

THE COURTS COUNSELOR/EVALUATOR LIST

WHAT ABOUT THIS LIST

Most of the so-called Experts/Evaluators that are on the court's referral list are not doctors and may only have a GED as a qualification. These are the people entrusted with the power to tear families apart. Elizabeth Robinson, a psychologist who recently left her position as a regulator with the state Board of Psychology, said she had seen enough complaints about evaluators' ethics to warrant serious concern. Some had improper relationships with one parent or another while purporting to conduct objective evaluations; others interviewed only one side in the dispute. Robinson saw children returned to abusive parents and others prevented from living with loving caretakers -- all on the strength of a therapist's report, against which there was virtually no recourse. I could go into many horror stories. I will only mention one well documented case. Washington State's own GREENBERG, shot himself when he got caught video taping his female clients in the bathroom, and later wacking off to them. The really sad part is he was not even questioned for the ridiculous billing practices. This evaluator was highly regarded by the Family Court System and received more referrals than any other evaluator on their list.

The State has set guidelines for what to charge for evaluations -- \$2,500. However, because there is no oversight (of any kind), the evaluators are free to charge whatever they like, and often do. One of Greenberg's poor mothers was charged over \$60,000.00 after dragging the case out for 2 years. One of the reasons such a thing can happen is because as a client you are looking for a favorable evaluation, if you ever plan on seeing your children again. They have you by the balls and Greenberg should have had his cut off -- but instead he shot himself before anyone got the chance. This is what we are stuck with and what PAPA intends to change. There have been some baby steps taken by the State - more like a bandaid. In June of 2007, after a decade of discussion, the board adopted newly binding regulations for psychologists working as parent evaluators. They must now document the reasons behind each recommendation, provide a written breakdown of fees, and be free of previous relationships with either parent. Violating any of these conditions could be grounds for license suspension. The state should not be allowed to make it mandatory to attend and pay for a counselor, evaluator, or any program for that matter, where they have not put a cap on the amount to be charged for such services. This just invites the opportunity for corruption. However, the new measures apply only to psychologists. They have no authority over social workers or anyone else acting as a parent evaluator and for many families, these rules come too late.