

**Dott. Vittorio Carlo Vezzetti**

**Da:** Kruk, Edward Andrew <~~Edward.A.Kruk@utoronto.ca~~>  
**Inviato:** martedì 12 febbraio 2019 21:00  
**A:** Dott. Vittorio Carlo Vezzetti  
**Oggetto:** Re: question-SP LAW DISCUSSION IN ITALY

This is obviously inaccurate and untrue, Vittorio. And to rely on a 1997 article that is 21 years old is highly problematic.

At the 2017 Boston conference, Dr. Kari Adamsons looked at quality time for fathers versus the quantity of time they have with their kids, concluding that fathers need sufficient time with their children in order to enjoy quality time. Dr. Irwin Sandler also highlighted the necessity of quality time for both parents that robustly predicts better outcomes for children. He stated that without shared parenting, the opportunity for quality time with both parents is lost.

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Although the term, "shared parenting" is usually used to describe arrangements where parents share child care responsibilities following divorce as much as possible, the notion of "equal parenting" refers to parenting arrangements after divorce where parents seek to fairly and equally divide their post-divorce responsibilities toward their children. Although shared parenting provides a number of benefits to children, it is equal parenting that is the optimal arrangement for most children of divorce. This includes children caught in the middle of high parental conflict. Recent research (Baude et al, 2016; Fabricius, 2011) has shown that child adjustment is heightened and parental conflict is reduced in equal parenting households, from the perspective of both children and parents, and in cases where inter-parental conflict is not reduced, equal parenting seems to ameliorate most of the negative effects of such conflict on children.

It is true that child development experts have written that psychologically, the quality of attachment relationships is a major factor associated with the well-being of very young children. Some believe that the quality of parent-child relationships counts for much more than merely quantity of time that children spend with each parent after divorce. But children form close bonds with those who care for them, which tells us that quantity of contact is at least as important as quality.

I would emphasize that quality of relationships is largely dependent on having a sufficient quantity of time to develop and nurture those primary relationships. *Equal parental responsibility provides a context and climate for the continuation or development of high quality parent-child relationships, allowing both parents to remain authoritative, responsible, involved, attached, emotionally available, supportive, and focused on children's day-to-day lives.* Attachment bonds are formed through mutual participation in daily routines, including bedtime and waking rituals, transitions to and from school, and extracurricular and recreational activities. There is a direct correlation between quantity of time and quality of parent-child relationships, as high quality relationships between parents and children are not possible without sufficient, routine time to develop and sustain a quality relationship. And children's adjustment is furthered by primary relationships with both mothers and fathers. For children, primary

attachment bonds are not possible within the constraints of "access" or "visitation." Quality of parent-child attachments is also largely dependent on the well-being of parents. Parent well-being is furthered with equal parenting, as neither parent is threatened with the loss of his or her children. The highest rate of depression among adults is among parents who have a dependent child but are unable to maintain a meaningful relationship with that child.

Quality of relationships with children are compromised not only in cases where a parent feels disenfranchised as a non-residential parent, but also in situations in which a parent is overwhelmed by sole custodial and caregiving responsibility for his or her children. The constraints of traditional "access" relationships are well documented; closeness, warmth, and mutual understanding are elusive when parenting within the constraints of thin slices of time. Meaningful relationships are developed and sustained through emotional connectedness, and this is made possible through the emotional stability and security of meaningful (fair and equal) parenting time. At the same time, quality of parent-child relationships is enhanced when parents do not feel burdened or overwhelmed by the demands of sole parental responsibility; studies have consistently reported that joint custody parents report significantly less burden and stress in their lives than sole custody/primary residence parents, as sole responsibility for day-to-day attention to the child's needs is not placed on either the mother or the father, resulting in better quality parent-child relationships, although it comes as no surprise that the highest and lowest levels of parental satisfaction with parenting arrangements after divorce are found in sole custody / primary residence families: custodial or primary residential parents report the highest levels of satisfaction with parenting after divorce arrangements while non-custodial/non-residential parents report the lowest. Between these extremes lies equal parenting, where both mothers and fathers report satisfaction. The marked imbalance in parental satisfaction levels between primary residential and equal parenting arrangements does not bode well for the exercise of parental rights and responsibilities after divorce, as one parent remains at a significant disadvantage in regard to quality of life and well-being. Parental quality of life is an important and significant determinant of the quality of parent-child relationships; optimally, both parents' interests vis-à-vis their children should be satisfied.

Hope this helps,

Edward"