

Exposure to abusive behavior can be as damaging as being directly abused, as published by the Childhood Domestic Violence Association here:

<https://cdv.org/2014/02/10-startling-domestic-violence-statistics-for-children/>

Multnomah County Family Court Services' mediation staff report they are able to identify domestic abuse in about 50% of cases.

Due to this prevalence and the important implications for custody and parenting time decisions, Oregon law (ORS 107.137; (1) (d)) **specifically requires the consideration of “the abuse of one parent by the other” as a factor in deciding the custody of minor children.**

By not considering “abuse of one parent by the other” in determining best interest is a form of victim blaming. It is essentially saying that the abuse happened because of the victim and not because the abuser is abusive.

However, even with protections in place by law, 58,000 children are taken from safe parents every year and given to their abusers full time or 50/50 custody, not because their protective parents were unfit, but because they were outlawyered and outmaneuvered in a court system that is not trained to understand family violence dynamics.

SB318 will not solve our court crisis. It will only make it worse and doom protective parents and their children.

Custody battles are a way for abusers to maintain power and control over their victims even after the victim has fled with the children.

If there is a “custody battle”, that is the first indicator there is a power and control dynamic.

SB318 will not end the power and control dynamic nor keep parents and kids safe.

Safe parenting works. Especially if victims are **exempt** from court and custody battles upon determination of family violence by state certified domestic violence advocates and family and child therapists.