

THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

The Least Detrimental Alternative

The landmark trilogy of *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child*, *Before the Best Interests of the Child*, and *In the Best Interests of the Child*

Now in one revised, updated volume

JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN, ALBERT J. SOLNIT,
SONJA GOLDSTEIN, and the late ANNA FREUD

"Essential reading for anyone charged with the protection of children in the legal process."
—ABA Journal, March 1998, and *NY State Law Reporter*

Resumo de The Best Interests of the Child: The Least Detrimental Alternative

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.

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