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Proposed parent abduction laws



Clarissa Rayward

Celebrity judge

Fishy patent

NEW laws aimed at deterring child kidnapping by migrant parents who split will make it easier for children to be returned to Australia and deter parents from fleeing overseas with them.

Proposed changes include allowing the family law courts to suspend child support payments for parents who abduct their children and adding new criminal offences under the Family Law Act to include the wrongful retention of a child overseas.

Clarissa Rayward from Brisbane Family Law Centre welcomes the measures announced by Attorney-General Robert McClelland.

"Australia has a strong record of support for the Hague convention in assisting the return of children to their home country. It's only fitting that all possible steps be taken to prevent the trauma of child abduction for Australian families," says Rayward.

She regards any Government action taken to safeguard both children's and parents' rights as a step in the right direction and eagerly awaits the drafting of new legislation for introduction to Parliament in early 2012, implementing the Family Law Council's recommendations in this regard.