



Psychological Abuse

Review of Parental Alienation Dynamic Research

By Teresa Sneed, Founder and President of National Family Justice (nationalfamilyjustice.org)

This report provides a systematic review of parental alienation literature organized by research categories, with brief summaries of key studies and recent research findings. Parental alienation research has evolved significantly in recent years, with an increasing shift from qualitative to quantitative methodologies and a growing emphasis on empirical validation.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

1. Baker, A. J. L. (2005). Parental alienation strategies: A qualitative study of adults who experienced parental alienation as a child. *American Journal of Forensic Psychology*, 23(4), 41–63.
 - Pioneering qualitative study identifying specific alienation tactics through retrospective interviews with adults who experienced parental alienation in childhood, documenting 17 alienation strategies.
2. Baker, A. J. L. (2005). The cult of parenthood: A qualitative study of parental alienation. *Cultic Studies Review*, 4(1), 1–20.
 - Examined parallels between cult indoctrination techniques and parental alienation strategies, highlighting psychological manipulation tactics used to separate children from targeted parents.
3. Baker, A. J. L., & Chambers, J. (2011). Adult recall of childhood exposure to parental conflict: Unpacking the black box of parental alienation. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 52(1), 55–76.
 - Study explored how adults retrospectively understand childhood exposure to parental conflict, distinguishing between normal post-divorce dynamics and deliberate alienation efforts.
4. Baker, A. J. L., & Darnall, D. (2006). Behaviors and strategies of parental alienation: A survey of parental experiences. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 45(1-2), 97–124.

- Quantitative survey of targeted parents identified 66 alienating behaviors organized into categories, establishing empirical documentation of alienation tactics from parents' perspective.
5. Baker, A. J. L., & Darnall, D. C. (2007). A construct study of the eight symptoms of severe parental alienation syndrome. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 47(1-2), 55-75.
 - Study tested Gardner's eight proposed symptoms of severe parental alienation syndrome, finding strong empirical support for the syndrome as a distinct clinical entity.
 6. Baker, A. J. L., & Eichler, A. (2016). The linkage between parental alienation behaviors and child alienation. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 57(7), 475-484.
 - Research established correlations between specific parental alienating behaviors and measurable alienation symptoms in children, providing evidence of cause-effect relationship.
 7. Bernet, W., & Lorandos, D. (2023). Milestones: A concise history of parental alienation theory. *European Journal of Parental Alienation Practice*, Issue 1, 39-71.
 - Historical analysis of parental alienation theory development, tracing its evolution from Gardner's initial formulation through contemporary conceptualizations and research.
 8. Bernet, W., Wamboldt, M. Z., & Narrow, W. E. (2016). Child affected by parental relationship distress. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 55(7), 571-579.
 - Introduces the clinical concept of "Child Affected by Parental Relationship Distress" (CAPRD) which includes parental alienation among other conditions affecting children caught in parental conflict.
 9. Burrill, J. (2001). Parental alienation syndrome in court referred custody cases [doctoral dissertation]. Northcentral University.
 - Early doctoral research examining prevalence and characteristics of parental alienation syndrome in court-referred custody cases, establishing empirical foundation for legal recognition.
 10. Drozd, L. M., & Olesen, N. W. (2004). Is it abuse, alienation, and/or estrangement? *Journal of Child Custody*, 1(3), 65-106.
 - Created a decision tree approach to differentiate between legitimate estrangement due to abuse versus alienation, addressing concerns about misdiagnosis in complex cases.
 11. Gardner, R. A. (1985). Recent trends in divorce and custody litigation. *Academy Forum*, 29(2), 3-7.

