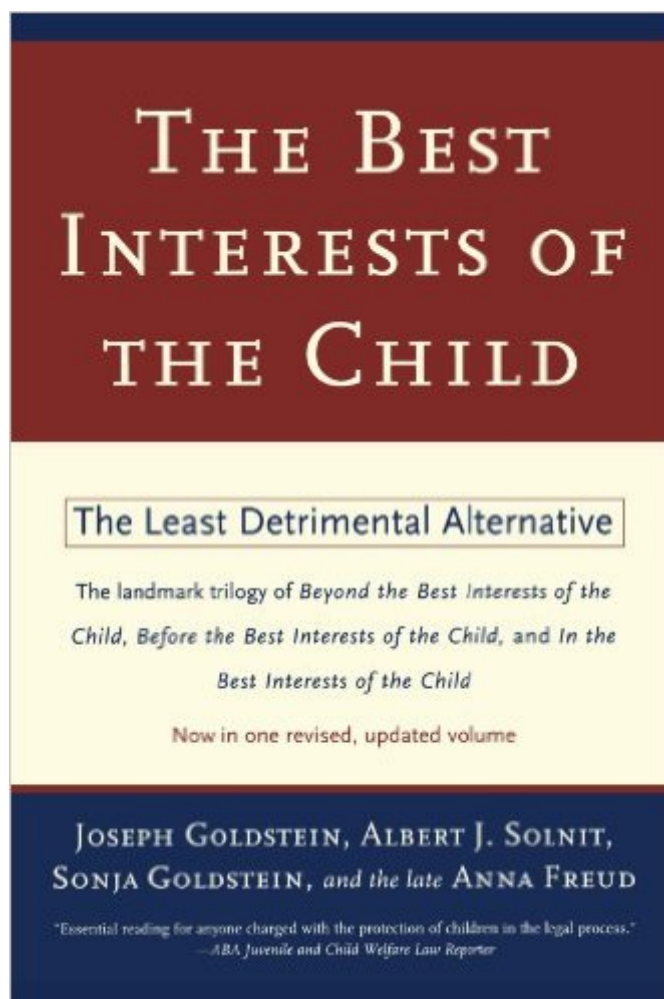


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# The Best Interests Of The Child: The Least Detrimental Alternative



## Synopsis

What principles should guide the courts in deciding the fate of hundreds of thousands of children involved every year in parental divorces and family breakdowns? What should justify state intrusion on the privacy of family relationships? How should professionals - judges, lawyers, social workers, psychiatrists, and psychologists - conduct themselves in pursuing "the best interests" of children who have been abandoned, neglected, or abused? The agonizing dilemmas posed by these three questions were the subject of one of the seminal publishing events in the history of The Free press. The result has been a set of historic guidelines which forms the basis of their landmark trilogy *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child*, *Before the Best Interests of the Child*, and *In the Best Interests of the Child*, published between 1973 and 1986. The authors speak in one voice in concluding that the continuity of care - continuity of a child's relationship with his or her adult caregiver - is a universal essential to the child's well-being. To this end, they stress that minimizing intrusions by the law is paramount to safeguarding the child's growth and development. "The least detrimental alternative" - the authors overarching guideline for assuring the continuity of the psychological parent-child relationship - has been cited in more than a thousand child custody cases since 1973.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book was written by lawyers, so I don't recommend reading it late at night. It is not written on the sixth grade level like most books. I do highly recommend it to anyone interested in the subject matter.

Best Interest of the Child is both a legal term, and principle, but it is not the same as best interest from a psychological or science perspective. This is a well researched and articulate exploration of the conflict between competing legal terminology and principles, and application of those principles in the life of children.

This book should be mandatory reading for all those who aspire to be advocates for children- anyone in the family court system (judges, lawyers, guardian ad litem), legislators and most especially workers in the child protection services.

Previously used in child custody evaluations/determinations. See update: Beyond the Best Interests of the Child.

These three books have originated a problem in family law with the concept "psychological parent." These three books are useful to a guide for lawyers and the concerned family.

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