



# Sept-Oct 2020 Newsletter

SEPT - OCT 2020

## NEW NATIONAL SURVEY SHOWS RAMPANT CIRCUMCISION SOLICITATION

Intact America conducted a nationwide random-sample survey earlier this year of mothers who gave birth to sons over the previous four years. The survey dealt with the topic of circumcision solicitation — the "selling" of circumcision by suggestion or pressure, to moms of newborn babies from doctors and nurses.

The survey is the first time that the extent and nature of circumcision solicitation by U.S. medical professionals has been studied. The survey results showed that the truth is worse than the anecdotal information we have heard from parents — especially mothers — about having been pressured or even coerced by medical professionals.

Here are three major highlights from the survey:

### **What portion of mothers surveyed were asked if they planned to circumcise their sons?**

*The survey revealed that 94 percent were asked about circumcision for their sons; only six percent said the topic was not brought up at all.*

### **How many times did healthcare providers ask about circumcision?**

*Of the mothers who were asked, they reported being asked an average of 6.5 times, and some more a dozen times.*

### **Who solicited circumcision from the mother?**

*The survey found that obstetricians were responsible for 36 percent of all forms of solicitations. Other physicians accounted for 25 percent of solicitations, nurses for 27 percent, and midwives twelve percent.*

Importantly, the survey found that mothers who were asked one or more times were 1.73 times more likely to agree to circumcision for their sons than mothers who were never asked; in other words, a single ask by a medical professional had the effect of nearly doubling the "non-solicited" circumcision rate. Multiple asks had no impact on increasing the likelihood of a mother agreeing to circumcision; it is the first one or two solicitations that were the most effective in getting a mother to sign the consent form.

Contrary to the oft-mentioned claim by physicians that they only circumcise babies

because parents demand it, Intact America's survey showed that physicians themselves (and, to a lesser extent, nurses and midwives) are responsible for creating the high circumcision rate in this country, as compared to other parts of the world. Soliciting patients (or, in this case patients' parents) to agree to an unnecessary medical procedure is a clear violation of medical ethics.

Intact America will be using the findings from this groundbreaking survey in a major three-part campaign to: 1) remove circumcision solicitation and the routine presentation of circumcision consent forms from "standard" medical practice and hospital protocols; 2) defund public and private insurance coverage for circumcision; and 3) replace the current promotion of circumcision by medical professionals and hospitals with foreskin-positive educational practices.

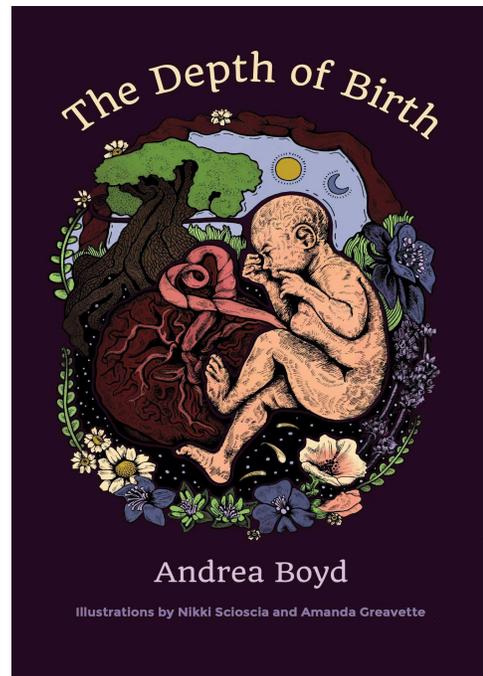
**This is a massive undertaking — and one for which we will need the help of all our supporters.** Please write to us at [Info@IntactAmerica.org](mailto:Info@IntactAmerica.org) with your ideas for making this campaign a success.

## NEWS & UPDATES:

### The Depth of Birth by Andrea Boyd

*"This book gives a breadth of information for parents to be, so they feel prepared for the journey of pregnancy, labor, and birth. But it is also for anyone interested in birth as an integral part of life, and in a society that is conscious and aware. The practices, routine procedures, and negativity that can prohibit optimal birth experiences, are addressed in this book.*

*With a better understanding and mothers and fathers educated and supported, there can be a decrease in unnecessary surgeries, interventions, trauma, and reduced maternal and fetal mortality rates in the USA and around the world. The chapters cover primary concerns for new parents, like questions to ask the caregiver, what to buy for baby, what is the best birthing location for us, etc." [via Amazon]*



The book also contains topics such as: breastfeeding, the umbilical cord, placenta, labor and birth, postpartum care, infant massage, vernix, risks of interventions, and circumcision. [Buy the book >>](#)

