakha), the collective body of Jewish religious laws derived from the Written and Oral Torah: Rabbi Yitzhak Ushinsky. Decision: joint custody.
- 22/11/2017, The Rabbinical Court in Tel Aviv, case No.: erased – confidential; the chief presiding rabbi of a *beth din*: Rabbi Meir Freeman, Dayyan: Rabbi meir Kahan, Dayan: Rabbi Yitzhak Rapapport. Decision: Shared parental responsibilities.
- 28/12/2017, Family court in Tiberias, Case Nos.: 50603-03-15, 50654-03-15, 47211-12-15, Judge: Avivit Nahmias. Decision: joint custody.

Paper Received March 17, 2019; Accepted August 6, 2019; Published November 2, 2019