

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Summer holidays shouldn't be a Stress-filled Battle, say British Second Wives

Each year the BSWC's online forums fill with comments expressing sadness or frustration because taking holidays with the children is being made so difficult.

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Summer is coming. Children across the country are already getting excited about the long, carefree holiday ahead. But will they spend much time with their fathers this year? The answer for many children of divorced parents is no, says the British Second Wives Club. Where mothers do allow children to spend some time with fathers and stepmothers, arrangements are often unnecessarily complicated, restrictive, or changed at the last minute, resulting in extra expense and using up more annual leave. Stepmothers report spending the days before the holiday tense and stressed:

“...I don't look forward to holidays with the children because of her constant threats in the weeks preceding that we can't take them after all...”

“I spend the weeks up to ... holidays ... stressing that she is going to refuse to let my husband collect the kids ... it ruins it for me, him and the kids.”

A mother may insist that children cannot holiday with their dad (or not for long, or not abroad) because she will “miss them too much”. Members believe this attitude places unfair emotional pressure on the children “not to enjoy themselves” while with Dad, and to worry about Mum. Constant phone calls and texts throughout even short visits are another problem:

“she texts and calls so much that everybody feels stressed out by it, the kids feel under pressure to call her, and look visibly upset after they've spoken to her.”

One stepmother describes how in order to see his three children, her husband flies to Europe; brings them to England, escorts them back after the visit and flies home again. Expense alone means visits cannot be frequent. These loving parents would not mind this so much if they didn't know that the children's mother refuses – literally and figuratively – to meet him half-way:

“This Christmas, he paid for five return flights, and the day after he flew there to get them ... she came to London for Christmas and could have brought them herself”.

For many members, holidays of any sort with the children are a just a dream: one states sadly:

“We are not allowed the stepkids overnight, let alone for a holiday ... We'd love to take the kids on holiday, but it will never happen.”

Another says:

“Since we married, my husband has been told ... that the children will only see him on his

own or not at all. Unfortunately, this means that holidays are out of the question.”

So much fathers' pain is recorded at BSWC. The BSWC wants to reiterate the appeal to mothers that it made last Christmas: let children and fathers spend some normal, quality time together this year – *without* making it difficult and stressful.

The British Second Wives Club offers support and comfort to women whose partners have been married before. For more information go to <http://www.thebritishsecondwivesclub.co.uk>