



Adoption
Associates



THINKING OF ADOPTION?

Adoption Gives Children And Birthmothers A Fresh Start

AN INFORMED, LOVING DECISION

Right now, you are experiencing an intensely stressful situation in your life that forces you to ask a lot of questions. What should I do with my baby? Could I take care of a newborn 24/7? Can I provide everything my child will need for a happy, healthy life?

The answers to these questions will be influenced by your friends, your family, and the media, but the fact that this packet is in your hands shows that you are already interested in making an informed, loving decision for your child.

At Adoption Associates, Inc. we help women plan adoption. Although it can be difficult at times, birth moms choose adoption because they find it the best way to show love for their baby, by providing them with a family who offers love, stability and security. At the same time, we help birth moms move forward with their lives, knowing they made the best decision possible.

ADOPTION GIVES CHILDREN AND BIRTH MOTHERS A FRESH START.

Please review the materials enclosed, understanding that you are under no obligation. If you would like to take the next step, we'd like to meet with you and help you begin the adoption planning process.

Thank you for showing your love for your child by considering adoption.

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WHY CHOOSE ADOPTION ASSOCIATES?

- Michigan's leading private adoption agency
- financial assistance for medical, living and other pregnancy-related expenses
- many approved, waiting families to choose from
- legal arrangements handled for you, no attorney is necessary
- 24-hour telephone availability
- experienced casework staff
- you choose level of openness, to meet the family, to receive pictures and letters
- licensed and working statewide in Michigan, we'll come to you!

Questions ? Contact a pregnancy caseworker at one of the numbers listed below.



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AN EASY GUIDE TO MAKING AN ADOPTION PLAN



1. **Contact us.**

If you asked for the information in this packet, you already got in touch. Move on to step #2.

2. **Check out the packet.**

Look through the information in this folder to discover the process of adoption. Then talk to one of our pregnancy caseworkers to decide if adoption is best for you and your baby.

3. **Make your adoption plan.**

- Discuss your needs and desires with a caseworker or case aide; she will know exactly how to help you and to make sure you feel comfortable with your decision.
- Fill out paperwork to keep the process going.
- Select an adoptive family
- Decide on how much contact you would like with the couple you selected.
- Speak to other birth mothers through the agency who have already gone through the process.
- Prepare for giving birth by making a simple hospital plan; who will be in the delivery room, do you want time alone with the baby, etc.

4. **Place your baby with the family you selected.**

- Baby often goes to adoptive home from the hospital.
- Go to court to sign the legal documents placing the baby for adoption.

5. **Use post adoption services.**

- Get information from AAI about what you can expect to feel after the adoption.
- Meet with caseworker for counseling if needed.
- Receive regular updates about the child through pictures and letters.
- If you'd like him/her to have the opportunity to contact you when they're grown, keep your address current with the agency.



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ONCE YOU DECIDE THAT ADOPTION IS THE BEST PLAN FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY, YOU WILL WANT TO LEARN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT YOUR CHOICES AND WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP YOU WANT WITH THE ADOPTIVE FAMILY.

OPENNESS IN ADOPTION

There is no single, easily defined idea of an open adoption. It typically includes the opportunity for birth and adoptive families to meet and make a plan for ongoing contact throughout the child's life.

Most common is a semi-open adoption, which involves meeting in person, possible continued contact during pregnancy, and an agreement to exchange pictures and letters. This communication is usually facilitated by the agency. There can also be non-identifying emails exchanged or visits with the family hosted by the caseworker.

Birth parents can also choose a more fully open adoption that includes the exchange of identifying information and visits. In a fully open adoption the birth family and adoptive family get to know one another, build a trusting relationship, and schedule visits. Families communicate directly and plan in-person visits between the families as the child grows up.

Advantages For The Child:

- more access to information about the birth family, including health and background information
- the adoptive family is better able to answer child's questions about their adoption and history
- the opportunity to have ongoing contact with birth parents provides adopted children with a greater sense of identity and self esteem, as well as an understanding of their adoption story
- with direct contact, a child does not have to wonder about their birth parents but knows true and accurate information about them

Advantages For Birth Parents:

- by choosing and meeting the adoptive parents, there is a greater sense of security for the birth parents in making their adoption plan
- receiving pictures and letters provides reassurance to the birth parents and confidence that the child is being well cared for by the adoptive family
- choosing the adoptive family is empowering to birth parents in their adoption process
- by seeing the child grow and develop, as well as the opportunities the adoptive family is able to provide, birth parents are better able to deal with the loss and grief they may feel and experience less negative feelings or guilt

Advantages For The Adoptive Family:

- meeting birth parents helps the adoptive family learn about them and their adoption decision and provides the family with information to share with the child about their adoption story
- greater understanding and knowledge of health and background information can be obtained
- building a relationship based on a mutual desire for the best interest of the child helps everyone feel more secure in the plan for adoption

ALL LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR YOU. AFTER THE BABY IS BORN, THERE IS A SHORT COURT HEARING WHERE YOU WILL SIGN A RELEASE OF PARENTAL RIGHTS. PAPERWORK IS THEN FILED, MAKING THE CHILD A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE ADOPTIVE FAMILY.

