PARENTING JUL 11, 2024

Man Chooses To Abandon 8-Year-Old Son For A Move To Australia, Sees No Issue With His Decision

Interview With Expert

Monica Selvi and Monika Pašukonytė

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Life sometimes has a funny way of throwing us curveballs, doesn't it? One minute it's all sunshine and rainbows, and the next, we're forced to make tough choices and deal with overwhelming emotions. And when kids are in the mix, things get much trickier. Just ask the original poster (OP) of this story, whose ex-husband dropped a bombshell that left her fuming and their son heartbroken.

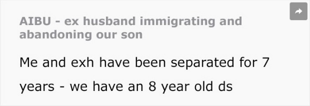
More info: Mumsnet

RELATED:

Ex-husband decides to move across the world with his fiancée and 2 kids, leaving a furious ex-wife and a heartbroken 8-year-old son behind

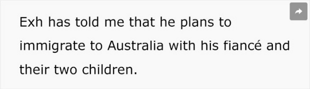
Image credits: Catarina Sousa (not the actual photo)

The couple have been separated for 7 years and have a young son together, for whom the husband is paying child support

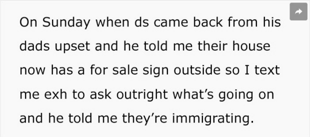


AIBU - ex husband immigrating and abandoning our son

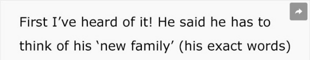
Me and exh have been separated for 7 years - we have an 8 year old ds



Exh has told me that he plans to immigrate to Australia with his fiancé and their two children.



On Sunday when ds came back from his dads upset and he told me their house now has a for sale sign outside so I text me exh to ask outright what's going on and he told me they're immigrating.



First I've heard of it! He said he has to think of his 'new family' (his exact words)

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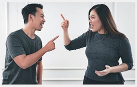

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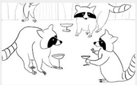

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and giving his two younger children a better life!!

Image credits: Stas Knop (not the actual photo)

The man decides to move to Australia on his fiancée's visa, taking their 2 kids with him but leaving his older son behind

AIBU to be fuming ? Especially as my son is distraught ? I mean they haven't even invited him to go with them (not that I'd let him go) but that's not the point to me!

My son sees his dad for a full weekend every other weekend and always has done, and goes for tea every Wednesday night. I'm just devestated for my son.

I asked where they're up to in the application process and my exh wasn't for giving me any info at all, he just said they are getting married then going… house is already up for sale, my ds can't even be included as they are going on his fiancées visa - she is a teacher and so my exh and their two kids will go dependent on her visa , apparently my son can't as she isn't his mother, is this true or a cop out?

Image credits: freepik (not the actual photo)

The man told his ex-wife he would not be able to pay child support as he would be jobless for a while, until their family settles in

He also said he isn't sure if he can send me maintenance anymore as he will be

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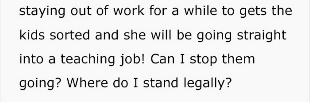
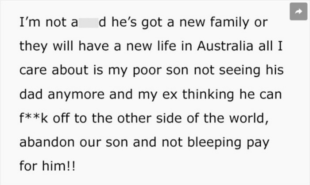
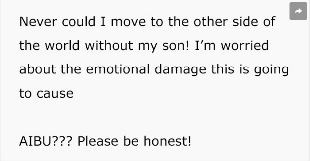


staying out of work for a while to gets the kids sorted and she will be going straight into a teaching job! Can I stop them going? Where do I stand legally?



I'm not a[redacted]d he's got a new family or they will have a new life in Australia all I care about is my poor son not seeing his dad anymore and my ex thinking he can f**k off to the other side of the world, abandon our son and not bleeping pay for him!!



Never could I move to the other side of the world without my son! I'm worried about the emotional damage this is going to cause

AIBU??? Please be honest!

Image credits: howsweet

The ex-wife took to the internet asking if there is anything she could do to stop her ex from moving across the world

The OP, who has been separated from her ex-husband for seven years, shares an 8-year-old son with her ex. Up until recently, things had been pretty steady, with the son spending every other weekend with his dad. On one of those Sundays, the son came back home from his dad's place, clearly upset, after seeing a "For Sale" sign outside his dad's house.

Immediately, the OP texted her ex to find out what was going on. Out of nowhere, he revealed he was planning to move to Australia with his new fiancée and their two kids. "He said he has to think of his 'new family' and give his two younger children a better life!" the OP recalls. Talk about a low blow.

