

Adoption in China

Hollie Seegmiller & Lauren Anderson

Copper Hills High School

Introduction:

“Too many children in foster care are falling through cracks. Be a hero, take the time learn about adoption today.” (Bruce Willis) Why will people not take action to adopt children from China?

Adopting children from China would help the children have a better life than they do now, help them with their futures, like language, and show the parents that America is willing to take action and become parents. This will also introduce children to couples who can't have children and this is their chance. Adoption is a necessary key to helping our world. Some people may say that adoption causes problems, but they don't know how it affects not just themselves, but the whole world.

Part I: Why Adopt?

Orphans are children who have had one parent die and the other can not take care of them or both parents have died. “Adoption is not about finding children for families, it's about finding families for children.” (Joyce Maguire Pavao). In Asia, in 2003: there were 87.6 million orphans and in 2010, 80.1 million orphans. (Roby, J. L., 2007) That number decreased, but that is still a lot of orphans without any future, health issues, and no parents to take care of them!

Why not take action? Some of the reasons are health issues. Is it that couples don't have the time or money to afford these medical costs? Or is it just the lack of desire to take in these poor children? It is so sad to look into the face of a child and see how sad, lonely, lost, and confused they are without a permanent place to stay. None of us would ever want one of our children suffering like that, why can we stand to see other innocent children being treated that way?! I believe that America is not a hypocrite, but if we just go with the flow or ride along with what happens without showing any emotion or

actions, they are being hypocritical. Show the world your kindness and support! “In the past, people used to care for the orphans and loved them, but these days, they are so many, and many people died who could have assisted them, and therefore orphanhood is a common phenomenon, not strange. The few who are alive cannot support them (Nyambedha et al., 2003 p. 306).” In 1995, 8,987 international adoptions were taking place and in 2005, 22, 728 international adoptions were taking place in the United States. (Glennen, S. L., 2007, Vol. 50) There are plenty of parents that do not have the opportunity to have children and it would be a great help and experience for both the parents and the child if more families would help out these orphaned children in achieving a better life, which everyone knows that they deserve. Many couples often do not have the money to adopt, but they are willing to have a child of their own, which takes a lot of money.

Part II: Environmental Issues & Necessities

Most internationally adopted children come from orphanages that need to be moved from their environment because it is the type of environment that will hurt them while developing.

Orphaned children are the most in need; they need: education, food, clothing, rent/housing, money, child care, but the big ones are food and education. The reasons why orphans are orphans are because of wars, poverty, famine, diseases (AIDS), and many others. Many are scared to deal with the health issues that come with adopting foreign children, but children need one basic necessity that every single human being needs: love. It is tough to see a child go without

love. When I see children so happy, so fulfilled over one hug or kiss, it makes me want to be a better person. No child deserves neglect or hardships, regardless of how long or why they are an orphan. There has been a dramatic increase in orphans due to HIV/Aids as well as a different attitude for caregivers because of the rising health issues. (Messer L. C., 2010) We could help them out and get them away from the nasty environment they are in now. Children don't need those memories and childhood. Wouldn't you want the best for your children? Orphans are children and they need help because they've lost their own parents. For children to actually develop properly mentally, physically, socially, and economically, they need an adult to take care of them and that the children can be attached to. Most orphanages are shorted on staff and funding, which results in poor medical care, development care, and social care. Children are not receiving the care or unconditional love of a stable home that they need to be nurtured and developed. Studies have shown that more orphaned children drop out of school than non orphaned children. My uncle works for the Foreign Service and they have had the chance to visit several countries. He has told me stories about the things that he has seen there. These orphaned children who are adopted by caring parents experience a more loving and stable experience in the home rather than being neglected. "I didn't come out of my mother. I don't have my father's green eyes. No one in my family looks like me. People are always surprised. I think we're a happier family Than if we were all kings and queens. We're so lucky we all found each other. That's what being adopted means." (Pamela Espeland & Marilyn Nelson) Also, children can escape this terrible thing and help their kids not to have to deal with what they had to deal with in their early life. It is not orphans fault that they are orphaned; they need to be raised and helped so that they can have a better life too. Leaving them on the side only creates room for future orphans and generations of the same problems that we have seen. The number

of HIV infections in China has largely risen. The number of infections went from 30% to 60% in only one year; that doubled! (Hereward, M. et al, June 2002, Ch. 9)