LEGAL PROCESS

Birth fathers may be involved in the adoption plan and participate in the legal process. Birth fathers who support adoption understand that being a parent means ensuring all of his child's emotional, social, physical and financial needs are met. When neither birth parent is able to meet these needs, an adoption plan can assure you that these needs will be met.



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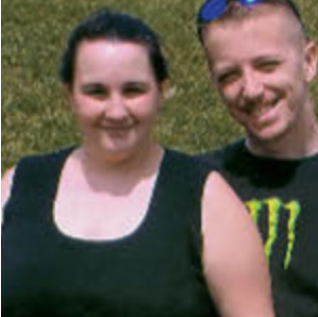
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ASK A BIRTH MOM A QUESTION



BRANDI & CORY // MARRIED // STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY

734.507.0000

My name is Brandi, and my husband and I have been through the adoption process and would be happy to talk to you. I know that planning adoption can seem very scary, but it is a great way to give your child the very best in life, and there is a lot of support available to help you through the process. Choosing and meeting the adoptive family was a huge positive, and we are happy that we were able to make the family's dreams come true through adoption. Best wishes to you!



AMANDA

mandeejoy@yahoo.com

Hi, my name is Amanda. I began working with AAI when I was 5 months along. I had 2 young children and was no longer involved with the baby's birth father. I was struggling financially and decided that adoption would be the best plan for the baby. I chose an adoptive family in September of 2008 and gave birth to my daughter, Maisie, in October. I became very close to the adoptive family and was excited to make their dream come true. I chose to have an open adoption and continue to see them and Maisie. There have been some hard times, but overall I know that I made the right decision and am very happy that Maisie has such a wonderful life.



MICHELLE

865.333.1242

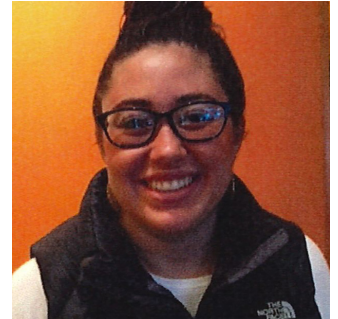
Hi, my name is Michelle. I made an adoption plan for my baby girl in 2010 when I was 24 years old. At the time I did not have a place of my own to live, or a job. I knew that an adoptive family could give my baby the best possible life and future. I chose and met the family and have a great relationship with them. They send me letters and pictures and are open to having visits if I want them. Although it was a very difficult decision, I feel good that I was able to give my daughter such a great life.

ASK A BIRTH MOM A QUESTION

HALLE

halle.casebolt@gmail.com 248.974.1180

My name is Halle. I was 19 when I found out I was pregnant with my little boy. I was terrified. I had no support from my family or my son's father. I knew as soon as I found out that I was pregnant I couldn't and was not ready to take care of my child as a single mother. I wanted to be able to do so bad, but my son would have a very hard life, one that he didn't deserve and I wanted him to have so much better, so I chose adoption. It was the best decision I could have made. I still get to have a very close relationship with my son and be a part of his life and watch him grow up, and I also gained a second family. I am super close and open with the adoptive parents and their other children. Adoption is very painful, but it is also very beautiful and the hard choice that I made was worth it. My son now has an amazing life filled with so much love and opportunity because of me and the amazing people I chose to raise him.



LINDSAY // 24 YEARS OLD // SINGLE WITH A GOOD JOB // OPEN ADOPTION

l.rambo1987@gmail.com 248-390-5043

My name is Lindsay. I made the decision to plan adoption for my six month old son when I was 24. I had a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a good job, but I was a single parent with almost no support from family and friends. I want what every parent wants for their child: for him to have opportunities, education, and present, loving parents in his life. I want my son to have a better life than I did. Placing him for adoption was the hardest thing I ever experienced. It has also been the best decision of my life. My son has a life now. I have a life now. I am a birth mother who has an open relationship with my son's adoptive parents. I am pursuing my dreams today. I am going back to school for my master's degree and have started a non-profit organization. The best thing I have today is a peace and serenity like I have never known before. I brought a child into this world, and put him in the hands of the parents he was meant to be with. It doesn't matter what other people say to me or what they think of me... I'm happy with me and my choices. My son is beautiful, happy, thriving, and so incredibly loved. What more could a mother ask for?



