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1 In 4 Kids In Divorce Becomes Parental Pawn
by Tom Miller



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A new book called *Marital Conflicts, Divorce, and Children's Development* states that 25% of children in a divorce experience Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS). The book was published by a trio of professors from the University of Granada (José Cantón Duarte, M^a Rosario Cortés Arboleda, and M^a Dolores Justicia Díaz). PAS is essentially the systematic undermining of one parent by the other. Generally, it's the parent with custody that does the undermining.

The mind games include the standard fair of veiled threats, quotes out of context, induced-anxiety over abandonment, and rewards for favoritism. And much of the time, these actions create irreparable damage in a parent-child relationship. And the indoctrination often makes children feel like he came to these negative conclusions on their own. It affects preteens more than teenagers (teens are typically concentrating on hating both parents for getting a divorce and ruining their lives). These parent power games have been going on long before divorce. And it's a little surprising that only one-fourth of children of divorce experience it. Maybe it's not PAS unless it's incredibly acute with long-term effects.

And, eventually, the other parent picks up on this. Sometimes it just drives the other parent away. Sometimes it makes for an incredibly elaborate Christmas spending. And sometimes the alienating child gets called a "thoughtless little pig." While it's fair to say that most people don't really care too much for their ex, it's also fair to say that it's incredibly lame (plus unoriginal) to use kids against former spouses. The best revenge involves A) dating someone awesome that the kid(s) automatically loves (think fighter pilots or American Gladiators) or B) random, minor acts of inconvenience (Photoshop-altered pictures, sending masseuses to their house when company is over, signing them up for catalogues, you know, gangster shit).