

A man in a dark suit and tie stands with his back to the camera on the peak of a large, craggy rock. He is holding a black briefcase in his right hand. In the background, a dense city skyline with numerous skyscrapers is visible under a clear blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of high stakes and a long, difficult journey.

Is Your Attorney Really Working for You and Your Children? 13 Questions to Find Out the Truth

[The Foundation for Child Victims of the Family Courts](#)

13 Questions All Protective Parents Should Ask Their Attorneys

Is your family court attorney working for you and your children?

No one cares about the welfare of your children more than you do.

Your children have come forward with allegations of abuse by the other parent. When you learned that abuse was taking place in your home, you became vigilant and took the steps that you believed were right.

In this nightmare, you are trying to protect them.

But you weren't prepared to look for an attorney, possibly didn't even know exactly what kind of attorney to look for, so you took on someone who was recommended to you by someone you trust. This lawyer seems like a logical, reasonable expert.

But you really don't know this professional who at least in part holds your future in his or her¹ hands.

You think you've found an attorney who will "fight for you," but now is not the time to slack on your sober attentiveness.

In fact, this is the time for your vigilance to be at its peak performance.

¹ NOTE: We understand that attorneys can be either men or women. For purposes of simplicity, from here on out we will refer to the attorney as "he."

If you are simply passive, naïvely “trusting the process,” then you may be at grave risk of losing your children.

You don’t think it can happen? It has happened to many before you.

Maybe your attorney is truly working for you . . . *but maybe not.*

Here are some questions to ask to find out.

1. *What have you done to educate yourself about various kinds of abuse and their effects, including sexual abuse?*

When it comes to family court, and especially when your child has made claims of abuse by the other parent, you need a lawyer who is fully informed and deeply educated about the spectrum of abuse and its effects.

Does your lawyer understand terms like gaslighting, narcissism, and sociopathy? Is he educated about how abuse takes place through isolation and through control of finances? Does he understand PTSD, CPTSD, and various personality disorders?

If your attorney has no understanding of these concepts that are basic to understanding abuse, then he is in danger of secretly believing the child’s abuser over the child, because the alleged abuser “presents so nicely,” and the child “doesn’t act like a child who has been abused” (whatever that is supposed to look like), and you, the protective parent, “seem a little unstable.”

This is an attorney who may claim to be fighting for you but who secretly is not. This is not an attorney that you want to be paying exorbitant sums of money to “fight for you.”

2. *How do you respond to the typical “abuser narrative”?*

The litigant with control of the finances, with knowledge of secrets to hide and a history of hiding secrets, that litigant can easi-

ly find out exactly who to hire to win his case, without concern for cost.

The “abuser narrative” reads (whether for men or for women) “the other parent is crazy, has a very serious mental illness, saying these awful things about me, convincing the kids to lie and distort things. The children must be protected for their own welfare; the children must get into therapy to help them overcome these awful lies they are starting to believe. The other parent has to get into therapy too and not be allowed to see the kids until they admit to their lies and get help for their mental illness.”

In family court, this script is well known. The script has a production team, a cast, a performance, execution plan and a closing act, which ends with removing vulnerable children from protective parents and putting them into the hands of abusers.

But protective parents must understand the character of the abuser. They must not allow themselves to be accused of having any responsibility for the abuse or the accusation of abuse.

If your lawyer has ever played a role in this script, you’ll want to find out early on.

3. Under what circumstances do you ascribe to the concept of “parental alienation” as a legitimate theory to be applied?

The concept of “parental alienation,” developed by Richard Gardner, states that only a very small percentage of complaints of sexual abuse that are lodged by children or protective parents are actually true. The vast majority are attempts by the “alienator” parent to “coach” the child to make false accusations.

But “parental alienation” has never been accepted as a legitimate syndrome by qualified professionals in the relevant social-science community. It continues to be rejected by the premiere

authority on mental health evaluation, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM 5).

“Parental alienation” is not even considered in the section on disorders needing further research.

Despite this fact, courts across the country have embraced “parental alienation” protocol and are increasingly following the directives of the so-called experts who accuse protective parents of alienating their children against abusers.

