

## **DEFINITION OF PARENTAL ALIENATION**

**Parental Alienation (PA) is defined as the efforts on the part of one parent (referred to as the preferred, favored, or alienating parent) to turn the child unjustifiably against the other parent (referred to as the rejected, disfavored, or alienated parent), through the use of parental alienation behaviors or strategies. The child may then add his/her own contributions to the deprecation and rejection of the alienated parent.**

**Not all children exposed to parental alienation strategies reject the targeted parent. When they do, they are referred to as alienated. Alienation cases are often confused with or referred to as estrangement. Estrangement differs from alienation in that the estrangement behaviors of the child are justified through the extreme actions (e.g. alcoholism, physical or emotional abuse, etc.) of the parent that is estranged. Whether or not they become alienated, exposure to parental alienation behaviors or strategies is harmful to children.**

**Parental Alienation is currently considered child abuse by many professionals that understand the dynamics of PA. When grandparents are being alienated from their grandchildren in an intact family environment this is referred to as grandparent alienation.**