LIFEWATCH
A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF ALLIANCE FOR LIFE INTERNATIONAL
MAY 2025

IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

Do you have the impression that we live in a country that values children and that their parents, in general, meet their basic needs for food, shelter, love, education, and safety?

After all, in the US, we live under conditions of relative affluence, our families are small, and most parents are trying hard to provide for their children. But do our children thrive? Are they physically fit, emotionally stable, spiritually vibrant, relationally satisfied, and growing developmentally?

Let's take a trip down memory lane. Remember mom and dad and their impact on your lives. My mom showed me the importance of work, and she demonstrated courage and persistence in life's adversities. She was a women-of-faith and lived her life according to a strong moral code

Dad was competent and assiduous at work; he loved language, reading, travel, and adventure, and had a wonderful sense of humor.

Now can you imagine yourself as a child having to choose and let go of one parent, not because of your own desire but because of your parents' choice to part? Which one would be optional? Can you see yourself thriving and not be affected by the absence of one parent?

In *Them Before Us,* authors Kathy Faust and Stacy Manning, make the case for a *Children's Right Movement* based on the fact that adults make all the decisions about marriage, divorce, family formation, parenthood, and the use of reproductive technologies. Children's well-being is rarely considered because we assume that love and safety are the primary drivers of children's (cont. p. 2).



ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE ARE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, LOUISE ALLARD

AN UPDATE FROM UGANDA

We report from California while anticipating that we will be in the field shortly and for several months.

The works of the Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC) is focused on teaching the Billings Ovulation Method in churches and in our office. We introduced 150 women to the BOM in April. We now promote Abstinence Education in churches because schools fail to assign time for it. We believe they are making a mistake because the child will fall prey to the pitfalls of dating and experience teenage pregnancy, STDs, and abortion.

Emily hosted four radio talk shows discussing the BOM, and parenting neglect. Suicides among the youth is increasing and getting media attention. Mothers leave their children looking for money while the children are poorly cared for. The money ends up spoiling the children (cont. p. 3),

IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

happiness. We tell ourselves that the children will adapt and BE HAPPY no matter what [1].

In *Them Before Us,* the authors claim that children have as much rights to their biological parents as the parents that conceived them. When parents go home from the hospital after giving birth, they expect to go out *with their baby*. There is a flip side to this reality but it is often violated: the baby has a right to leave the hospital with his or her parents [2].

How do we determine that a child has *a natural right to his biological parents* even if not encoded in law? There are three tests:

- A natural right is not necessarily granted by the government. It predates government. For example, the government is expected to respect the parent-child relationship [3]. It is unalienable, innate, and non-transferable.
- A natural right is not provided by anyone [4]. A child has biological parents, otherwise he would not have life. The child's right to his parents exists and commands respect all on its own [5]. The right-to-life is also a natural right and provides the foundation for all other rights.
- A natural right is equal in its distribution. Everyone naturally possesses the same amount. For example, the right to religious freedom and free speech are universal. Governments often infringe on those rights but the right to worship and speak remains [6]. Similarly, every child has two biological parents. He has a right to them as much as they do toward him.

Children's Rights have been recognized universally in a United Nations document: The Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by many countries.

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starting with the Preamble to the Convention:

"Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, ***including appropriate legal protection before as well as after birth [7]."***

Here are some pertinent Convention articles showing the child's right to life, primarily, and the right to their identity.

Article 7: The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality. And, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents…

Article 9: States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when …such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child…States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests [8]."

Articles 8, 10, and 18 are also pertinent. The US has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are not advocating they do because of such issues as sovereignty. Nevertheless, the Convention indicates a consensus among countries that reinforces the rights of the child to his biological parents as mentioned above. Let's look at circumstances (cot. P. 3)

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Children who live with their biological parents in the context of marriage fare better than children raised in all other family structures

REPORT FROM UGANDA

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and barely making a difference.

We finally completed our submission for NGO recertification. It was a costly and lengthy process. It is difficult to reconcile these difficulties with the benefits except that NGO status speaks volume to foundation donors.

Celebration Bakery remains vibrant but not without challenges. Providing our products in schools helps distribution and revenues but when they are closed, we really feel it. We are trying to compensate by marketing to more stores. We are conquering our electricity outages since we bought a gas oven. The bread turned out beautifully to the satisfaction of our bakers.

We held a meeting with the architect and engineers to review their revised drawings and cost analysis for the pediatric facilities. We are excited to have reached this stage. The Technical Committee will then make a recommendation to the Board for approval. It will then go to the Ministry of Health and the Kibaale District for their recommendations.

Louise has been sending letters of Inquiries to foundations. Even though there are thousands of foundations, they fund projects in the US mostly or do not accept applications. They prefer choosing their own beneficiaries. DEI has been introduced and it is changing their focus. “So, our eyes are on the Lord our God, till we are shown favor [14].”

Please join us in praying for a breakthrough. We thank you for your unfailing support,

where the child is separated from his biological parents. Children born and raised outside the marital bond often suffers the loss of one biological parent. We realize that marriage has changed greatly since the Supreme Court has legalized same-sex marriage in 2016, but for the purpose of advocacy for children’s rights to their biological mothers and fathers, the authors refer to a marriage between the biological parents of the child or traditional marriage, where one man is married to one woman [9].

Why this approach? It is because children who live with their biological parents *in the context of marriage* fare better than children raised in all other family structures. For example, children living with their biological parents but in a cohabitation arrangement, suffer the following:

- They are 3 times more likely to experience their parents’ break-up. Cohabitation is an unstable lifestyle. Children need the love of both their biological parents and stability to thrive.
- They are more likely to suffer physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, 4 times as much.
- Those children are more prone to drugs, depression, living in poverty, and dropping out of school [10].

That’s because marriage matters. It indicates commitment and an expectation that the marriage will be permanent.
Cohabitation, especially with a male boyfriend unrelated to the child can be catastrophic to the child’s safety. In one study, a preschool child was 120 times more likely to die at the hands of a stepfather or boyfriend living with the child compared to his biological dad [11]. In 2018, there were 3 million cohabiting couples living with at least one child [12]. Nearly half of US children will spend part of their lives in a cohabitating household before they complete high school. These unions are unstable as they dissolve on average within18 months. Half will marry, but then their unions is more prone to divorce [13].

We will continue exploring this topic next time.

Alliance for Life International

Trusting God with Life
May 2025

Alliance for Life International is a Catholic Christian, non-profit educational and charitable organization committed to assist and encourage States in building cultures of life in which preborn children are welcome and the lives of those who are vulnerable are protected. The lack of essential medical care in Uganda is a reflection of health disparities found in socially disadvantaged countries. We are leading and cooperating with church partners to bring modern medical care in Uganda.

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