For Gardner and his disciples, if the children do not want to be with the abusive parent, then they have been, *ipso facto*, alienated.

It appears evident that the junk concept of “parental alienation” is used to remove and suppress evidence, to maliciously cover crimes against children, to subvert prosecution of crimes, to overwhelm protective parents with this “alternate reality,” and to transfer children into the hands of abusers as part of custody settlement.

Legitimate attorneys must employ aggressive, credible tactics to discredit junk science manipulations of the legal process.

4. *Do you believe my children?*

Children—who have no money or power—are the largest and most easily targeted victims in modern day society.

Courts fail to come to grips with the reality that home and family are the nest for the most primitive and dangerous crimes, because power, wealth, and control combine with dependency, neediness, and vulnerability.

The honest, forthright statements of children in their own words, in their own terms are unmistakable. They are clear to those who are actually willing to listen without preconceived notions.

However . . .

It is more likely that a child will be seriously maimed, injured or murdered, than that their complaint will be honestly addressed.

In the context of crimes against children, the new era of “do not believe your lying eyes” has reached a new iteration. The crimes brought to court, testified to, and witnessed by multiple credible reporters, are now litigated as if crimes of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse did not exist.

The argument has become that the victim misperceived and misunderstood what took place, if the act took place at all. The inference placed before the court is that acts of harm and abuse are in fact the confabulations of the other parent, seeking to manipulate and control the thoughts, feelings, and expressions of children who have in actuality been subject to varying levels of harm.

If your child has come forward with a clear testimony of abuse, then you might simply assume that your attorney believes your child. But you may be surprised how often this is not the case.

It is an important question to ask.

5. Are you working to protect my children from abuse?

When a child shows fear or other negative responses to an abusing, destructive, rejecting or abandoning parent, we would see that child as exhibiting a normal, healthy, appropriate reaction to a situation of personal harm and danger.

Visitation is usually a disaster because children do not want to be alone with the person they have named as their abuser and hoped they escaped to save their lives.

But if the child asserts an independent will, opposing the authority who demands association with the abuser, that child may find themselves punished by the very court system that is supposed to protect.

That punishment includes isolation and confinement. That confinement, under court order, may include a juvenile detention program, psychiatric hospital, or the latest permutation of parental alienation, the “reunification program,” an unlicensed, undefined program in which the child’s thinking is reprogrammed to the will of the litigation team in charge.

Instead of allowing, supporting, empowering children’s testimony, attorneys for children are often more likely to work for the highest bidder, supporting suppression of testimony and isolation of the child so that a true and accurate statement of facts never comes to testimony.

The role and goal of your attorney and all aides supporting your case should be to define truthful, accurate complaints, causes of action to define those complaints, and techniques to advance your truthful narrative.

Their role and goal should be to preserve evidence and witness testimony to achieve your mission to protect yourself and your children.

6. Do you see yourself as part of a “court team”? If so, would you describe that team?

In many cases, your attorney—the expert you hired to present the facts and merits of your case in order to protect you and your children—is actually part of a team that works more like a well-oiled machine to move cases through court.

If you have hired a “connected” attorney, he will know how to work the system, to play the other members of the team so as to bring about the best outcome . . . for his career.

The “family court team” usually consists of

- ◆ The psychological evaluator

- ◆ The Guardian ad Litem (GAL) or Best Interest Attorney (BIA), who claims to work for the children
- ◆ Your attorney
- ◆ The opposing attorney
- ◆ The judge

These team members engage in an orchestrated process that is often illegal, illogical, and lethal.

Independent evaluators

As soon as you hire your attorney and make your case known, there will be an appointment of the “independent evaluator,” the “neutral forensic.” At the cost of several thousand dollars, this person is supposed to examine and validate the mental health or lack thereof of each of the litigants in family court. He will decide whether the children are telling the truth or lying and whether one parent is being “alienated” by the other.

But where did the “independent evaluator” come from? The judge appoints her from a list of court-approved experts, who will produce predictable outcomes. You won’t be able to vet this so-called expert, but she will hold your future in her hands.

The “independent psychologist evaluator” will make confidential assessments, using proprietary tests such that neither you nor your attorney will be privy to how the assessment was determined.

