

P-03-236 The Charter for Grandchildren – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 27.04.15

Frank Bradfield

Petitions Committee
National Assembly of Wales

27th April 2015

Dear William

Petition: P-04-236

It is good to hear from you again in your capacity as chair of the Petitions Committee. My position in relation to a Charter for Grandchildren has never changed but as the years roll by I have been more and more involved with mums and dads who have been alienated from their children.

I have spoken to Gwilym Roberts the Chief Executive of RELATE and he supports the idea of a voluntary Charter for Children that could be seen as a code of conduct for parents and children's agencies to adopt and follow.

I agree with the politicians, many of whom come from a legal back ground, that vast strides have been made in Family Law since 2009 when a Charter for Grandchildren was first petitioned and although these changes in the law are to be welcomed, they are not achieving what we, who live in Wales wish for society and the children who suffer the consequences of being alienated from their parents and grandparents.

The answer to this is quite simple and it is that children should be able to access both parents, a point on which all politicians agree before they muddy the waters with what ifs' and it is the what ifs' that has held real progress back.

Children need a pathway which simply outlines their rights, such as, and I quote from the Charter.

"When we have **difficulties or problems** we expect you to, **Get to know us, Speak with us, Listen to us, Take us seriously, Involve us, Respect our privacy, Be responsible for us, Think about our lives as a whole, Think carefully how you use information about us, Put us in touch with the right people, Use your power to help, Make things happen when they should, Help us be safe.**"

The above was the 13 statements derived from a consultation process with children and young people and one wonders why it was not adopted since it was obviously what the children wished, and I suggest and hope we continue to argue the case for such a charter to protect our children.

We in the group FNF- Both Parents Matter Cymru – Llandudno are enjoying success in the family courts and have even had one case heard by the Court of Appeal in London, so our persuasive ways

are bringing success to many parents and grandparents but that does not detract from the need of a code of conduct respected by all for the sole paramount interest of protecting children so that they have access to the people they love mainly their mums, dads and grandparents.

To deny children this right has a detrimental effect on children which is apparent in the behaviour patterns of some children which we are looking into that at the moment.

William, I thank you and your committee for writing me, and my commitment for a charter for children or grandchildren is still as strong as ever and may I add in case your members are aware that I was denied access to my own granddaughter for a year. My 11 year old granddaughter sorted the situation out herself with the social services and she has lived with us for over four years now.

Many thanks and Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bradfield', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Frank Bradfield