



China has a thriving domestic black market in children, mostly involving buyers who want them as slave labour. Most of the children are bought or kidnapped by gangs who force them into pick-pocketing and other non-violent crime in China's eastern cities. The children might also end up in a prostitution network or illegal adoption. According to a study by the University of Iowa, in November 2005, Chinese authorities uncovered a baby trafficking ring involving six orphanages and babies primarily from the southern part of the country. It is unclear how the children were obtained, but defendants claim the babies were abandoned or kidnapped.

In 2011, Chinese authorities arrested 370 persons and saved 89 children from being sold. Because of the “one child policy”, some Chinese parents abandoned their second child. Indeed, a family that has more than one child is fined and loses a lot of social benefits. Unfortunately, abandonment is a common practice. In the worst cases parents sell their second child to local officials who in turn, sell them to orphanages.

Another problem is kidnapping. Organisations estimate that about 60,000 children between the ages of 2 to 4 are kidnapped every year, often sold to orphanages and end up in American or European families. In 2006, 10,000 children were adopted from China, with 7,000 going to the United States. Adoptive parents usually pay around \$15,000 to \$20,000 to adopt a child. The big challenge for organisations is to know if adopted children were kidnapped or not. For some parents, it raised a nightmarish question: What if my child had been taken forcibly from their parents?

Though Chinese Government believes that birth control limits are essential for China to control an increasing population that will soar over the next 20 years, probably peaking at around 1.5 billion, it is aware of the situation and is ready to tighten adoption rules to combat child trafficking. Therefore, only orphanages will be able to offer abandoned infants and children for adoption, and adults who adopt without official registration will not be recognized as legal guardians. According to Ji Gang, the director of the domestic adoption department of the China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption, forcing people to go through official adoption channels will reduce the demand for abducted children.