

I am a child
By Allison Sampson, LCSW, CSOTP

I am a child ... I remember hearing the voices of my mother and father when I was still deep inside the womb. Sometimes they were loud and full of hate... But sometimes they were soft and full of dreams... I often wondered what my life would become within these sounds of the world ...

And so I was born. There were still moments of dreams and moments of softness ... and yet now all I can remember is what was loud

The loud voices of my father ... and then the absence of his voice at all ... the loud voice of my mother ... and the tears that were soon to follow... the loud crashing sound as I felt their hands hit my skin ... the sight of my mother in the corner of the kitchen ... I was too small to protect her

I remember the loud sounds of the ambulance and the neighbor's voices. The loud sounds of the police car as they drove me to a large building where people helped kids "like me" ... the sounds of the people their laughing, and then their silence as I came in.....

With the sounds come pictures ... pictures of my life ... Pictures of my first foster family and my second Pictures of my father behind bars and my mother in the hospital ... pictures of my brothers and sisters who no longer live with me They ask me where my picture of family ... is but that seems to be the one picture I am missing ... because I am not really sure what family is and the only family I ever loved is gone ...

And now back come in the sounds Sounds of loud voices and children crying ... sounds of rage and pain and hurt ... sounds that are so common now and familiar ... they are perhaps the only thing I can depend on Only now they are my sounds ... my voice ... my actions

And so I sit before you now ... and you are asking me what path my life took ... what choices did I make Where is my responsibility ... my empathy Why did so many others choose the right path ... and why am I here ... do I realize what I have done

And I say ... I am a child ... there were many paths I could have taken ... why am I here ... Will you help me without me asking .. will you give me new sounds .. will you change my picture of myself ... others .. and the world ...will you be able to see me past all I have done

Will you ?