

THE SECOND BIGGEST THREAT “Why Promote Adoption?”

*By Steven M. Kirsh, Attorney**

Terrorism clearly threatens our safety, lives, and way of life. President Bush and the rest of the world leaders must wage war against terrorism and terrorists so that any prospective terrorists will quickly realize that whatever they believe might be gained by their actions will greatly and massively pale in comparison to the consequences which will befall them. Clearly, we must eliminate terrorism in the same way society has rooted out and eliminated smallpox.

However, the United States, in particular, faces a second threat, in some ways more dangerous and threatening than possible terrorist attacks. This threat manifests itself all around us, but silently. By the time we realize what has happened, it will be too late.

The threat about which I write is that of wasted potential, hopelessness for a bright future, and a drain on society. Thousands, perhaps millions, of young people in our country have left school, have no prospects for gainful employment, have no concept of contributing to society, and are increasingly turning to violence. Furthermore, this element of society continues to propagate itself in record numbers. Their children and their children's children will only worsen the problem. Our most influential role models are our parents. Unless the cycle is reversed, the role models of the children and the children of the children are the ones creating the problems in society today.

I grew up in a home with loving parents, whose sole focus was to help my siblings and me feel secure, have fun, and prepare for the future. I suspect that most people reading this essay had a similar experience when they were growing up.

But look around, for how many children in our society is such a life as unimaginable as the collapse of the twin towers of the World Trade Center by terrorist attack? I met a birth mother recently. She told me that she met her best friend in school because their parents dealt drugs together. Further, she said that when she was in grade school, a drug counselor came to her school to warn the kids about the ill effects of drugs, but that she and her friend knew more than the counselor about the different kinds of drugs. Her words to me were, “Kids are not supposed to know such things. Kids are supposed to have fun.”

I do not suggest that the problem of wasted potential highlighted in this essay would be completely eliminated if more birth parents considered adoption plans for their children, but the birth parents who consider adoption are loving parents, truly concerned for the welfare of their children. They are among the most heroic members of our society. They make courageous, loving choices because they want what is best for their children. But what about the other children? How many of those children would be better off if adopted? How many of those children who are not adopted have an opportunity to live a carefree childhood, have parents who have the time and the resources to attend to their every want and need, have the assurance of a college education, and will have the chance to make a real contribution to society?

Why should we all promote adoption? The answer is clear: in some – not every – situation involving an unplanned or unexpected pregnancy, adoption provides both the children and the birth parents a fresh start, an opportunity to better themselves and to become productive members of our society. The real tragedy of adoption is not the heartbreak of the prospective adoptive parents who face the prospects of going through life childless, but rather the wasted potential. Who knows where

will come the cure for cancer, the creation of pollution free fuels, solutions to poverty, crime and the myriad of issues which our society faces? Could it be from a child who, through adoption, is given the security of a warm and loving home, the chance of a carefree childhood, the opportunity of a good education, and being raised with the idea that nothing is impossible, that every dream is obtainable with hard work and determination?

Why promote adoption? Everyone benefits and not just those directly involved in the process. Society as a whole is the real beneficiary.

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