This person will also make a recommendation as to custody, visitation, and therapy recommendations. When he has determined “alienation,” he will offer recommendations to guard against the “alienator” and “reunify” the child with the “alienated” parent.

Evaluators are non-judicial personnel, not law enforcement, not forensic scientists. And yet their subjective impressions, judgments, and comments replace the fact-finding function of the judge. In more and more cases across the United States, the

judge will ignore her legal responsibility to get to the truth of the matter and will instead defer to the evaluation report and associated recommendations.

Your attorney should be vetting the evaluator, her credentials, the quality of information she presents, and the biases she has been shown to have.

The GAL or BIA

The Guardian Ad Litem or Best Interest Attorney, who is supposed to serve as an attorney for your child or children, often will actually function as “parenting police.” They will often pretend an authority and competence they do not have, seeking to enforce rules that have never before existed and should never exist.

Though they claim to be working in the best interest of the children, as part of the well-oiled court machine, many GALs and BIAs will suppress evidence, distort testimony, and forfeit the children’s rights.

Your attorney should be aware of which GALs and BIAs will be moved by the one who holds the purse strings and which will actually want to work in your children’s best interest.

Your attorney should always keep your children’s best interest at heart.

7. Under what circumstances would you work with the abuser’s attorney rather than seeing him or her as the adversary?

The attorney with the wealthiest client will most often be the one calling the shots in the courtroom. The abuser will hire an attorney who is able support his agenda, maintaining a level of oblivion when it comes to consciousness to the harm enacted on innocents, with laser focus and energy to pursue a strategy that

will indelibly and interminably help her client to win at any cost, even massive harm to the children.

Don't be fooled by an attorney that tells you that all the players in the family court should work together. The one who harmed your children is not your ally. Your adversary is not part of your team.

8. What will you do if I am accused of “parental alienation”?

You may not have heard of “parental alienation” before entering the nightmare of family court, but make no mistake about it, “parental alienation” has become a veritable industry in the courtroom.

In basic terms, the underlying, completely unfounded premise is that the child is being “alienated” from one innocent parent by the other guilty parent (the “alienator”).

The most common way the courts can tell that a child is being “alienated” is if one parent comes forward against the other with an accusation of child abuse.

Even in cases in which the child has disclosed the abuse to a dozen or more people, including forensic professionals, a judge can rule that the evidence for the abuse is not conclusive, and the protective parent is committing, or is in danger of committing, “parental alienation.”

Since the early 2000s this “parental alienation assessment” industry of so-called experts has arisen, presenting their tidy protocol for proclaiming good-parent-bad-parent and prescribing therapy for the child to be “reunited” with the parent who has been “alienated.”

The overwhelming theme of this form of intervention is the suppression of claims, evidence, and witnesses in cases of heinous crimes against children.

These are cases that are thoroughly capable of yielding clear and convincing hard evidence if those who litigate and evaluate these cases are true to their professional skills, professional competence, and fiduciary responsibility.

In cases like this, you don't need an attorney who thinks "parental alienation" might be a valid judgment in cases when abuse has been alleged. You need a bulldog who will fight for you. Finding out where your attorney stands when there are charges of "parental alienation" is a must before moving forward with that attorney in family court.

9. If an "expert witness" declares that I'm mentally ill, how will you handle it?

In the "parental alienation" narrative so common in the family court system, you will be required to sign HIPPA releases that will void your privacy and allow the court "team" to discuss your most private details with your medical providers.

If you have also been abused, then any evidence of PTSD or related issues can be used against you.

They can discuss, evaluate, and decide upon the most relevant diagnosis to assign to you, to suppress evidence or to assign the most toxic, eviscerating diagnosis available to seal the pre-determined outcome.

You want to be sure you have an attorney who understands how this system works and is willing to strongly resist it.

10. If you call on me to compromise in order to "look good," what will that compromise look like?

It is common for the protective parent's attorney to recommend dropping the restraining order, to show that you're acting in good faith and expressing good will.

But this is never recommended. The victims have a right to justice and freedom from abuse or retaliation.

