

## Judge orders children seized in custody battle

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**KIRK MAKIN JUSTICE REPORTER**  
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An Ontario judge has ordered that three girls be seized and sent to a parental alienation centre for deprogramming after their mother waged an unrelenting campaign to alienate them from their father.

The children – aged 14, 11 and 9 – were transported several days ago to the U.S.-based centre. After being treated, they will live in the sole custody of their father, a 56-year-old vascular surgeon.

“It is now time for his and the children's fates to be free from [the mother's] control,” Madam Justice Faye McWatt of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice said in her ruling. “She has shown that she cannot be entrusted with it.”

The judge said the children had become so poisoned toward their father by the mother's “emotional abuse” that they had lost the capacity to make independent decisions about interacting with him.

Judge McWatt ordered the 42-year-old mother – a chiroprapist identified only as K.D. – to turn over all the children's clothing, passports and possessions. K.D. was also ordered not to harass the children or go within 300 metres of them.

The judge also gave the father, A.L., the power to confiscate the children's cellphones, pagers, computers and BlackBerrys to prevent their mother from contacting them.

“Hopefully, this decision will send a message to other parents of like mind that, if they alienate children, there is a huge price that will be paid at the end of it all,” the father's lawyer, Harold Niman, said in an interview last night.

“This order was child focused and designed very sensitively to ensure that children emerge from this process as healthy children,” Mr. Niman said. “My client is a very decent guy who tried resolutely, under very difficult circumstances, to have a relationship with his children. Here, the system worked.”

Soon after the couple met in 1993, K.D. became pregnant. K.D. attempted to keep A.L. from seeing his first daughter, but nonetheless eventually agreed to marry him.

The relationship became more dysfunctional. K.D. closely regulated her husband's interactions with his child and accused him of sexually abusing the child. Judge McWatt said K.D. appeared to be dominated by her mother, a vindictive woman who had regularly beat her children when they were young.

K.D. and A.L. soon split up, but had two more children during brief periods of reunification.

Judge McWatt found that K.D. – whom the judge described as immature, evasive and completely lacking in credibility – on several occasions precipitated physical confrontations with her husband and berated him in front of the children.

K.D. also refused repeatedly to comply with court orders granting A.L. visitation rights, and invented excuses to thwart them.

Judge McWatt said a psychologist who assessed the family noted that K.D. was obsessive about observing the children when they were with their father, retained an unreasoning belief that he would harm them, and “overprotected the three children to the point of infantilizing all of them.

“Eventually, he was not allowed to see or speak to the children – but was left shouting good night to them through a door of K.D.'s home,” Judge McWatt added. “Most times, he was not aware whether they were in the house. He did this for up to two years during this period.”

The degenerative series of events ended in the children withdrawing from their father and refusing to see him.

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