

## **A Father's Plea for Help: A Broken System in Gwinnett County Family Court**

If you plan on trying to do the right thing in Gwinnett County Family Court, don't expect things to go your way. You'll be met with hostility, villainized, and looked down on for trying to expose how broken the system is.

My name is Jonathan Todd Bishop. I am a father who has spent the last year fighting not only for my rights but for my daughter's well-being. What started as a tragedy — the sudden loss of my daughter's mother — has turned into a legal nightmare that has nearly broken me emotionally, financially, and spiritually.

Since my ex-wife passed away, I've been the only legal parent to my daughter. But instead of support, I've faced an onslaught of legal attacks — not from the state, but from my late ex-wife's mother. She filed for emergency custody, made false accusations, and has continued to drag me through court with no legal standing as a parent. I've already spent over \$30,000 in legal fees and have been forced to represent myself as a pro se litigant because I simply can't afford it anymore.

This case has been a catalyst in alienating my daughter from me. And every time I've raised concerns about parental alienation, the Guardian ad Litem and the court have ignored me. My daughter is angry and grieving. She witnessed her mother's death, and instead of receiving unified care, she's been stuck in the middle of a toxic custody case that never should have been allowed to continue.

The judge has laughed at me in open court. Opposing counsel has yelled at me on the stand. The Guardian ad Litem, who is supposed to be impartial, has been rude, dismissive, and even tried to twist my words — saying I “just want control” of my daughter. This is not just unprofessional. It's deeply harmful to the child at the center of this case.

One of the most troubling aspects of the case was a “bonding assessment” that was used as evidence. This assessment was conducted by a therapist handpicked by the Guardian ad Litem and paid for by the petitioner — the grandmother. It's no surprise that the report found in the petitioner's favor. It's clearly biased and flawed, and I've challenged its validity because it does not meet standards for admissible forensic evidence. But the judge accepted it anyway, ignoring my Daubert motion, despite the fact that the evaluator admitted flaws in the assessment.

To make matters worse, I was recently hit with a court order to pay \$5,000 in attorney's fees to the very person who is abusively litigating against me. I had already filed a motion for sanctions against her — it was denied. Every motion I filed in good faith has

been denied.

I've been silenced as well. The court granted the petitioner's motion for injunctive relief, restricting my right to speak about this case publicly — a clear violation of my First Amendment rights.

I am reaching out to the media now, not because I want attention, but because I believe the public deserves to know what is happening in our courtrooms. I am also asking my legislators to pass a Three Strikes Law in Georgia — one that penalizes custody interference: the first two strikes result in fines, and the third is a felony.

Please hear me. Please help me. I am a father trying to protect his daughter — and I am being punished for it.

Additionally, the Guardian ad Litem has ignored statements from qualified mental health professionals who have indicated that the Petitioner suffers from mental health issues and personality disorders. Furthermore, the Guardian ad Litem has coincidentally failed to call any witnesses who are willing to testify to the toxic and harmful nature of the relationship between the Petitioner and my daughter. This pattern further illustrates the biased and incomplete representation presented to the Court.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Guardian ad Litem has ignored the input of multiple mental health professionals who have stated that the petitioner suffers from mental health issues and personality disorders. Moreover, the Guardian ad Litem has not called any witnesses who are willing to testify to the toxic nature of the relationship between the petitioner and my daughter. If custody is ultimately awarded to the petitioner, it will set a dangerous precedent and change case law in Georgia. This decision would open the door for fit parents across the state to be at risk of losing custody of their children to third parties and grandparents whenever a conflict arises, regardless of their parental fitness or rights.