

Community Support and Services Committee

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 1 January 2021 2:09 PM
To: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Subject: Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 - Submission #2

31 December 2020

Committee Secretary
Community Support and Services Committee
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Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020

I am vehemently opposed to your proposed Legislation change.

After seeing opposition clearly set out in Submissions during August 2020 as NOT being acceptable by 36 out of 38 Submissions and yet our Government still accepting what AdoptChange wants, I am now submitting a second Submission. Please explain to me how 36 can say "No" -v- 2 "for", and yet those 36 are ignored? Is that how a Democracy works these days?

I am stating categorically that adoption should only EVER be an absolute last resort ... after EVERYTHING else has been exhausted.

I hope the debate is not as rushed as this Inquiry has been. Is this not important enough? Please listen to those most affected the adoptees and their natural mothers. Those closest to the pain, should be closest to the power. The only 'skin' that AdoptChange has in this 'game' is \$\$\$\$.

We cannot get the help we need now let alone creating even more victims. We are outraged. Where are all the implemented recommendations from our own inquiry, other than our anniversary events? How many of us can find or afford fully qualified assistance from adoption trauma counselors? How many Psychologist, Psychiatrists, Therapists and Counsellors are competently trained in adoption trauma?

Researchers have shown that stress, anxiety or depression in pregnant mothers is associated not only with poor obstetric outcomes but also social, emotional and behavioral problems in their children. The care needs to begin while the mother is pregnant. Anxiety in gestating mothers appears to affect the course of brain development in their fetuses, changing neural connectivity in the womb. This could help explain longstanding links between maternal anxiety and neurodevelopmental disorders in their children and suggests an urgent need for interventions to diagnose and decrease maternal stress. Disturbances in connections reported in the years and decades after birth of children born to women with anxiety, suggests a form of altered fetal programming, where brain networks are changed by this elevated anxiety even before babies are born. This emphasises the importance of making sure pregnant women have support for mental health issues, which helps ensure current and future health for both mothers and babies.

Mental health problems remain taboo, especially in the peripartum period where the expectation is that this is a wonderful time in a woman's life. Many pregnant mothers aren't getting the support they need. Changes at the systems level will be necessary to chip away at this critical public health problem and make sure that both mothers and babies thrive in the short and long term.

Then after they are born, you are choosing to force adoption and all that entails onto a baby.

Once a child is adopted, the department only makes checks on that child for 12 months after the adoption. It might be convenient for the Department, but it's not good enough for those children involved.

Open Adoption is not a solution either, as we all know that an open adoption is not enforceable under law. And the people in control of how "open" an adoption is, are those with all the power ... the adoptors.

The child will be legally separated from siblings and other family members, their name is changed, their Birth Certificate (which should be an accurate certificate of their birth) is (apparently legally) changed. The adoptee is treated as an eternal "child" for its complete life, with absolutely no rights even as an adult. As an adult, an adoptee is still required to "ask permission" if they no longer wish to be adopted. They are without a voice their whole life.

Why have Inquiries if no one listens to those directly affected?

I hereby give permission for this Submission to be published publicly and in full.

Regards,
Lesley Mitchell

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