

What Is Parental Alienation Syndrome?

Parental alienation syndrome refers to a situation where one parent sets out to turn their children against the other parent, resulting in a severely estranged and fractured relationship between them. A parent who is angry at the other parent might try to influence their children's perception of that parent by making disparaging comments, and sometimes, false allegations of about them. A parent might also try to "hoard" the kids, encroaching on the other parent's parenting time. Parental alienation is a serious concern in [divorce](#) and [child custody](#) situations.

Showing Parental Alienation

Finding compelling or persuasive evidence of parental alienation can be difficult. Unlike physical abuse, the harms of parental alienation do not visibly manifest themselves through physical scars or bruises. Establishing a solid case of parental alienation requires a lot of diligent investigation and record keeping, as well as showing the estranged relationship.

Friends or family who witness how a parent talks about the other parent in front of children could be valuable in proving parental alienation. Sometimes children can be essential witnesses as they have personal knowledge of, and often repeat, the comments the alienating parent makes about the alienated parent.

Sometimes **therapists who witnessed acts of parental alienation** during joint marital therapy are possible sources of proof. Whether a therapist may be compelled to testify about such acts is a complicated question of law that requires the advice and counsel of a professional attorney.

Finally, **social media** can be a very useful tool for proving parental alienation. If the alienating parent uses social media to publish disparaging comments about the alienated parent, these posts could be used to demonstrate parental alienation.

Legal Action for Parental Alienation

There is no crime or civil tort for parental alienation in California. However, a case of parental alienation and sadly have damaging experiences on a child's psyche and relationship with the estranged parent. Under California law, courts are required to make custody determinations based on factors related to the best interests of the child.

California public policy recognizes that a child's best interests are served when both parents have a relationship with them. Additionally, one of the main factors courts must consider when evaluating the best interests of a child involves a parent's willingness to foster and exchange the other parent's relationship with the child.

If the record clearly demonstrates that one parent is the victim of a malicious parental alienation scheme, the court could consider these facts to be detrimental and against the child's best interest, and ultimately award custody to the alienated parent.

Consult Sullivan Law & Associates for Quality Legal Counsel

Our legal team is dedicated to finding reasonable and fair resolutions in contentious family law matters. However, if a reasonable compromise is unlikely under the circumstances, we are prepared to take you to trial and zealously advocate for you and your family's best interest.

For more information about how Sullivan Law & Associates can help you, call us at (949) 565-2793 or [contact us online](#) today.