

# International adoption



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Tammy Joiner CFS 157, 6: 00 PM 2 May 2012 International Adoption Offers Advantages and Disadvantages In April of 2010, an American single mother, Torry Hansen, put her foreign-adopted seven-year-old son on a plane back to Moscow—alone. She cited psychological and behavior issues as the reason for such a drastic measure, “ After giving my best to this child, I am sorry to say that for the safety of myfamily, friends, and myself, I no longer wish to parent this child,” read the note accompanying the frightened Artyem Saviliev to the RussianEducationof Ministries (Magee and Netter 2).

Intercountry or international adoption is the process of establishing a permanent parent-child relationship with a child from another country through proper and legal channels (Intercountry Adoption). More Americans are opting for this means of adoption, some due to infertility but largely due to the media and celebrities bringing awareness to the mistreatment of children in foreign lands (Knox and Schacht 326-327). Although adopting abroad can be very rewarding for prospective parents, it can often result in startling challenges. Fulfilling Advantages

There are several benefits to international adoption. Around the world there are numerous orphaned children available to hopeful mothers and fathers. The U. S Department of State, Offices of Children’s Issues—Intercountry Adoption reports in 2011 there were over 9, 300 foreign adoptions in the United States most of which were from China, Ethiopia, Russia, South Korea, and the Ukraine, respectively. With this type of adoption, parents have the option of selecting their preferences when it comes to the age (especially infants), gender, and nationality of the child.

Transcontinental adoptions are usually handled by an adoption agency, the country's adoption committee, or through an in-country visit ("Pros & Cons of..."). Another advantage and possibly the most important is the opportunity to give a disadvantaged child a happy home. Unfortunately, young children often undergo global changes including poverty and war which may make it difficult for them to remain in their home country. For example, China's one-child policy leaves infant girls open to abandonment.

In that nation, parents would suffer harsh penalties for having an additional child; therefore they are inclined to desert any other children born into the household ("International Adoption"). Intercontinental adoption provides another way for children to receive the care, stability, and love that they need to succeed in the form of a permanent family. Indeed, this method of adoption offers an alternative for many potential parents desiring to build their families with children that are in need (Intercountry Adoption).

#### Challenging Disadvantages

In many cases of foreign adoption unexpected and surprising setbacks have occurred. Some of which are expensive fees, exploitation of children, and behavior problems. Adoptive parents spend from \$30,000 to \$40,000 to bring their children home (Hannigan). It has been reported that due to the amount of money involved in these types of adoptions, children have been adopted fraudulently. These children are often stolen at gunpoint or the birthmother has been paid to place her child with an agency. Several adoptive parents have been awarded children that were not orphaned further complicating the process.

Recently, due to like violations, the United States have suspended adoptions in Guatemala (Hannigan). These and other violations are under review from the Hague Adoption Convention—" an international agreement established to protect intercountry adoptions, preventing the abduction, sale, or trafficking of children" (" International Adoption"). Additionally, intercountry adoptive families may face unforeseen and major challenges dealing with behavior, health, and mental issues. Frequently, adoptive parents receive incomplete, or false information regarding the medical and background history of their children.

This often leaves them unprepared to handle difficulties when they surface. In addition, there are virtually no post-adoptive services available, adding to the issue. Therefore, the adoptive parents contemplate returning the children as dependents of the State (Ruggiero). Conclusion Undisputedly, international adoption is one of the most admirable, life-changing, and rewarding experiences one can take on. I applaud those who are motivated by love to open their hearts and homes to children from any land, domestic or foreign.

My grandmother was such a person; she adopted my mother when she was ten months old, after her biological mother abandoned her. Nonetheless, it is also one of the most difficult and weighty decisions one could ever make, as the outcome could have lasting and damaging effects for all involved. I fully support this form of adoption, hopefully, with global enforcement of regulations and policies intercountry adoption can continue; and succeed in protecting the adoptive parents, the birthparents, and most of all the children—like Artyem Saviliev. Works Cited Hannigan, Elizabeth.

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