**MEL Magazine:** They fell in love. He converted. What about the circumcision? [Read more >>](#)

**The Standard:** US entity raises age for boys cut as it slashes HIV funding. [Read more >>](#)

**News-Medical:** Male circumcision campaigns to reduce HIV transmission in Africa are based on systemic racism. [Read more >>](#)

## INTACT AMERICA'S "VOICES" SERIES

### Lawn Griffiths

I crossed the threshold of awareness that I had been circumcised when I was about 12. Running naked on the farm driveway was a second cousin, who was about 6. His penis was remarkably pointed and tubelike, yet somehow covered. I learned he and his brothers were not circumcised. I largely just left it at that until I was in graduate school at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., in 1971 when I came across the Gore Vidal novel, "Myra Breckinridge." [Read more >>](#)

Interested in telling your story? Send an email to [Voices@IntactAmerica.org](mailto:Voices@IntactAmerica.org), giving us a brief summary of what you would like to write about, and we will get back to you. Each story should be roughly 500 words and you may write it yourself, or with the help of our Voices editor Sally Parker.

You can read our previous Voices submissions [here >>](#)



## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACEs)?

The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study was a long-term health-outcomes research project conducted in the 1990s by Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study measured childhood traumas and exposures to stressors using a 10-item Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) questionnaire and found that these traumas were strongly associated with health and social problems in adulthood, including depression, heart and lung disease, and cancer. Further, the researchers found that ACEs have a dose-response relationship with health problems, meaning that the more ACEs a person experiences, the more likely s/he is to accumulate others in the future.

Last year, Intact America has created a "white paper" calling for child genital cutting (CGC) to be classified as an Adverse Childhood Experience, and be added to the ACE questionnaire administered by psychologists and social workers seeking to assess their clients' source(s) of trauma and prevent or ameliorate negative consequences. The paper, co-authored by IA executive director Georganne Chapin and strategic advisor Dan Bollinger, presents compelling evidence that child genital cutting (CGC) — in its various forms performed on males, females, and intersex children — is a

known early trauma with lifelong repercussions, and thus qualifies as an Adverse Childhood Experience.

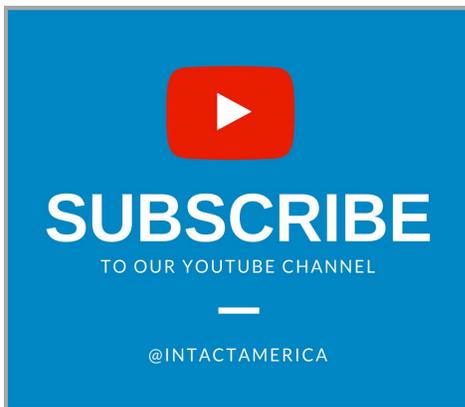
While the paper focuses primarily on the most common form of CGC in the United States, male circumcision, the authors call for the official ACE inventory to be modified to include a gender-neutral question about whether the person taking the questionnaire experienced any form of genital cutting as a child. The authors address the following questions:

- **Does male child genital cutting (MCGC) meet the criteria for an Adverse Childhood Experience?**
- **Should MCGC be added to the ACE questionnaire?**
- **What are the implications of adding CGC to the questionnaire?**

For more information about Intact America's ACEs project, [see here](#). In addition to the white paper, Intact America has established a [website](#) with links to a mobile app (designed for both iPhone and Android) that includes the question about child genital cutting, which individuals can take to obtain their ACE scores.

**P.S. If you are male and overcame having an ACE score of 5 or more but lived a good life, please consider telling your story for this [groundbreaking book project](#) by Charles Sultzman**

## INTACT AMERICA IS ON YOUTUBE!



Every week, our YouTube curator and former Intactivist of the Month, [Shelton Walden](#) uploads both new and vintage clips related to genital cutting in the United States and beyond.

Feel free to browse our videos and audio files, and share them with friends. [Subscribe today!](#)

## ADD INTACT AMERICA AS YOUR AMAZONSMILE CHARITY

Do you shop frequently on Amazon.com? Are you an Amazon Prime subscriber? If so, be sure to add Intact America (registered under Hudson Center for Health Equity and Quality) as your [AmazonSmile charity](#).

### What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that

amazon

smile

lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. However, the difference is that when customers shop on [AmazonSmile](#), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organizations selected by customers.

Remember, every purchase helps to support Intact America's efforts to protect boys and the men they'll become. [Sign up for AmazonSmile today](#) and designate Intact America (Hudson Center for Health Equity and Quality) as your charitable organization!

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