

Save Indian Family Foundation (SIFF) www.saveindianfamily.org	Children's Rights Initiative for Shared Parenting (CRISP) www.crisp-india.org	All India Mother-in-Law Protection Forum (AIMPF) www.aimpf.org
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Memorandum regarding Children's welfare in Family Courts

Submitted to
Principal Judge,
Family Courts, Nyaya Degula, Bangalore.

Family courts should enforce children friendly policies

Only in exceptional cases should children be allowed inside court halls

Children must not be allowed to enter the court hall. It is seen that often mothers bring their kids in the court hall in the maintenance cases to impress upon the court the need to get higher maintenance. The environment inside the court hall is not conducive for children where often allegations and counter allegations are levelled at each other with ease. There are occasions where allegations of adultery and extra marital affairs are levelled at each other. Shouting and high pitch arguments also happen sometimes. Hence children must be confined in separate rooms where environment will be friendly to them with no adverse effects.

Often it has been seen that children put forward their hands when father gives maintenance. This kind of practice must be stopped since it can have long-term negative impact on children's mind.

One more thing has been noticed that in case of maintenance some mothers will pinch their babies to get attention of the presiding officer with obvious reasons. Children must not be allowed to be made use of by either of parties in matrimonial cases.

Lack of space for children

It has been seen on occasions that when children are inside court, they do not have a place to sit due to crowd. So sometimes children have been seen sitting on the ground or standing; while the seats are occupied by lawyers and other people. In special and exceptional cases when children have to be inside family court halls, it should be ensured that they get a place to sit inside family courts at all times. It will also do justice to the name "Family Court".

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Family courts infrastructure must be more children friendly

Lack of meeting space for children and parents

There is no separate place where meeting of children with parents can happen in a pleasant environment. Since many court visitations orders are meant to be inside court premises, it is highly recommended to have such places inside court itself. However, in interest of children, court ordered visitation must be granted in home or such place conducive to children rather than inside court's premises.

"The visitation provided in Family Court premises is pure harassment", says a father and SIF member who has been granted visitation for few hours on few days in a month. *"We need to sit in the passage and meet our loved one. No privacy, no congenial atmosphere."* – He adds further.

Bad condition of toilets

It has been noticed that a child wanted to go to toilet but on seeing the pathetic condition in the toilet and the foul smell he started crying and the father was seen helpless.

A separate room for the small children is needed

A mother was seen breast feeding her baby in the ground floor waiting hall. There seems to be ample space on ground floor, and more infrastructures could be created to take care of children.

No food or other basic facilities are available in or around family court

No shops are available in or around the family court, for example to buy children's basic necessities such as food, hot milk, napkin etc or play things as balloons, toys etc. Hence a small shop (possibly with private partnership) should be opened within the family court premises. The only available canteen in the family court supplies food which even adults are unable to consume hence a food facilities must be opened wherein children specific food are available.