If you're thinking, "what about the son?", you're not the only one. That's exactly what the OP thought as well when she heard the news. She was livid, and who could blame her? And to make matters worse, the ex didn't even invite their son to join them. Not that the OP would have let him go, but it's the principle of the thing.

When the OP pressed her ex for details, his answers were pretty vague, but he did mention they're getting married, the house is up for sale, and they plan to move to Australia on his fiancée's visa. She's a teacher, so he and the kids are tagging along on her visa.

And then, just when you thought it couldn't get any worse, the ex dropped another bombshell: he's not sure he'll be able to keep up with child support payments as he plans on being out of work for a while. He wants to help the kids settle in while his fiancée starts her teaching job. This left the OP with a mountain of legal and emotional questions. Can she stop them from moving?

Image credits: Keira Burton (not the actual photo)

It's easy to see why the OP is furious. Her ex is essentially planning on moving to the other side of the world, abandoning their son both emotionally and financially. The thought of the emotional damage this could cause to her 8-year-old son is heartbreaking for the OP. No parent wants to see their child suffer, and the idea of her son feeling abandoned is just gut-wrenching. "I'm just devastated for my son," the OP says. As he has been spending weekends with his dad forever, this news hit him hard and left him feeling abandoned.

Being abandoned by a parent can have deep, long-lasting emotional effects on young kids. When a parent leaves, it often creates feelings of rejection, insecurity, and low self-esteem in the child. According to experts, parental abandonment, regardless of the child's age, can leave lasting scars that extend well into adulthood.

"Children in dysfunctional families are often put in age-inappropriate emotional and physical situations. And they are often treated as either older or younger than they are, developing personality characteristics that reflect that mistreatment, such as ultra-independence, learned helplessness, or codependency," experts explain.

Plus, beyond the negative emotional effects that this move would have on the 8-year-old son, it may also take a toll on the OP as well, as her ex decided he would stop supporting her in raising their child. However, when it comes to child support, a parent can't just stop paying, especially if the payment has been mandated by the court, as part of a divorce settlement.

To find out more about the legality of relocating to a different country and stopping child support payments, **Bored Panda** reached out to Brette Sember, JD, a retired attorney and author of The Complete Divorce Guide. She told us that "A parent is free to relocate anywhere they want; however, the parenting plan and custody agreement will still be in place and if they wish to change it, they must get a new court order. Child support payments are still required no matter where a parent lives; however, it can be more difficult to enforce them in another country."

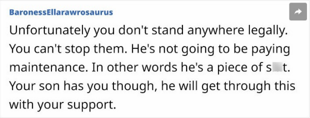
We asked Sember about what legal options a parent has to ensure they still receive child support if the paying parent moves abroad. She explained that "Enforcing child support in other countries can be challenging. You need to work with an attorney experienced in enforcing child support abroad in that situation. Relocation does not change a parent's responsibility to make child support payments. If a parent becomes unemployed, they can seek to have child support payments reduced to reflect their new financial circumstances."

While we don't have the details of the OP's location, it would still be a good idea if she researched her country's laws regarding child support payments.

The OP's situation is definitely a tough one, with no easy answers. But one thing's clear – her main concern is her son's well-being. Here's hoping that the ex steps up and considers the impact of his decisions on his son, because no child deserves to feel abandoned by a parent.

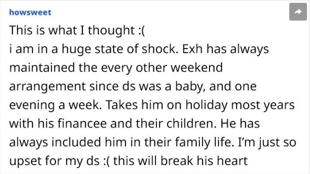
What's your take on this story? Is the OP being unreasonable? Let us know in the comment section.

Netizens are shocked by the dad's behavior, feeling bad for the innocent son, but advising the woman to seek legal advice



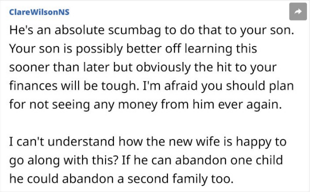
BaronessEllarawrosaurus

Unfortunately you don't stand anywhere legally. You can't stop them. He's not going to be paying maintenance. In other words he's a piece of s[redacted]t. Your son has you though, he will get through this with your support.



howsweet

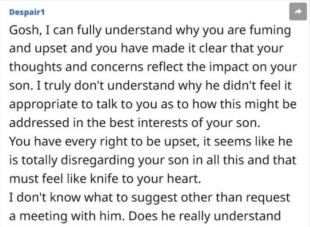
This is what I thought :(
i am in a huge state of shock. Exh has always maintained the every other weekend arrangement since ds was a baby, and one evening a week. Takes him on holiday most years with his financee and their children. He has always included him in their family life. I'm just so upset for my ds :(this will break his heart



ClareWilsonNS

He's an absolute scumbag to do that to your son. Your son is possibly better off learning this sooner than later but obviously the hit to your finances will be tough. I'm afraid you should plan for not seeing any money from him ever again.

