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Cape Coral attorney helps fathers through divorce

Many dads looking for more time with kids

By *JL Watson*

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You've got to fight for your right to birthday parties, homework and science fairs.

Attorney Sam Assini is helping fathers who are looking for more time with their children after the family is torn apart by divorce. His Mens Right Law Firm recently opened in its new location in Cape Coral.

"The main issue I see in working with divorce is what's best for the children," Assini said.

Assini isn't just sympathetic to the needs of his clients - he's empathetic. The former butcher went through a divorce in 1995, and he felt like he kept hitting a brick wall.

"I was trying to have a relationship with my son," he said.

Assini spent so much time working on his own case, the judge encouraged him to become an attorney. With only a high school diploma, Assini started by enrolling in undergraduate classes. It took him seven years to finish a bachelor's degree and get his law degree, but he never once looked back. He graduated from law school at age 40. He practiced family law, but he turned to mens rights.

"I just couldn't understand why the law said that men and women should be treated equally, but the obstacles put in front of men were enormous," Assini said.

Although Assini works primarily on behalf of fathers, he has female clients and works to unite the parties in the decision-making process.

"The big issue now, because of the economy in Southwest Florida, is a lot of families getting divorced over financial problems," he said. "I may want to work with them on those issues. I'm big on sending people to counseling before ending their marriage. The financial strain might be temporary and divorce is a permanent result."

Assini was too late to save John McLaughlin's marriage. The Cape Coral resident was married for 27 years when the relationship fell apart.

"He (Assini) was the best lawyer I've ever had," McLaughlin said.

It's been almost a year since McLaughlin's divorce and every day gets a little bit better. McLaughlin said that if the need arises again, he will go back to Assini for legal advice.

"I have already recommended him to other people," he said.

Assini's efforts made the difference in a custody case for Deerfield Beach resident John Schlosser.

When Schlosser's wife moved to Pennsylvania in 2004 she wanted to take their daughter.

"Sam was outstanding," Schlosser said. "He was willing to help keep my daughter in Florida."

Schlosser was awarded full custody of his daughter, who is now a teenager.

"Without Sam I don't think I would have seen my daughter," Schlosser said. "He really went to work for me."

Schlosser is now working to recover more than \$12,000 in child support that his former wife has not paid.

Assini plans to continue working in the field of men's rights, with an eye on helping to facilitate changes in state laws.

"This is probably the most emotional times in people's lives," he said of the divorce process. "Criminal defense attorneys see the worst clients at their best. I see the best clients at their worst. Getting people through the divorce process is getting them through anger, depression, denial. The family still needs to operate. I got involved in law to serve the community. I thought the best way was to focus on men's rights."