- Seminal paper introducing the concept of "parental alienation syndrome," describing a cluster of symptoms observed in children deliberately alienated from a parent during custody disputes.
- 12. Harman, J. J., Bernet, W., & Harman, J. (2019). Parental alienation: The blossoming of a field of study. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 28(2), 212–216.
 - Review documenting the emergence of parental alienation as a legitimate field of scientific inquiry, highlighting methodological improvements and growing empirical support.
- 13. Harman, J. J., Biringen, Z., Ratajack, E. M., Outland, P. L., & Kraus, A. (2016). Parents behaving badly: Gender biases in the perception of parental alienating behaviors. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 30(7), 866–874.
 - Experimental study identifying gender biases in how observers perceive identical alienating behaviors performed by mothers versus fathers, revealing societal double standards.
- 14. Harman, J. J., Lorandos, D., Biringen, Z., & Grubb, C. (2020). Gender differences in the use of parental alienating behaviors. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35(5), 459–469.
 - Large-scale study examining whether mothers and fathers differ in their use of alienating behaviors, challenging gender stereotypes about alienation perpetrators.
- 15. Johnston, J. R. (2003). Parental alignments and rejection: An empirical study of alienation in children of divorce. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 31(2), 158–170.
 - Empirical investigation of alignment and rejection dynamics in high-conflict divorce, distinguishing between various patterns and factors influencing children's responses.
- 16. Johnston, J. R., Walters, M. G., & Olesen, N. W. (2005). Is it alienating parenting, role reversal, or child abuse? A study of children's rejection of a parent in child custody disputes. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 5(4), 191–218.
 - Studied differential diagnosis in cases of children rejecting parents, identifying multiple potential causes beyond alienation, including role reversal and legitimate responses to abuse.
- 17. Moné, J. G., & Biringen, Z. (2006). Perceiving parent–child alienation: Empirical assessment of parent–child relationships with divorced and intact families. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 45(3-4), 131–156.
 - Comparative study examining how alienation patterns differ between divorced and intact families, providing context for understanding when alienation dynamics emerge.

18. Warshak, R. A. (2015). Ten parental alienation fallacies that compromise decisions in court and in therapy. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, 46(4), 235–249.
 - Systematically addresses common misconceptions about parental alienation that lead to errors in clinical and legal decision-making, providing empirical corrections.
19. Warshak, R. A. (2020). When evaluators get it wrong: False positive IDs and parental alienation. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 26(1), 54–68.
 - Examines the problem of false positive identifications of parental alienation, establishing criteria to reduce diagnostic errors in forensic evaluations.
20. Bentley, C., & Matthewson, M. (2020). The not-forgotten child: Alienated adult children's experience of parental alienation. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 48(5), 509–529.
 - Qualitative study exploring the lived experiences of adults who were alienated from a parent in childhood, revealing profound psychological impacts persisting into adulthood^[1].
21. Ayeb-Karlsson, S. (2024). Unregulated experts and harm in family courts: Impact of alienation claims. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*.
 - Recent study examining how unregulated experts appointed by family courts have caused harm to children by separating them from their mothers based on contested "alienation" claims, documenting multiple cases where court-ordered transfers led to escaped attempts and psychological harm^[2].

ACCEPTANCE OF PARENTAL ALIENATION THEORY

1. Baker, A. J. L. (2007). Knowledge and attitudes about the parental alienation syndrome: A survey of custody evaluators. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 35(1), 1–19.
 - Survey finding that the majority of custody evaluators were familiar with and accepted parental alienation as a valid concept relevant to custody determinations.
2. Bernet, W., Baker, A. J. L., & Adkins, K. L., II. (2022). Definitions and terminology regarding child alignments, estrangement, and alienation: A survey of custody evaluators. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 67(1), 279–288.
 - Comprehensive survey of custody evaluators' understanding of terminology related to alienation versus estrangement, showing strong professional consensus despite academic debates.

3. Marsden, J. (2024). Quality of Parental Alienation Research. Department of Psychology.
 - Recent meta-analysis documenting the evolution of parental alienation research, noting a significant shift from qualitative to quantitative methods and increased hypothesis testing, indicating maturation of the research field^[3].

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS FOR PARENTAL ALIENATION

1. Bernet, W., Gregory, N., Rohner, R. P., & Reay, K. M. (2020). Measuring the difference between parental alienation and parental estrangement: The PARQ-Gap. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 65(4), 1225–1234.
 - Introduces the PARQ-Gap methodology to differentiate between alienation and justified estrangement, providing a quantitative metric for forensic evaluations.
2. Blagg, N., & Godfrey, E. (2018). Exploring parent-child relationships in alienated versus neglected/emotionally abused children using the Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test. *Child Abuse Review*, 27(6), 486–496.
 - Comparative study using established psychological testing to differentiate alienated children from those suffering other forms of emotional maltreatment.
3. Gordon, R. M., Stoffey, R., & Bottinelli, J. (2008). MMPI-2 findings of primitive defenses in alienating parents. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 36(3), 211–228.
 - Used standardized psychological testing (MMPI-2) to identify distinctive personality traits and defense mechanisms in parents who engage in alienating behaviors.
4. Rowlands, G. A. (2019). Parental alienation: A measurement tool. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 60(4), 316–331.
 - Developed and validated a specific measurement instrument for parental alienation, enhancing diagnostic precision in clinical and legal settings.
5. Siegel, J. C., & Langford, J. S. (1998). MMPI-2 validity scales and suspected parental alienation syndrome. *American Journal of Forensic Psychology*, 16(4), 5–14.
 - Early study using MMPI-2 validity scales to identify patterns associated with parental alienation, providing objective markers for forensic evaluation.

