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Partridge Family Star Disinherits Daughter

Pop music icon and '70s television star David Cassidy passed away in November of organ failure at the age of 67.

[In his will](#), the late Partridge Family star left \$150,000 in assets to his son, Beau, and his music memorabilia was left to his three half siblings, according to *The Blast*.

What's shocking to many is not only the fact that a well-known figure's assets amounted to so little, but also that his will included language that specifically disinherited his daughter, Katie. Why would he do that?

Most of your clients would never fathom themselves purposely disinheriting one of their offspring. But sometimes, a parent decides to leave one child the assets and another one absolutely nothing out of a loving intention.

In cases where a parent is looking to leave an inheritance without directly giving a child access to it, creating a trust to control the heir's inheritance is often the best solution. The trust can give the trustee specific instructions about how and when distributions can be made to beneficiaries. This can include incentives (i.e., attending college, working a full-time job, or staying drug and alcohol-free).

One child might be financially successful while another is struggling to support himself, and the inheritance could make a huge difference in his quality of life. Or, there may be a need to disinherit a child in order to shelter assets from a child's creditors or a child's substance or gambling addiction.

And, in cases like Cassidy, sometimes there simply isn't much left in the bank to divide. Equal inheritances between children aren't always *equitable* and can actually create problems for those left behind.

Katie Cassidy, 31, is a major star in her own right. She's been a regular and recurring cast member on the CW network's *The Arrow* television show for several years. Her father's will was signed and filed in 2004, long before she started an acting career.

Katie was raised by her mother, former model Sherry Williams, and Williams' husband [according to *The Chicago Tribune*](#). There were many reported periods of estrangement between David and Katie, and many sources laid the blame for that on David's struggle with

alcoholism over the years.

Still, Katie was among the relatives who rushed to her father's side when he was near death.

"My father's last words were, 'So much wasted time,'" she tweeted after he died. "This will be a daily reminder for me to share my gratitude with those I love as to never waste another minute."

In the end, it's vitally important that if a client chooses to disinherit a loved one, his or her reasons should be explicitly laid out in estate planning documents. Make intentions clear, because seeing them in black-and-white will drive the point home and discourage a contest of the trust or will.

We hope this information is useful to you and helps your clients and their families. If you have a specific case or a question, please don't hesitate to call our office.

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