I can't understand how the new wife is happy to go along with this? If he can abandon one child he could abandon a second family too.



Despair1

Gosh, I can fully understand why you are fuming and upset and you have made it clear that your thoughts and concerns reflect the impact on your son. I truly don't understand why he didn't feel it appropriate to talk to you as to how this might be addressed in the best interests of your son.
You have every right to be upset, it seems like he is totally disregarding your son in all this and that must feel like knife to your heart.
I don't know what to suggest other than request a meeting with him. Does he really understand

the implications of his actions?
Can he not understand how this is extremely important that needs discussing?
Take care, I hope all will be OK

BruFord

What a callous bastard. It's incredible that his fiancée's a teacher as you'd think she'd have more empathy with a child and realize that this needs to be carefully handled.

Re. CMS. I'm not familiar with Australian law, but it might be worth doing some research as some countries are far more aggressive about unpaid maintenance than the UK. Wages can be garnished, etc. Perhaps someone in Australia can advise.

Meadowfinch

Wow. Some men really are horrendous.

How can anyone be a parent for 8 years, be in their child's life every week, love him, and then just shrug and walk away. It's beyond me.

Ozanj

if his child mainenance is court ordered you can take enforcement action. It can often result in them losing their right to remain there because Australia takes a dim view of non-workers not paying their bills. Get legal advice.

TillyTrifle

Oh and definitely look into rules in Oz and make it clear you won't hesitate to report him to Australian immigration authorities and his wife's employer for unpaid maintenance. It may well do absolutely nothing, I've no idea what the rules are, but might put the sh**s up him when he realises you're not just going to wave him off merrily.

pikkumyy77

Yes: I agree with everyone else. Don't accept "Im not paying maintenance." See what rights you have with respect to Australian-UK agreements. They are going to have a nice lump sum when they sell the house: is there anyway you can demand a lump sum payout now from the proceeds in exchange for not filing troublesome paperwork with australia that might gum uo her visa application.?

Zimunya

Yes, agree with above poster - contact the Australian embassy in writing. Provide as much info as possible - her name, his name and dob, any other info you have. Is the maintennace he pays you by mutual agreement, or court mandated? If court mandated, report his comment ot the court, and teh Australian Embassy / Consulate. Do you have any proof he has said he won't be able to pay - screen shots etc? Include these in your letter.

booksunderthebed

Remind your ex that his other kids will be aware of this at some point and will have a dim view of this behaviour as they get older.

If he was paying maintanence and ensuring continued contact (flying your son over or vice versa) than that would be one thing, but this sounds awful.

Poll Question

Do you think the ex-wife should take legal action to ensure child support?

○ **Yes, definitely and as soon as possible.**

○ **Only if he really does stop paying child support.**

○ **No, it might complicate things further and hurt the child more in the long term.**

○ **She should consider other options first**

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Monica Selvi

Writer, BoredPanda staff

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Libstak *1 week ago*
I would think the U.K. and Australia would have reciprocal agreements to enforce payments as both are Commonwealth Countries, I dont know for sure but I'd be surprised if something was not in place.
24 Reply

Alexandra *6 days ago*
Australia is included on the list of Countries with Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders, so get yourself a good lawyer and make sure your child gets what he's entitled to!
13 Reply
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Sand Ers *6 days ago*
She needs to be asking a lawyer, not a mommy chat group.
20 Reply

Wendy Herman *4 days ago*
This "Mommy Chat Group" gave her some *excellent advice* though (*including* the need to consult legal experts in each country). That's b/c their "Mommy chats" go W-A-Y deeper than "T&A" comparisons (= the Top topic in "Daddy Chat Groups"). 🙄
4 Reply
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AKA AKA *6 days ago*
th ex is the scumiest scunbag to ever scum the earth. how do you just abandon your kid like that????
17 Reply

Zoe Vokes *5 days ago*
And to not tell your ex and your son? To go from seeing your son regularly to not at all and saying he's probably not going to pay child support anymore either? That's all awful behaviour. He could have cared for his sons feelings and had a conversation before he saw the "for sale" sign and he could have promised regular communication through zoom calls, etc.
7 Reply

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