Parental Alienation Diagnostic Models

1. Baker, A. J. L. (2020). Reliability and validity of the four-factor model of parental alienation. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 42(1), 100–118.
 - This paper introduces and validates the Four-Factor Model for identifying parental alienation. According to this model, alienation is present only when all four criteria are met:
 - A prior positive relationship existed between the child and the now-rejected parent
 - Absence of abuse, neglect, or seriously deficient parenting by the rejected parent
 - The favored parent engaged in multiple alienating behaviors
 - The child exhibits behavioral manifestations of alienation
 - The study tested the model's reliability and validity by having mental health professionals evaluate vignettes representing various combinations of the four factors. Results demonstrated high reliability across vignettes, coders, and factors. The data supported the model's validity, showing agreement among professionals that when all four factors were present, the case represented alienation, while cases with one or no factors present were not alienation.
 - The model provides a structured framework to differentiate alienated from estranged children in custody assessments.
2. Bernet, W., & Greenhill, L. (2022). The Five-Factor Model for the diagnosis of parental alienation. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 61(5), 591–594.
 - This paper presents the Five-Factor Model, which builds upon Baker's Four-Factor Model by adding an additional criterion. Bernet asserted that this additional factor evolved from the definition of parental alienation and helps determine whether resistance to contact with the alienated parent is "unjustified".
 - The five factors are:
 - The child manifests contact resistance or refusal (avoids a relationship with one parent)
 - The presence of a prior positive relationship between the child and the rejected parent
 - The absence of abuse, neglect, or seriously deficient parenting by the rejected parent

- The use of multiple alienating behaviors by the favored parent
 - The child exhibits many of the eight behavioral manifestations of alienation
 - The additional first criterion is intended to identify contact resistance and exclude children where there is no contact resistance.
 - This model provides mental health professionals with a diagnostic framework for identifying parental alienation in clinical and forensic settings.
3. Morrison, S. L., & Ring R. (2021). Reliability of the Five-Factor Model for determining parental alienation. *American Journal of Family Therapy*.
- This study assessed the reliability of the Five-Factor Model (FFM) as an assessment tool for determining parental alienation. The researchers presented six vignettes to mental health professionals who provided responses for each of the five criteria. Using statistical measures to determine inter-rater reliability, including Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA), the study found high reliability across all cases. The ICC indicated reliability with an average of 0.923 for all vignettes, and Cronbach Alpha values showed consistency with an average of 0.926.
 - Four of the six tests yielded results of "excellent reliability," and two reported "good reliability." The authors concluded that the FFM is a reliable assessment tool for determining if parental alienation is occurring. However, they emphasized that proper application requires explicit knowledge of the difference between estrangement and parental alienation, as well as understanding of the alienating behaviors and manifestations.
4. Rueda, C. A. (2004). An inter-rater reliability study of parental alienation syndrome. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 32(5), 391–403.
- This study had two main objectives: to test the acceptance of the concept of parental alienation among therapists and to assess the validity of parental alienation as a syndrome among therapists familiar with the phenomenon. The researcher used Dr. Richard Gardner's differential diagnosis chart in a questionnaire format for both the potential alienator and the child. Five case scenarios were presented to respondents, and their

responses were analyzed using reliability measures including Kendall's coefficient of concordance.

- The findings showed a significant level of agreement among raters in four of the five cases, with one complex case showing lower consensus. The study noted that completed surveys came primarily from therapists already familiar with parental alienation syndrome, indicating their understanding of the phenomenon differed from therapists unfamiliar with PAS. The researchers concluded that the data was sufficiently reliable to suggest further study for potential classification in future editions of the DSM.
- It's worth noting that this study used Gardner's original criteria rather than the later-developed factor models by Baker and Bernet.

