

25th March 2008

NBC Entertainment
3000 W. Alameda Ave.
Burbank, CA 91523

To Whom it May Concern,

As an early childhood journalist and professional I urge you to reconsider the broadcast of "The Baby Borrowers" and become more informed of the importance of the mother-infant/child relationship before you launch a program which could cause emotional and psychological injury to the babies being 'borrowed'. A large body of respected research now confirms that the infant / mother bond is crucial to later wellbeing and optimal development. If interrupted, even for just a day or two, important and fragile neural conditioning is altered, and the consequences are long-term. They are long-term because of the immense and rapid development happening within a baby's brain during this time. Literally, early childhood experiences are being hard-wired into the brain. Separation from the mother, even if only for a day or so, will have severe consequences for the child, but those consequences will not be experienced until some time later. This is why society is very slow to make the connection.

The experiences during a baby's first twelve months play a crucial role in a his / her psychological, social and neurological development. We as human beings are neurologically hardwired to connect—we are born expecting to continue the connection we experienced in the womb, not only with our mother but to the whole. As our connections to others increase—through touch, smell, skin to skin contact, rocking, hearing the heartbeat, eye contact through breastfeeding—our brain's neural synapses increase in number, making more connections—the internal mirroring the external. In this way—through this connection—, love, peace, compassion, sympathy are hardwired into the brain. When connection is not forthcoming, our synapses decrease, leading to sadness and fearfulness. In fact, the first few years of our life is the time we either step into our sense of 'belonging' to the whole, or conclude we do not belong. A baby who is blessed with sensitivity, calm, connection, attunement and responsiveness to their early needs is a baby who emerges as a healthy and happy adult. Conversely, a baby who experiences separation from his primary care-giver emerges with life-long challenges.

You may consult <http://www.violence.de>, which documents the harm of mother-infant/child separations. Alternatively Google the work of John Bowlby, Jean Liedloff, Dr. Sears, and Sarah Blaffer Hrdy to name just a few.

In running this series, you not only put the borrowed babies at risk, but you also perpetuate the cultural myth that babies do not need their mothers, that the mother-bond is replaceable, and that babies do not have specific emotional and physical needs that are met only through their intimate care-givers (mother or father).

I do hope you will reconsider how this program is structured.

Regards,

Kali Wendorf
Editor, *Kindred Magazine*