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LawTalk Blog



The Christmas present nobody wants: divorce

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Chaotic schedules, booze-fuelled functions and awkward family get-togethers are predictable happenings that mark the annual Christmas and New Year season. Unfortunately however, as the champagne fizz flattens, many people find that the festive holidays spell the end of their relationship.

In Australia, it is expected that the number of separated couples will increase by over 10,000 at the conclusion of the Christmas and New Year period. Each New Year, family lawyers prepare for an influx of new client enquiries, as newly separated couples race to the closest solicitor's office to seek legal advice. While the New Year period has always proved to be a busy time for family lawyers, the question often is, why? What drives couples to separate at a time that is heavily marketed to be the most joyous time of the year?

Expectation Stresses

The problem begins with the substantial expectations placed upon people regarding Christmas and the New Year. Individual expectations are at an all-time high, and if said expectations are not met often arguments between spouses will result. The celebratory season can also be a trigger for some, reminding them harshly that they are not as happy as the perfect images they are lambasted with by media and social media alike.

Alcohol Consumption

A further reason, and a substantial one, for the increase in separations over the holidays is the surge in alcohol consumption by individuals. Statistics show that New Years Day is the most violent day in Australia with a 157% increase in Domestic Violence. Emergency Services have reported to reach breaking point on New Years Day as a result of being called out to attend to homes

effected by alcohol related family violence. Combine the increase in alcohol consumption with the financial strain felt by so many Australians at Christmas, and it is no wonder that spouses cannot make it out of the holiday season together.

Children

Another reason is that spouses will often stay unionised for their children over Christmas period. Despite knowing in advance that their relationship has ended, parties may maintain appearances for the sake of the children. Once the festive season has finished they will then announce their separation, which contributes to the spike in enquiries family lawyers receive each New Year.

Importantly, it is vital to remember that throughout the Christmas and New Year Period, excessive alcohol consumption, stress and financial strain will not likely enhance your relationship (particularly if you and your spouse are already on negative terms). Avoiding all of the above where possible will hopefully alleviate the risk of separation.

In the event that you do separate with your spouse our offices are open as of **2 January 2018** where one of our competent [Family Lawyers](#) will be available to assist and guide you with any queries.

Please note, this Blog is posted in Adelaide, South Australia by Andersons Solicitors. It relates to Australian Federal and South Australian legislation. Andersons Solicitors is a medium sized law firm servicing metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia across all areas of law for individuals and businesses.