Attachment-Based Parental Alienation (AB-PA)

1. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *An Attachment-Based Model of Parental Alienation: Foundations* (Oaksong Press 2015)
 - Replaces Gardner's Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS) with a framework grounded in **attachment theory, personality disorders, and family systems pathology**. Defines "pathogenic parenting" as a form of child psychological abuse involving cross-generational coalitions and trauma reenactment.
2. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *An Attachment-Based Model of Parental Alienation: Professional Consultation* (Oaksong Press 2015)
 - Guides mental health professionals in diagnosing AB-PA using DSM-5 criteria (V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse). Emphasizes collaboration with courts to address narcissistic/borderline parenting behaviors that disrupt child attachment.
3. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *An Attachment-Based Model of Parental Alienation: Single Case ABAB Assessment and Remedy* (Oaksong Press 2015)
 - Proposes a court-ordered **scientific protocol** to assess causation via phased protective separation. Uses an ABAB reversal design (baseline, intervention, reversal, final phase) to empirically validate alienation and guide custody decisions.

4. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *The Narcissistic Parent: A Guidebook for Legal Professionals Working with Families in High-Conflict Divorce* (Oaksong Press 2016)
 - Identifies narcissistic parents' manipulation tactics (e.g., gaslighting, triangulation) and provides strategies for legal professionals to mitigate harm. Highlights the role of minor's counsel in restoring healthy co-parenting.
5. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *Strategic Family Systems Intervention for AB-PA: Contingent Visitation Schedule* (Oaksong Press 2017)
 - Introduces a **data-driven custody model** where visitation with the alienating parent is contingent on the child's symptom-free behavior, assessed via a Parent-Child Rating Scale. Combines protective separation with structured reunification.
6. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *The Key to Solving High-Conflict Divorce in the Family Courts: Proposal for a Pilot Program* (Oaksong Press 2017)
 - Advocates pairing **AB-PA-certified therapists** with amicus attorneys to implement court-ordered interventions. Focuses on stabilizing families through treatment-focused assessments and Contingent Visitation Schedules.
7. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *Assessment of Attachment-Related Pathology Surrounding Divorce* (Oaksong Press 2017)
 - Details a **6-8 session protocol** for courts to diagnose AB-PA, including parent interviews, child observations, and conflict coding. Emphasizes 50-50 custody to avoid making children "custody prizes".
8. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *Parent-Child Conflict Coding System* (Oaksong Press 2017)
 - A tool to categorize conflict origins (e.g., attachment insecurity, personality disorders) and prioritize treatment. Enhances clarity in custody evaluations by standardizing causal factor documentation.
9. Craig Childress, Psy.D., *Diagnostic Questions to be Answered* (2023)

- <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://drcachildress-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Diagnostic-Questions-to-be-Answered-11-23.pdf>
- A 24-point checklist to differentiate alienation from estrangement. Assesses emotional cutoff, split-parenting beliefs, and role-reversal dynamics. Guides courts in identifying pathogenic parenting.
- Key Advances
 - Shifted alienation from a “syndrome” to a **DSM-5-aligned diagnosis**.
 - Introduced **evidence-based interventions** (e.g., ABAB protocol, Contingent Visitation).
 - Addressed systemic failures in family courts through pilot programs and standardized assessments.

PREVALENCE OF ALIENATING BEHAVIORS AND PARENTAL ALIENATION

1. Harman, J. J., Leder-Elder, S., & Biringen, Z. (2016). Prevalence of parental alienation drawn from a representative poll. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 66, 62–66.
 - First nationally representative survey establishing the prevalence of parental alienation, finding it affects millions of families in the United States.
2. Harman, J. J., Leder-Elder, S., & Biringen, Z. (2019). Prevalence of adults who are the targets of parental alienating behaviors and their impact: Results from three national polls. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 106, Article 104471.
 - Expanded study estimating that approximately 22 million adults in the U.S. have been targets of parental alienating behaviors, establishing alienation as a significant public health issue.
3. Burrill, J., & Melnyk, J. (2024). Parental alienation in Ontario family courts: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Family Law*.
 - Recent study examining 172 reported family law cases in Ontario between 2021-2023 involving parental alienation allegations, finding courts made findings of alienation in 36% of cases, with significant correlation between IPV claims and dismissal of alienation allegations.