It is the abuser who needs to show that he is acting in good faith and expressing good will. There should be no quid pro quo.

But when you're new in the family court setting, you may simply trust your attorney when he urges "cooperation," even to the point of dropping charges, signing information releases, and approving experts that your adversary wants to hire ("experts" who will be working against you and your children).

You may be urged to cooperate, cooperate, cooperate, until you find that there is no case left against the abuser, but a surprising case has been built against you.

You will want an attorney who will not cave to such pressure.

11. Would you advise me to work with the court directives even if they are harmful to me and my children?

Your attorney may submit that you must comply so that you can reserve some morsel of contact with your children.

Your attorney may advise you

- To give in to the weight of the pressure to withdraw any complaint.
- To apologize to those you confronted.
- And even to comply with transfer of rights and authority into the hands of your child's abuser.

Some protective parents have been used to obeying and appeasing authorities, and so will want to simply do what they're told. But in this case, seeking to appease the authorities can threaten total loss of your children.

Any suggestion that the initial complaints were not actually true (or should be treated as if they were not true), any "cooperation"

that conforms to coercion and threats, will undermine your integrity and strengthen the hand of the perpetrator.

Unless your attorney is willing to take a stand for you in court, to your shock you may find that you are rapidly progressing toward loss of custody, loss of child contact, and loss of any and all ability to protect and parent.

12. Would you help to move my case from family court to criminal court by assisting in referral to proper forensic advocacy centers - services - working with police?

You as a protective parent—with a child who has come forward with an account of abuse by the other parent—need to be fully aware.

When the abuse reaches a certain level, then it is a case that should be tried in criminal court.

But because the one being accused is the other parent, the case instead goes to family court, where the described misconduct takes place.

When you are aware of this, you are miles ahead of other protective parents, who simply hope that through cooperation and “trusting the process,” the court will understand and do the right thing.

But family courts and family court lawyers are not equipped to deal with matters of evidence production and submission or the explanation of how and why the behavior in a given abuse situation constitutes a crime.

Family court is not the venue capable of making competent decisions in cases involving complaints of a criminal nature.

Your family court lawyer will do you a great service if he understands the need for a criminal attorney in the cases of crimes. You deserve to know up front where he stands on this matter.

13. Where do you stand on recusing a judge—that is, filing complaints against a judge to have him or her removed from the bench—when you are a witness to crimes against me in the courtroom?

Would you sign a power of attorney for both finances and health care, for both yourself and your children and then give it to someone that you know is your adversary?

This is what all too often happens to protective parents who face false allegations before hostile family court judges.

Forcing the appointment of evaluations and evaluators that the judge prefers is only one way a family court judge can take power over your life, and the lives of your children.

When there are early documented indications of bias or malfeasance, when a judge is shown to suppress evidence in a case, then recusal is critical.

Having a lawyer who is willing to undertake recusal is also critical.

Do you have what it takes?

Rational, law-abiding people tend to (very sensibly) believe that the family court system actually wants to help families. They are not equipped to deal with the corruption or the depravity that tends to define each step of the process in family court.

When the protective parent is overwhelmed with confusion about a process appears to be going worse and worse—that's usually the beginning of awareness that all is not well.

Three things are critical:

- A full understanding of the court dynamic.
- A full understanding of the process for confronting fraud.
- Finding resources to provide authentic help.

And here is what you need to accomplish those.

Motivation

You may think that you can sit back and allow your lawyer to run your case, but this is not true. You must be informed, engaged, and focused on protecting your children.

Education

Sadly, you simply can't trust your attorney in this process. You must become as educated as possible in all aspects of court rules and procedure. You must understand the nature of your complaints, know your rights, and understand the inner workings of family court.

Even though you have an attorney, you must be as educated as your attorney about your particular case.

Stability and alertness

You need to maintain emotional equilibrium and sound judgment in the midst of what may evolve into a crisis.

If you and your attorney are not alert to questionable advice or nonsensical and threatening rulings, then you may lose advantages and miss opportunities. You must be attentive to court procedures, as well as crucial deadlines for needs such as discovery, subpoenas, and witness lists.

