

Fighting Parental Alienation Syndrome

Divorce is never an easy process, but it can be particularly messy when **custody** of minor children is involved. In some cases, one parent may attempt to use children as a weapon against the other parent, undermining and even vilifying him or her. ***This type of behavior is called “Parental Alienation Syndrome”,*** or “PAS” for short, and it is unfortunately all too common. At the law offices of **Wall & Wall**, we have been helping parents fight PAS for more than 40 years.

What Is Parental Alienation Syndrome?

PAS is a general term used to describe ***a range of behaviors usually used by one parent to, intentionally or unintentionally, weaken a child’s relationship with the other parent.*** In the worst case scenario, this results in the child choosing to distance himself or herself from that targeted parent, so there is in effect no meaningful parent/child relationship.

PAS can take many forms. Sometimes, one parent will badmouth or blame the other parent in front of the child. In other cases, one parent will schedule other tempting activities during the other parent’s scheduled parenting time. In yet other situations, one parent puts the child in an uncomfortable position by asking them for personal details about the other parent’s post-separation life, or by spying on phone calls or visits with the other parent.

What You Can Do if You are the Victim of PAS Attacks

If you believe you are the victim of PAS attacks, ***confronting your ex about the targeted attacks is not likely to help, and may just serve to aggravate the situation.*** There are, however, things you can do. Here are five suggestions for fighting PAS the right way:

1. **Take the high road.** If your child’s other parent is badmouthing you, it can be tempting to turn around and do the same thing. Don’t do it. Be the bigger parent by putting your child’s best interests first, and not putting them in a position where both parents are playing the blame game.
2. **Be the parent you want your child to think you are.** In addition to not stooping to your ex’s level, do everything you can to model good behavior for your child. Show them, through your words and actions, that what their other parent is saying or doing isn’t right.
3. **Don’t blame your child.** Remember that the attacks are coming from your ex, not from your child. Try not to be frustrated with your child, and stay as positive as you can.
4. **Don’t stop being there for your child.** If the other parent is trying to deny you your rights to visitation or parenting time with your child, or if the badmouthing attacks are working and your child doesn’t want to talk to you, it’s easy to become discouraged. Don’t stop trying, though, or else you’ll just be giving your ex-spouse more ammunition against you. Keep trying to be there for your child, and find ways to show you care.
5. **Get legal help when you need it.** If your child’s other parent is denying you your court-ordered rights to spend time with your child (court-ordered visitation or parenting time), contact an experienced family law attorney who can help you preserve your rights. In some situations, the court may take action against your child’s other parent or there may be grounds to modify your child custody order.

Get Help Handling Parental Alienation Syndrome with Wall Legal Solutions

PAS can be heartbreaking for the targeted parent and the child. When you have minor children, divorcing carries the

added stress of custody issues. At Wall & Wall, we have been helping parents fight off parental alienation attempts in the Salt Lake City area since 1973. [Contact us here](#), or call 801-803-6988 for a free consultation.