KIMBERLY

mylilkiki2016@gmail.com

I have been involved with Adoption Associates for several years, and they have been wonderful to me. They are organized and kind. My caseworker has been great. She is very supportive and caring. If I were ever in a situation where I needed to make an adoption plan again I would definitely use them. I highly recommend them to anyone considering adoption. Planning adoption can of course be difficult emotionally, and I would be happy to talk to anyone who is thinking about it. Feel free to email me if you have any questions or need to talk.



ADOPTION STORY: GEANETTA, BIRTH MOM

My decision to plan adoption for my baby was the most difficult decision of my life. Already having three children at home and unexpectedly becoming a single parent, I knew that I would not be able to support a fourth child. I had not only lost my significant other, but I was also laid off from my job of five years. My job was my main source of income, and I had no unemployment benefits.

My pregnancy was a total surprise, and abortion would never be an option for me. I knew the birth father was not going to be there to help support myself or the baby. This all caused an extreme amount of stress for me.

My son was blessed with a wonderful adoptive family. I had requested that they be a stable two-parent Christian family and that is exactly what he received. He also has an older brother and sister to love and who definitely love him. I feel blessed beyond all measures. Although it was a difficult decision, it was one of the best choices I have ever made in my life. I am confident that my son will have a bright and loving future.



ADOPTION STORY: BROOK, BIRTH MOM

At 17, Brook felt desperate to be in a serious relationship. When she became pregnant, she knew she needed to leave the relationship with the birth father, because she realized her unborn baby would need a more safe and stable environment.

After considering her options, Brook felt adoption was the best thing she could do for her unborn daughter. "Miah has everything now that I couldn't give her, a two parent home and financial security," Brook says. "I've had time to grow and mature, and now I'm married and will soon be the kind of mom I always wanted to be."

Her advice: "Adoption is a loving opportunity you give your child as you receive pictures and letters and watch them grow into a wonderful person. At the same time, you have an opportunity to get your life on track."

“I’VE HAD TIME TO GROW AND MATURE, AND NOW I’M MARRIED AND WILL SOON BE THE KIND OF MOM I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE.”



ADOPTION STORY: EMILY, BIRTH MOM

“ I HAD A STRAINED RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CHILD'S BIRTH FATHER, AND HE WAS STRUGGLING TO PROVIDE FOR HIS TWO OTHER YOUNG CHILDREN ALREADY. I WANTED MY CHILD TO HAVE MORE. ”



When I found out I was pregnant, I was twenty years old, living at home, and unemployed. An unplanned pregnancy was the last thing that I ever thought would happen to me, and I must have taken six pregnancy tests to be sure. I didn't tell my parents right away because I knew that they would be upset with me, and I thought it would make the conversation easier if I had a plan in mind first.

Fortunately, I had a good friend who released two children for adoption through Adoption Associates, Inc. some time ago. I told her about my situation, and she encouraged me in choosing adoption for my child. I soon met with Adoption Associates, Inc. and another agency in town. After meeting with Adoption Associates, Inc. I was convinced that they were the agency for me. They greeted me warmly, told me what my options were, and didn't pressure me into making a decision. Unlike the other agency, they didn't ask me a lot of questions or make me sign my name to anything. They accepted my situation- no questions asked- and didn't judge me.

With my current life circumstances, I knew that adoption was the best choice for my baby. I had a strained relationship with my child's birth father, and he was struggling to provide for his two other young children already. I wanted my child to have more.

I chose to plan adoption, and after I had made this decision, I told my parents. My mom had guessed that I was pregnant before my announcement, so she wasn't very surprised. I was most terrified about my dad's reaction, and I was worried he would be really disappointed in me. He was hurt, but once he knew that I was pregnant, he was also really supportive.

After reviewing agency profiles, I found the perfect parents for my child in the adoptive family I chose for him. I met them for the first time when I was six months pregnant, and I was able to get to know them during the rest of my pregnancy.

When I delivered my baby, my whole family came up to the hospital to support me, and the adoptive family spent a day with me and the baby. At the end of the hospital stay, I said good-bye to my baby. Leaving was the hardest part of my hospital stay, but it wasn't more than I could handle.

I still stay in touch with the adoptive family through pictures and letters, and I can see how happy my baby is with his parents and his big brother. Today, I am confident that adoption was the right choice. I plan to go back to school and earn a degree in social work so that, one day, I can help others as they have helped me.