PARENTAL ALIENATION AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

1. Harman, J. J., Kruk, E., & Hines, D. A. (2018). Parental alienating behaviors: An unacknowledged form of family violence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 144(12), 1275–1299.
 - Groundbreaking paper reconceptualizing parental alienation as a form of family violence, documenting how alienating behaviors meet established criteria for child abuse and domestic violence.
2. Jaffe, P. G., Johnston, J. R., Crooks, C. V., & Bala, N. (2008). Custody disputes involving allegations of domestic violence: Toward a differentiated approach to parenting plans. *Family Court Review*, 46(3), 500–522.
 - Proposes a framework for addressing cases with both domestic violence and alienation allegations, emphasizing careful differentiation rather than presumptive approaches.
3. Korosi, S. A., Bernet, W., Graham, S. P., & Ross, D. (2023). Parental alienation: A violent and potentially lethal social and psychological phenomenon. *European Journal of Parental Alienation Practice*, Issue 1, 114–138.
 - Documents severe cases where parental alienation has led to extreme outcomes including suicide and violence, positioning alienation within the spectrum of harmful family dynamics.
4. Kruk, E. (2018). Parental alienation as a form of emotional child abuse: Current state of knowledge and future directions for research. *Family Science Review*, 22(4), 141–164.
 - Synthesis of research establishing parental alienation as a form of emotional child abuse, with recommendations for policy and practice interventions.
5. Walker, A. J. (2006). The extreme consequence of parental alienation syndrome – The Richard Lohstroh case of a child driven to kill his father – Will courts move toward allowing children to use parental alienation syndrome as a defense to the crime of murder of their own parent. *Women's Rights Law Reporter*, 27(3), Article 153.
 - Case study analyzing the tragic Lohstroh case where severe alienation allegedly led to patricide, examining legal and psychological dimensions.
6. Harman, J. J., & Matthewson, M. (2024). Does evil underlie some cases of parental alienation syndrome? ESMED Research.
 - Recent theoretical paper examining severe parental alienation cases through a moral framework, arguing that deliberate alienating behaviors align with concepts of evil due to intentional, systematic harm to children's emotional and relational development^[5].

7. Sharples, J., et al. (2023). Domestic abuse and parental alienation: Examining co-occurrence patterns. *Journal of Family Violence*.
 - Recent study finding that parents who alienate their children had an 82% greater probability of having substantiated abuse claims against them compared to targeted parents, challenging narratives that separate alienation and abuse.

DARK PERSONALITIES AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

1. Greenham, S., & Childress, C. A. (2023, April). Dark personalities and induced delusional disorder, part I: Solving the Gordian knot of conflict in the family and domestic violence courts. ResearchGate.
 - First in a series examining how personality disorders contribute to alienation dynamics, proposing a framework for understanding complex family court cases.
2. Greenham, S., & Childress, C. A. (2022, September). Dark personalities and induced delusional disorder, part II: The research gap underlying a crisis in the family and domestic violence courts. ResearchGate.
 - Identifies critical research gaps in understanding how personality pathology influences both alienation and domestic violence dynamics in family courts.
3. Greenham, S., & Childress, C. A. (2023, February). Dark personalities and induced delusional disorder, part III: Identifying the pathogenic parenting in the family and domestic violence courts. ResearchGate.
 - Provides assessment framework for identifying pathogenic parenting patterns involving both alienation and violence, with implications for court intervention.

INTERVENTIONS FOR PARENTAL ALIENATION

1. Dunne, J., & Hedrick, M. (1994). The parental alienation syndrome: An analysis of sixteen selected cases. *Journal of Divorce and Divorce*, 21(3-4), 21–38.
 - Early case analysis finding that traditional therapy was ineffective for severe alienation cases, while custody transfers often resulted in restored relationships with targeted parents.
2. Gardner, R. A. (2001). Should courts order PAS children to visit/reside with the alienated parent? A follow-up study. *American Journal of Forensic Psychology*, 19(3), 61–106.

- Longitudinal follow-up study examining outcomes of different court interventions in alienation cases, finding that decisive court action often led to better outcomes.
- 3. Neff, R., & Cooper, K. (2004). Parental conflict resolution: Six-, twelve-, and fifteen-month follow-ups of a high-conflict program. *Family Court Review*, 42(1), 99–114.
 - Evaluation of intervention program for high-conflict parents, showing mixed results but some promising approaches for reducing alienating behaviors.
- 4. Saini, M. (2019). Strengthening coparenting relationships to improve strained parent-child relationships: A follow-up study of parents' experiences of attending the Overcoming Barriers program. *Family Court Review*, 57(2), 217–230.
 - Follow-up evaluation of specialized intervention program for families experiencing resist-refuse dynamics, documenting improvements in co-parenting and reduction in alienation.
- 5. Sullivan, M. J., Ward, P. A., & Deutsch, R. M. (2010). Overcoming barriers camp: A program for high-conflict divorced families where a child is resisting contact with a parent. *Family Court Review*, 48(1), 116–135.
 - Description and preliminary evaluation of innovative immersion program for severely alienated families, showing promising results for relationship restoration.
- 6. Templer, K., Matthewson, M., Haines, J., & Cox, G. (2017). Recommendations for best practice in response to parental alienation: Findings from a systematic review. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 39(1), 103–122.
 - Systematic review identifying effective intervention components for addressing parental alienation, with evidence-based recommendations for practitioners.
- 7. Toren, P., Bregman, B. L., Zohar-Reich, E., Ben-Amitay, G., Wolmer, L., & Laor, N. (2013). Sixteen-session group treatment for children and adolescents with parental alienation and their parents. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 41(3), 187–197.
 - Evaluation of group therapy approach for alienated children and their parents, showing promising outcomes for restoring relationships.
- 8. Walters, M. G., & Friedlander, S. (2016). When a child rejects a parent: Working with the intractable resist/refuse dynamic. *Family Court Review*, 54(3), 424–445.
 - Clinical guidelines for intervening in cases of severe parent-child contact problems, distinguishing different causal pathways and intervention approaches.

