



PREVENTION

Vulnerability

Your child is most vulnerable to abduction when your relationship with the other parent is broken or troubled. The vulnerability is magnified if the other parent has close family in, or other ties with, another country.

This vulnerability may be increased in situations where permission is granted for a child to visit or travel to another country. In many cases, abduction or custody issues arise when the child is prevented from returning to Canada. These cases may not be considered as abductions under the criminal laws of other countries concerned or of Canada. Rather, they may give rise to custody or wrongful retention issues. You should bear these factors in mind when you are contemplating travel for either yourself or your child.

In some countries, children must obtain the permission of their father and women must obtain the permission of their husbands in order to travel. If you are planning to visit another country where you are unfamiliar with the laws and customs as they relate to children and women, you should acquire a thorough knowledge of them before making final arrangements for the trip. You can begin by calling the Consular Affairs Bureau in Ottawa.

As well, if you are separated or divorced, or if there is a court order with respect to custodial arrangements for your child, you should discuss your planned visit with a Canadian lawyer experienced in such matters. In some instances, it might also be necessary to discuss your situation with a lawyer in the country you will be visiting. Consular officials can provide you with a list of lawyers in foreign countries who may be able to assist.

If at any time you believe your child may be in danger of being abducted, you should discuss the matter with your local police, your lawyer, the Consular Affairs Bureau and other organizations that may be able to provide you with assistance and advice. Remember that it is easier to prevent an abduction than