You should review documents before your attorney releases them, knowing what he is filing and why. You must question every decision and every direction.

Boldness

In the family courts of the U.S. in the 21st century, protective parents must be laser focused, fierce, and indomitable in the face of circumstances that would induce fear and trembling in many.

You must be cautious, thoughtful, well informed, and in control over every aspect and detail of who is doing what, and when your lawyer should act. These must all be your concerns at every moment of litigation proceedings.

If you are unwilling to challenge your attorney to recognize abuse in all of its many forms, your reticence may have terrible consequences, not only for your family, but for all of society.

You must stand firmly on the truth and never cede ground to the opposition.

Having taken the necessary steps, you will be stronger, wiser, and better prepared for the next. Having taken the necessary steps, you will take on the ensuing confrontations as a matter of course. The path to justice will be closer as your reputation will precede you.

You must think creatively, you must think outside of the box, but most importantly, you must continue to think and continue to seek advice.

The Foundation for Child Victims of the Family Courts understands the family court system

Vulnerable clients must be able to retain seasoned experts who maintain independence in their practice, as well as a moral, ethical compass.

We recognize the threats to you and your children

If you do not recognize your rights and the rights of your children, you cannot fight to defend yourself from incursions into those rights. The FCVFC identifies threats to justice in corrupt family court proceedings. Legal remedies and interventions exist, and we must take advantage of them.

We have been and continue to be dedicated to raising consciousness of violations of human rights and enforcing Constitutional rule of law. Our goal is to identify remedies and legal interventions, enforcing the rule of just law in order to help protective parents and their children.

We are willing to disrupt the system

Most vulnerable protective parents are used to “being good,” “not rocking the boat.” But what do you fear more, a lack of “obedience” or losing your children?

The family court may order the “sheep to slaughter” directives of obedience and silence in the face of tyranny and child/family destruction.

But the FCVFC is willing to defy these directives as we rise to the defense of vulnerable protective parents.

We can help you aggressively change those declarations and help put you in control of your case.

Beyond the immediate remedy is the prosecution for crimes committed by court actors and other purveyors of illegal acts. We are dedicated to holding accountable those who have violated fiduciary responsibilities. We seek monetary damages, sanctions, and retribution for bad acts of perpetrators of harm so that those who have suffered are not tasked with having to pay for the recovery due them.

Even in following court rules and procedures, we still must follow the rules of law and due process. Because of this, judicial orders may be challenged, modified, and disputed. We think outside the box that is called “how family court always proceeds.”

How we will work with you

We will organize facts into categories, dealing with legal, psychological, financial, and educational content. We will then organize this material into the association of institutions, institutional policy, and personnel associated with actions that are harmful or hurtful to our client. We focus on the cast of characters from family members, service providers, court actors, and community members, reviewing and assessing their role in the case.

We look to define the narrative of the case, to establish a position, to challenge the legitimacy, authenticity, and neutrality of experts, to develop and protect evidence and witness testimony, thereby developing a defense for litigation, or creating grounds for settlement.

Toward this end, we assist clients in retaining experts in relevant areas, and then we assist the support services in their understanding of the full context of the case.

Our timeline for review is past, present and future:

- Past to develop patterns
- Present to define current parameters
- Future to seek damages for repair, rebuilding, and accountability of those responsible perpetrators of harm

As our goal is for each case to speak for others suffering similar challenges, we focus on clients who have preserved records and are willing to face harsh circumstances in the course of contesting high-conflict custody litigation.

Each client is part of the mission to confront the miasma of lies and criminal collusion that are destroying the lives of children and all who love them.

Call us today

The FCVFC stands to challenge abuse of power, court corruption, and imposition of coercive psychological interventions, in defense of the rights of children and their protective parents.

If you are facing confusing, high-conflict issues of domestic violence and child abuse, contact the FCVFC. Your issues will be defined, the problems faced, and experts found to respond to the needed issues. We will also provide extensive client support.

Contact our office to discuss your case, defend yourself, and work for a greater good. We can help you to make sense of the implausible and gain control of the confusion. We can help you work toward a just and safe resolution, for yourself and for your child. Call 866-553-6931 or email info@fcvfc.org.