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Author offers inspiring words for African-American moms

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

It would have been easy for Kim Crouch to simply raise her two boys, 7-year-old Julius and 4-year-old Justin, and give them a charmed life in Canton. But her heart told her otherwise.

Crouch, who is a corporate attorney by day, spent two months of nights and weekends laboring over her book, *Mother to Son: Words of wisdom, inspiration and hope for today's young African-American men*.

"This book was to really honestly tell my kids what I think they need to know to be successful men," Crouch said, but she also wrote it for mothers everywhere. "I wrote it for my sons, but I also know that it's up to mothers to take back our communities. So I wrote it for them, too. These are the things I think they need to tell their sons."



The book is written like a series of letters, similar to the letters Crouch writes to her young sons every year on their birthdays. Each letter comes with a lesson, such as Lesson One: Know your history - you come from a line of kings, and Lesson Five: Character and integrity matter.

Mother to Son is not the first book Crouch has written, even if it is the first to make it off a folder in her hard drive and to the presses at i-Universe print-on-demand service.

She's passionate about the book because now more than ever, mothers need support in raising their children. The majority of children are raised by women who are at some point single mothers, she said, and the impact on the African-American community - manifesting in poverty, substance abuse



Canton attorney Kim Crouch's book, *Mother to Son: Words of wisdom, inspiration and hope for today's young African-American men*, is about her two sons, Julius and Justin.

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and lawlessness and despair - is alarming, according to Crouch.

"The studies are sobering, when you look at the statistics on the plight of black men," she said.

Though her children are growing up in a two-parent household in the suburbs, most of Crouch's family is still in St. Louis, where poverty is common and college-bound kids are not.

"It's a problem for all of us if we're raising children who are feeling like they are left behind," Crouch said. "It's a battle to overcome that that kind of environment and society says in its actions, 'We don't care.'"

Because it often falls entirely on a mother's shoulders to ensure a child's success, women often have unrealistic expectations of themselves, Crouch said, and those expectations are perpetuated when mothers don't talk honestly with each other about the challenges of raising children, particularly their sons.

"We all think we have to be a supermom, but none of us can. We wind up thinking we fail because we don't talk about issues," Crouch said. "The important thing is to try. The important thing is that your kids know you're in their corner."

For more information about Crouch and her book, visit the Web site www.kimcrouch.com.

cmarsall@hometownlife.com | (734) 459-2700

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