



**THEM BEFORE US**

Children's Rights Before Adult Desires

# BIOLOGY MATTERS

Defending children's rights to their biological parents grants children safety, biological identity, the perfect gender balance in the home, and maximizes child outcomes.

*"Most scholars now agree that children raised by two biological parents in a stable marriage do better than children in other family forms across a wide range of outcomes."*

-Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University  
and the Brookings Institution

## ACCESS TO BIOLOGICAL PARENTS = ACCESS TO BIOLOGICAL IDENTITY

All humans ask the existential question, "Who am I?" While children in traditional homes have access to their identity with relation to kinship bonds (including bonds with extended family), adoptees and donor-conceived people must formulate their sense of self without it.

- 72% of adoptees want to know why they were given up for adoption
- 65% expressed a desire to meet their birth parent
- 94% expressed the desire to know which birth parent they resemble most - [American Adoption Congress Survey](#)
- 64% of donor-conceived adults agree "My donor is half of who I am."
- 78% agreed being donor-conceived was a significant part of their identity
- 81% often wondered what personality traits, skills, and/or physical similarities they shared with their donor -We Are Donor Conceived Survey

## THE CINDERELLA EFFECT

Whether because of genetics or our primal reproductive instincts, step-parents treat their own biological offspring preferentially. While there certainly are heroic step parents, statistically, unrelated adults are less connected to and protective of kids. [Data reveals](#) that stepmoms provide stepkids less healthcare, lower quality education, and spent fewer dollars on food when compared to biological mothers.

*"[My father's] new wife did not want kids in general and did not want us in particular. In truth, we were both a lot of work by then, me mostly because I had very very bad asthma and my sister because she was acting out. What also became clear is that she did not want us to be close to our father... We were the interlopers in their private, very adult relationship." - Christie*

## CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH UNRELATED ADULTS ARE DISADVANTAGED

[Step-children](#) suffer more adverse family experiences (AFE's), putting them statistically at higher risk of poverty, mentally-ill caregivers, witnessing neighborhood violence, exposure to drug and/or alcohol addiction, and having an incarcerated parent. As adults, [step-children](#) are more likely to suffer poor health outcomes, to abuse illicit drugs, and have a higher risk of suicide.

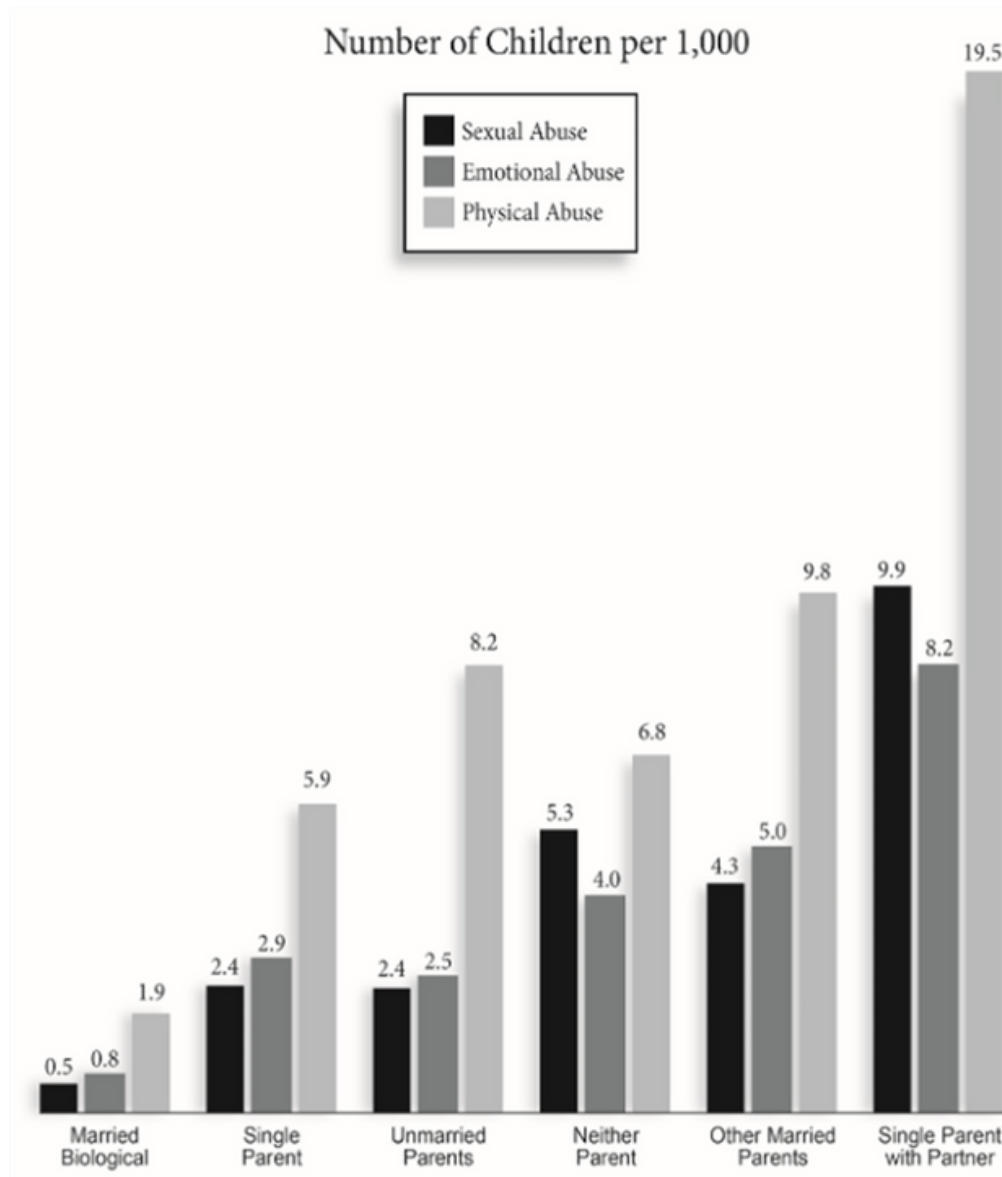
*"My mom remarried a couple of years after my bio dad left. The man she married is still my step father to this day, forty years later. He took on four kids that were not his own and tried the best he knew how to raise us. Unfortunately he was often verbally abusive, ill-tempered and reactionary.... My mom was put in the position of protecting us almost daily from his verbal diatribes. My stepfather and my mother ended up having three children together as well and I saw my stepfather turn into a loving, adoring biological father. He was a different, changed man...toward his own children." - Allison*

## CHILD ABUSE AND DEATH

Research shows that the question isn't whether unrelated adults pose an increased risk to kids, but how much risk they pose.

*"...young children who reside in households with an unrelated adult are at nearly 50-fold risk of suffering a fatal inflicted injury, compared with children residing with two biological parents. The majority of perpetrators were male members of the decedent child's household." - Pediatrics 2005*

If you believe children should be "safe and loved," then you believe biology matters.



Excerpts from chapter 2 of "Them Before Us: Why We Need a Global Children's Movement"



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