9. Warshak, R. A. (2010). Family bridges: Using insights from social science to reconnect parents and alienated children. *Family Court Review*, 48(1), 48–80.
 - Describes innovative four-day educational intervention program designed to restore relationships between severely alienated children and targeted parents.
10. Warshak, R. A. (2019). Reclaiming parent–child relationships: Outcomes of family bridges with alienated children. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 60(8), 645–667.
 - Follow-up outcome study of Family Bridges program showing positive results in restoring relationships between alienated children and targeted parents.

CONSEQUENCES FOR ALIENATED CHILDREN

1. Baker, A. J. L., & Verrocchio, M. C. (2016). Exposure to parental alienation and subsequent anxiety and depression in Italian adults. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 44(5), 255–271.
 - Cross-cultural study finding significant associations between childhood exposure to parental alienation and adult mental health problems including anxiety and depression.
2. Ben-Ami, N., & Baker, A. J. L. (2012). The long-term correlates of childhood exposure to parental alienation on adult self-sufficiency and wellbeing. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 40(2), 169–183.
 - Study finding that adults who experienced parental alienation as children reported lower self-esteem, higher rates of depression, addiction problems, and relationship difficulties.
3. Bentley, C., & Matthewson, M. (2020). The not-forgotten child: Alienated adult children's experience of parental alienation. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 48(5), 509–529.
 - Qualitative study exploring the lived experience of adults who experienced parental alienation as children, revealing themes of profound loss and identity disruption.
4. Giancarlo, C., & Rottman, K. (2015). Kids come last: The effect of family law involvement in parental alienation. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Annual Review*, 9(1), 27–42.
 - Study examining how family court processes often fail to adequately address alienation, perpetuating harm to children through delays and ineffective interventions.
5. Hands, A. J., & Warshak, R. A. (2011). Parental alienation among college students. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 39(5), 431–443.

- Survey of college students finding significant rates of alienation experiences and associated psychological distress, suggesting alienation affects a substantial number of young adults.
- 6. Harman, J. J., Matthewson, M. L., & Baker, A. J. L. (2022). Losses experienced by children alienated from a parent. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 43, 7–12.
 - Conceptualizes alienation as creating profound losses for children including identity loss, relationship loss, and extended family loss, with implications for grief-informed treatment.
- 7. McGlynn, L. C. (2001). Assessing parental alienation: Empirical assessment of college students' recollections of parental alienation during their childhoods. *North Dakota Law Review*, 77(3), 525–548.
 - Early empirical study establishing the prevalence of alienation experiences among college students and associated psychosocial impacts.
- 8. Moné, J. G., & Biringen, Z. (2012). Assessing parental alienation: Empirical assessment of college student's recollections of parental alienation during their childhoods. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 53(3), 157–177.
 - Retrospective study finding that college students who experienced alienation tactics reported poorer relationships with both parents and psychological adjustment problems.
- 9. O'Hara, K., Rhodes, C. A., Wolchik, S. A., Sandler, I. N., & Yun-Tin, J. (2021). Longitudinal effects of postdivorce interparental conflict on children's mental health problems through fear of abandonment: Does parenting quality play a buffering role? *Child Development*, 92(4), 1476–1493.
 - Longitudinal study identifying mechanisms through which interparental conflict impacts children's mental health, with implications for understanding alienation impacts.
- 10. Saini, M. A., Drozd, L. M., & Olesen, N. W. (2017). Adaptive and maladaptive gatekeeping behaviors and attitudes: Implications for child outcomes after separation and divorce. *Family Court Review*, 55(2), 260–272.
 - Differentiates between protective gatekeeping and harmful alienating behaviors, examining differential impacts on children's wellbeing.
- 11. Smith, A. D., Biringen, Z., & Harman, J. J. (2018). Parenting time and child coping: The context of parental alienation. *Family Science Review*, 23(4), 118–140.
 - Study examining how parenting time arrangements influence children's development of coping mechanisms in the context of alienation dynamics.

