

## Tekst 1

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Sir: May I contribute to the debate engendered by the antics of Fathers4Justice, from the position of one who has dealt with some hundreds of contact disputes?

A small number of fathers do have a legitimate grievance, but it is not the one stated or implied in the propaganda stunts they seek to mount. Disputes over contact with children are governed by the Children Act - an excellent piece of legislation requiring no amendment on this topic. Under the Act the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration. Neither Fathers4Justice nor some politicians who appear to sympathise with them appear to argue from this starting point.

When a court limits or refuses contact to the parent who does not have the day-to-day care of the child, it does so because it considers such a course to be in the child's best interests. In any event, only a tiny proportion of divorces involve a dispute over contact with children. Where there is a disagreement, at least half are settled without a contested court hearing, thanks usually to the efforts of the Probation Service. Where a court order has to be made - perhaps in 1-2 per cent of divorces - the parties generally abide by it.

But, there is a residual problem where the order is flouted. And in these cases, fathers do have a real grievance, because the courts are scandalously faint-hearted. Men are sent to prison for not paying maintenance, and mothers for not sending their children to school, but equal sternness for mothers who refuse to obey or simply sabotage contact orders is almost wholly lacking, bringing the law into disrepute and tempting the aggrieved into disruptive action. If Fathers4Justice were to concentrate, in a reasoned and reasonable manner, upon this failing in our domestic legal system, they would deserve to command sympathy.

R J HOLLOWAY  
Penrith, Cumbria

*www.independent.co.uk*

*Let op: beantwoord een open vraag altijd in het Nederlands, behalve als het anders is aangegeven. Als je in het Engels antwoordt, levert dat 0 punten op.*

## **Tekst 1 Sir: May I contribute...**

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- 1p 1 What does R J Holloway argue with regard to Fathers4Justice?
- A They should direct their attention to the courts failing to enforce orders for contact with fathers.
  - B They weaken their case in court over contact with children by taking part in wild protests.
  - C They will have to accept that the judge's decision is always made in the child's best interest.
  - D They wrongly claim that the majority of divorced men are denied contact with their children.