

Mums who cut fathers out after separation: One in three say Dad should not have say in their child's upbringing

- Study found 32% mothers feel they can better handle problems alone
- Comes as deepening concern millions of children don't have male role model
- 85% of fathers would prefer to make decisions as a unit, research finds

By [Steve Doughty](#)

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Concerns: Judges and education experts warn that if fathers are cut out it could be damaging for the child

One in three separated mothers think their children's fathers should have no say in their upbringing, according to a report yesterday.

It found that 32 per cent of separated mothers thought that they alone had the right to make decisions about their children's future.

The high proportion found by a survey implies that more than one in 10 of all the families in the country include mothers who do not want the fathers of their children to have a say over the future of their children.

The findings were revealed in a survey carried out for the counselling group Relate.

It comes at a time of deepening concern among judges and education experts over the absence of fathers from the lives of millions of youngsters.

Concerns over the way 'deadbeat dads' have gone missing from their children's lives have been at the forefront of public concern for nearly 25 years.

The Child Support Agency was set up in the early 1990s to try to force absent fathers at least to pay for the children they had abandoned.

But the figure for mothers unveiled by Relate was more than double the number of men who believed that one parent from a separated or divorced couples should be able to decide alone how to raise the children.

Worries over mothers who want to exile separated fathers from their children's lives have been coming to the fore in recent months, notably in two prominent High Court cases in which judges questioned why mothers had been allowed to prevent fathers from taking a role with their children.

The Relate study was based on a YouGov survey taken among more than 1,500 people which asked parents about how they regarded their separation.

Six out of 10 thought a family break-up was always a bad thing and just over half of separated parents acknowledged that the split had had a negative impact on their children.

But the continued bitterness between mothers and fathers, and the wish of many mothers to cut fathers out of their children's lives, was laid bare in questions about how parents should cope with separation.

'One notable difference was in attitudes between the separated mothers and fathers we asked on who should make decisions about children's futures,' the report said.

'Here, 68 per cent of separated mothers said both parents should make decisions together about children's futures, compared to 85 per cent of fathers.'



Research: 32 per cent of separated mothers feel they can better handle problems as a single parent

Relate estimates that a third of all British families have been through a parental break-up, so on the counselling group's reckoning around one in nine of all families are led by a mother who wants to keep the father out of decision-making.

Family courts trying to help warring couples re-arrange their lives have long struggled with the difficulty of dealing with intransigent mothers.

Judges are reluctant to punish children further by sending mothers to prison.

At one stage Labour ministers tried to get around the problem with a plan to make mothers who disobey court orders obey curfews and wear electronic tags.

But the finding follows strong remarks from judges in recent cases over the way mothers are sometimes allowed to exile fathers from their children's lives.

Last month High Court judge Mrs Justice Parker set down a judgement that warned social workers: 'Parents who obstruct the relationship with either mother or father are inflicting untold damage on their children and it is about time the professionals truly understood this.'



Campaign: Fathers For Justice continue to fight for equal parenting rights as growing concerns mount over lack of male role models for millions of youngsters after their parents have separated

In another case Appeal Judge Lord Justice McFarlane condemned family courts that had prevented a father from having regular contact with his daughter for 12 years because 'the mother appears to want an unhealthy exclusive relationship' with her daughter.

In October Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector of schools and social care, warned against the alienation of fathers from their families, saying: 'Children are abused because their biological parents were long ago alienated from each other and the new man in the house - often the latest in a succession of men - is violent and resentful.'

Relate said separating parents should try to communicate with each other, even if there is tension over one having a new relationship.

Chief Executive Ruth Sutherland said: 'The one thing everyone can be sure of is that it's the wellbeing of children which is of paramount importance here - so finding ways to work together as parents in the best interests of our children is vital.'

Harry Benson of the Marriage Foundation think tank said: 'Fathers must have a role in their children's lives. Teenagers are much more likely to go off the rails if their fathers are not part of their lives.'

'The problem is that it is very, very difficult when parents split up. There is no such thing as a good divorce.'



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[Susan](#), Dumfries, 1 day ago

Daughter now going through the same HOWEVER ex son-in-law is the complete OPPOSITE. Contact is limitless with children, they always attend parents nights etc together, never a bad word from either parent to the children about the other. Regular contact with both sets of grandparents and extended families. Cannot disclose reason for split but both are fabulous parents. Ex son-in-law will ALWAYS have my respect.

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[Bubbles](#), UK, 1 day ago

He's wrong. There is such thing as a good divorce. When parents decide mutually to split because they've grown apart they can still remain friends. It doesn't have to be all awkward. My son's dad and I have a lovely relationship and I have a good one with his new wife as well and they with my new partner. We get along for the sake of our son and just because it's the type of people we are.

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[Midlifechange](#), London, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

It has taken my husbands ex wife 8 years to destroy his relationship with his children despite ensuring his ex was never inconvenienced socially or financially by their split and him continuing to try and see his children. Legal involvement has achieved zero and now there is birthday and Christmas contact only - their birthdays and Christmases, with no phone contact. She's very happy with how things are as it's less inc

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[hydey 44](#), hereford, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

Just so long as they keep up the child support payments?

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[Chris](#), Brighton, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

The State allows this to go on because it sees the role of men as purely that of some sort of sperm donor who must work and pay taxes for everyone else. The State is deliberately allowing men to be viewed as second class citizens when it comes to children, purely for economic and business reasons.

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[osiris](#), Oxford, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

My ex has not seen my eldest son since he was 5 years old. My son is 35 this month. It was my ex husbands choice.