12. Verrocchio, M. C., Baker, A. J. L., & Bernet, W. (2016). Associations between exposure to alienating behaviors, anxiety, and depression in an Italian sample of adults. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 61(3), 692–698.
 - Study finding significant correlations between recalled childhood exposure to alienating behaviors and adult mental health problems in Italian sample.
13. Verrocchio, M. C., Baker, A. J. L., & Marchetti, D. (2018). Adult report of childhood exposure to parental alienation at different developmental time periods. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 40(4), 602–618.
 - Research examining how age of exposure to alienation influences long-term psychological outcomes, finding differential impacts based on developmental stage.
14. Verrocchio, M. C., Marchetti, D., Carrozzino, D., Compare, A., & Fulcheri, M. (2019). Depression and quality of life in adults perceiving exposure to parental alienation behaviors. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, 17(1), Article 14.
 - Study documenting significant impacts of childhood alienation experiences on adult quality of life measures, particularly through depression pathways.
15. Wozencraft, T. A., Tauzin, M., & Romero, L. (2019). The relationship between psychological functioning in a college sample and retrospective reports of parental loyalty conflicts and psychological maltreatment. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 60(2), 104–116.
 - Research finding that retrospective reports of childhood loyalty conflicts predicted psychological functioning problems in college students.

CONSEQUENCES FOR ALIENATED PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

1. Balmer, S., Matthewson, M., & Haines, J. (2018). Parental alienation: Targeted parent perspective. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 70(1), 91–99.
 - Study examining the lived experience of targeted parents, documenting profound psychological distress, helplessness, and secondary trauma.
2. Godbout, E., & Parent, C. (2012). The life paths and lived experiences of adults who have experienced parental alienation: A retrospective study. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 53(1), 34–54.
 - Retrospective study exploring long-term impacts on adults who were alienated from their children, finding persistent grief, trauma symptoms, and relationship difficulties.

3. Kruk, E. (2010). Collateral damage: The lived experiences of divorced mothers without custody. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 51(8), 526–543.
 - Study of non-custodial mothers' experiences, including those who lost custody due to alienation processes, documenting profound psychological impacts.
4. Lee-Maturana, S., Matthewson, M., & Dwan, C. (2020). Targeted parents surviving parental alienation: Consequences of the alienation and coping strategies. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29(8), 2268–2280.
 - Research identifying consequences of alienation for targeted parents and protective coping strategies that support resilience.
5. Lee-Maturana, S., Matthewson, M., & Dwan, C. (2020). Understanding targeted parents' experience of parental alienation: A qualitative description from their own perspective. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 49(5), 499–516.
 - Qualitative study providing rich descriptions of targeted parents' experiences, highlighting themes of powerlessness, institutional betrayal, and complicated grief.
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 - Systematic review synthesizing research on targeted parents' experiences, identifying common patterns and psychological impacts.
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 - Study examining how family narratives about divorce and conflict contribute to alienation dynamics, with implications for intervention.
8. Poustie, C., Matthewson, M., & Balmer, S. (2018). The forgotten parent: The targeted parent perspective of parental alienation. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(12), 3298–3323.
 - Research highlighting how targeted parents are often overlooked in family systems interventions, with recommendations for more inclusive approaches.
9. Sims, M., & Rofail, M. (2013). The experiences of grandparents who have limited or no contact with their grandchildren. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27(4), 377–386.