Part III: Language Issues

Another point that would help the orphans would be language. Orphans can learn English (the universal language) if they come to America. If they ever hope to succeed or bring themselves out of this, they need to be taken in by someone that will teach them a language that is a huge language in the world! Language and speech is difficult for internationally adopted orphans to accomplish. As more children come to America, the more calls to speech and language services are happening. Calls to speech and language services range from 54% to 60% in the United States. (Glennen, S. L., 2007, Vol. 50)

Orphaned children have a high chance of speech delay in their home country because they have been in orphanages too long. They need to get out of the orphanages! Because of their orphanage past, children are at a higher risk of not fully developing their speech and language. They can also be under-developed in speech if they are older than two orphans and switch from one culture to another. By the time 2001 rolled around, there were 23,000 infections reported in China, even though there were known higher infections. (Hereward, M. et al, June 2002, Ch. 9) China ranks fourth in Asia and seventeenth in the whole world for their HIV infections. Children should not be in this environment where so many people are infected and the rate is so high, children could get killed! The worst five areas are: Yunnan, Guizhou, and Sichuan provinces, and Xinjiang and Guanxi regions for infections. (Hereward, M. et al, June 2002, Ch. 9) Also, drug

consumption is at a very high rate in China. By the time children are young teens, they will be addicted to drugs, especially orphans. Orphans don't need that kind of influence or environment in life. Americans need to realize that drugs and diseases are everywhere, even in America, but in China, it is ten times worse than America! Americans also need to realize that children shouldn't be in those kind of situations and environments! 66.5% of Chinese are infected because of drug users sharing each other's needles. (Hereward, M. et al, June 2002, Ch. 9) What if someone went up to an orphan, who was feeling down, and said, "Here, try this! It'll make you feel better!" and the innocent child took the needle and used it and got infected with HIV?! That child was innocent and didn't know right from wrong. That child could have been spared if it was in a healthy environment and healthy home and not in their environment they are in now. Many couples can't have children or can't have anymore than what they have. These couples should take action and look towards adoption, especially international adoption for answers. HIV infections are real and very dangerous. It is a disease that will never go away and children do not need this infection that will haunt them the rest of their life.

Conclusion:

Americans, take action and be a savior to these orphaned children in these mountainous regions that need your help. It's enough of putting these children on the back burner and telling them we'll handle it later. Things need to take place immediately! There are several persons who agree that international adoption is needed, yet they stand on the sidelines waiting for others to take the action that is heavily weighing children down.

They desperately need food and education or they perish. Even though the adoption rate is increasing in the United States, there is still a huge population of orphans around the world, waiting for an answer to a prayer. "I'd rather regret the things that I have done, than the things that I have not done." (Lucille Ball) An excuse that people would use to not adopt would be the immediate fear that comes from the unknown of what is to come. However, people need to look past the fear and insecurity and think of what a huge impact you would have on these children's lives. It is every child's hope to live in a secure home with loved ones who care; are we going to let a little fear cause these children to be orphaned for who knows how long? "The key to change...is to let go of fear." (Rosanne Cash) Will you take action?

References:

- Cornia, G. A., & Mark Hereward, G. I. (2002). Limiting the Future Impact of HIV/AIDS on Children in Yunnan (China). *China HIV/AIDS Socio-Economic Impact Study Team* , 1-55.
- Glennen, S. L. (2007). Predicting Language Outcomes for Internationally Adopted Children. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research* , 529-548.
- Messer L. C., Pence, B. W., Whetten, K., Whetten, R., Thielman, N., O'Donnell, K., et al. (2010). Prevalence and predictors of HIV-related stigma among institutional- and community-based caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children living in five less-wealthy countries. *BioMed Central* , 1471-2458.
- Roby, J. L. (2007). *Women of the Mountains Conference*. Retrieved February 2011, from Women of the Mountains:
http://www.womenofthemountains.org/files/Microsoft%20PowerPoint%20-%202007-03-07-Jini-Roby-Orphan_presentation_UVSC_03_08.pdf