

## ***Why Parents Abduct Their Children***

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Family abductions occur in the context of many different types of domestic situations. Take Root has members whose parents were separated, divorced, still married, or never married. We have members who were taken by the parent s/he lived with, members who were taken by the parent they visited, and members who split time between each parent's house. We have some members whose taking parent was fleeing in response to ongoing domestic violence. Some members had a close bond with the parent who took them, others were afraid of that parent. Some members were taken suddenly by an absent parent they had never even met.

***Take Root's program work with former abducted children has revealed the following as reasons why parents abduct their own children:***

- **The parent confuses their own frustration or disgust with the relationship as meaning that the other parent is bad for the child**
- **The parent fears losing custody or visitation rights**
- **The parent is "getting back at" the other parent by taking away "something the other parent wants" (i.e., the child)**
- **The parent is removing the child from real physical and/or emotional threat or injury by the other parent**
- **The parent is removing the child from *perceived* physical and/or emotional threat or injury by the other parent**

- The parent fears the values, influence and/or behavior the other parent may expose the child to
- The parent may have never intended to involve the other parent in raising the child, and is “eliminating” them by leaving
- The parent is trying to force a reconciliation or contact with the left-behind parent
- The parent wants to be more important in the child’s life/wants the child to be more dependent on them