- Study documenting the "ripple effect" of alienation on extended family, particularly grandparents who lose relationships with grandchildren.
10. Tavares, A., Crespo, C., & Ribeiro, M. T. (2020). Psychological adaptation and beliefs in targeted parents: A study in the context of parental alienation. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29(8), 2281–2289.
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 - Early qualitative study giving voice to targeted parents' experiences, establishing foundational understanding of their perspective.
 12. Whitcombe, S. (2017). Powerless to parent; powerless to protect: The experiences of alienated parents in the U.K. *Maltrattamento e Abuso All'Infanzia*, 19(1), 47–66.
 - UK-based study documenting systemic failures that compound the trauma of alienated parents, with policy recommendations.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS OF PUBLISHED RESEARCH

1. Harman, J. J., Warshak, R. A., Lorandos, D., & Florian, M. J. (2022). Developmental psychology and the scientific status of parental alienation. *Developmental Psychology*, 58(10), 1887–1911.
 - Comprehensive review establishing parental alienation as a scientifically validated concept, analyzing over 200 empirical studies and addressing common critiques.
2. Marques, T. M., Narciso, I., & Ferreira, L. C. (2020). Empirical research on parental alienation: A descriptive literature review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, Article 105572.
 - Systematic literature review categorizing and analyzing the empirical research on parental alienation, identifying methodological trends and research gaps.
3. Saini, M., Johnston, J. R., Fidler, B. J., & Bala, N. (2016). Empirical studies of alienation. In L. Drozd, M. Saini, & N. Olesen (Eds.), *Parenting plan evaluations: Applied research for the family court* (pp. 374–430). Oxford University Press.
 - Chapter reviewing empirical research on alienation with specific focus on implications for custody evaluations and parenting plan development.

4. Bernet, W., et al. (2022). New research on the science of parental alienation. Institute for Family Studies.
 - Recent meta-analysis of over 200 empirical studies demonstrating that parental alienation research has matured significantly, with 40% of studies published since 2016, and showing a shift toward quantitative methods and hypothesis testing.

LEGAL RESEARCH REGARDING PARENTAL ALIENATION

1. Bala, N., Hunt, S., & McCarney, C. (2010). Parental alienation: Canadian court cases 1989-2008. *Family Court Review*, 48(1), 164–179.
 - Analysis of Canadian legal cases involving parental alienation claims, documenting trends in judicial recognition and response.
2. Harman, J. J., & Lorandos, D. (2021). Allegations of family violence in court: How parental alienation affects judicial outcomes. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 27(2), 184–208.
 - Study examining how allegations of parental alienation influence court outcomes in cases with family violence claims, with policy implications.
3. Lavadera, A. L., Ferracuti, S., & Togliatti, M. M. (2012). Parental alienation syndrome in Italian legal judgments: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 35(4), 334–342.
 - Analysis of how Italian courts recognize and address parental alienation, providing cross-cultural perspective on legal responses.
4. Lorandos, D. (2020). Parental alienation in U.S. Courts, 1985 to 2018. *Family Court Review*, 58(2), 322–339.
 - Comprehensive review of parental alienation case law in the United States, documenting increasing judicial recognition and evolving legal responses.
5. Priolo-Filho, S., Goldfarb, D., Shestowsky, D., Sampana, J., Williams, L. C. A., & Goodman, G. S. (2018). Judgments regarding parental alienation when parental hostility or child sexual abuse is alleged. *Journal of Child Custody*, 15(4), 302–329.
 - Experimental study examining how allegations of abuse influence judgments about parental alienation, identifying decision-making biases.

6. Waide, A. M. (2011). To comply or not to comply? Brazil's relationship with the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 39(1), 271–301.
 - Analysis of international child abduction cases involving parental alienation dynamics, with focus on cross-border legal complexities.

MISINFORMATION REGARDING PARENTAL ALIENATION THEORY

1. Bernet, W. (2021). Parental alienation and misinformation proliferation. *Family Court Review*, 58(2), 293–307.
 - Analysis of how misinformation about parental alienation spreads in academic and popular discourse, with implications for science communication.
2. Bernet, W., & Xu, S. (2022). Scholarly rumors: Citation analysis of vast misinformation regarding parental alienation theory. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*. doi:10.1002/bsl.2605.
 - Research documenting citation patterns that perpetuate misinformation about parental alienation, identifying common errors and their propagation.
3. Harman, J. J., & Kruk, E. (2022). Countering arguments against parental alienation as a form of family violence. *Journal of Family Therapy*.
 - Recent comprehensive review examining and refuting common critiques of parental alienation as a form of family violence, based on analysis of over 100 peer-reviewed studies^[6].

CONCLUSION

The research on parental alienation has evolved substantially in recent years, with a clear shift from predominantly qualitative to increasingly sophisticated quantitative methodologies. Recent studies have addressed important gaps regarding prevalence, gender dynamics, and connections between alienation and family violence. The scientific literature increasingly supports viewing parental alienation as a form of emotional abuse with significant consequences for children's psychological development and long-term functioning, while acknowledging the need for careful differentiation from cases of justified estrangement due to abuse.