ADOPTION STORY: ASHLEY, BIRTH MOM

I look at people around me and I see girls who are my age and have one or two kids. A lot of them show off their kids like “look at me,” but the truth is that they aren’t really parenting. Their mom is taking care of the kids because they don’t have a job or aren’t mature enough to raise kids. There are some people in my school who criticize my decision to plan adoption, but that just fuels me even more. I knew that I didn’t have the ability to take care of my kids and I know I did the right thing and the best thing because they won’t have to struggle and I gave them a good life.

If I were to give advice to another girl facing an unplanned pregnancy, I would say don’t get an abortion because you will be taking that child’s chance at life away. But if you want to parent, you have to be sure that you can have all the necessities to be able to take care of the child. Adoption is a good choice because you can know that your baby is happy and healthy and taken care of. The best part is that you have the option to receive pictures and letters that allow you to see them growing up while you’re still doing the growing up that you need to do. You need to be real and choose what is best for the baby-not what you want. Even though it’s a hard thing, you will find support in places you don’t expect. I still read the “Love Stories” book all the time and it helps to know that those people made this good decision and so did I. Your life is not gonna end when you plan adoption. It’s just gonna change. And that’s ok. I have no regrets. I made the best choice for my kids and I know that.

It was hard, but now I am doing really good! I am on the honor roll, in National Honor Society, and I do service in my community to help other people. When I graduate, I hope to go to college to be a registered nurse and help cancer patients like the nurses who helped my mom when she had cancer. If that doesn’t work out, then I want to either be in the Navy like my dad or in the Air Force like my grandpa.

“THE BEST PART IS THAT YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO RECEIVE PICTURES AND LETTERS THAT ALLOW YOU TO SEE THEM GROWING UP WHILE YOU’RE STILL DOING THE GROWING UP THAT YOU NEED TO DO.”



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ADOPTION STORY: SEAN & SUSAN, BIRTH PARENTS

We chose adoption because we felt it was the best thing for our child. It was the hardest thing we have ever done, but we knew it was the right thing for the baby. When I was pregnant, we didn't have stable housing and I wasn't working. We knew that the baby needed more than we could give him. Almost anyone can have a baby, but not everyone is prepared to provide everything that a child needs.

We feel that the family we chose was best for our son. They provided him with everything we couldn't and will love him as much as we do. We chose a family who couldn't get pregnant so that they could experience the joy and excitement of parenting. At first we didn't think we wanted to meet the family, but as we talked with our caseworker during the pregnancy, we became more open to the idea. We realized that by meeting the family and getting pictures and letters, it would allow our son to feel good about his adoption and give him information about us. We hope that in the future our lives will become more stable and look forward to whatever contact we may have.



“WE KNEW THAT THE BABY NEEDED MORE THAN WE COULD GIVE HIM. ALMOST ANYONE CAN HAVE A BABY, BUT NOT EVERYONE IS PREPARED TO PROVIDE EVERYTHING THAT A CHILD NEEDS.”



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ADOPTION STORY: JESSICA, BIRTH MOM

When I was 16, I was hanging out with the wrong crowd, and I started to make bad choices. Before long, I found out I was pregnant. I had already broke up with the father of the baby, and I knew I didn't want to get back with him just because I was pregnant.

The truth is, I didn't know what to do or think, so my mom talked to me about adoption. I wasn't listening at first, because I didn't want to "give away" my child. After about a month, my mom talked me into going to a support group meeting at Adoption Associates. I didn't want to go, because I didn't want the other girls to judge me. But when mom dropped me off, I discovered that they didn't judge me or assume I was going to choose adoption. I loved the group.

A few weeks went by, and I got some adoptive family profiles from the agency. But inside, I didn't want to look through them. My head was telling me to parent: "It won't be that hard. You can do it. You made the mistake; now you have to live with it." But my heart was fighting back and telling me that adoption was the best for my child and me.

My heart was right. I wanted a two-parent home for my child and a dependable income, I didn't want my mom to be raising my child. So I chose a couple from the profiles and met them. They were exactly how I thought that they would be. Nice and fun, and just as nervous as I was to meet them. I knew I was doing the right thing.

I delivered a beautiful little girl two weeks early. The adoptive couple waited in the hall while I was in delivery, and they and my family were helping me and supporting me with anything they could do. I stayed in the hospital for one night, and then said my goodbyes to my child. It turned out to be the hardest thing I will ever have to do, but I know that she will grow up knowing that I made the best decision for her and that I love her very much. I do regret the things I have done in the past, but I will never regret her or my decision to give her a loving home.

“I DO REGRET THE THINGS I HAVE DONE IN THE PAST, BUT I WILL NEVER REGRET HER OR MY DECISION TO GIVE HER A LOVING HOME.”



YOU JUST FOUND OUT YOU ARE GOING TO BE A FATHER AND WEREN'T PLANNING ON IT?

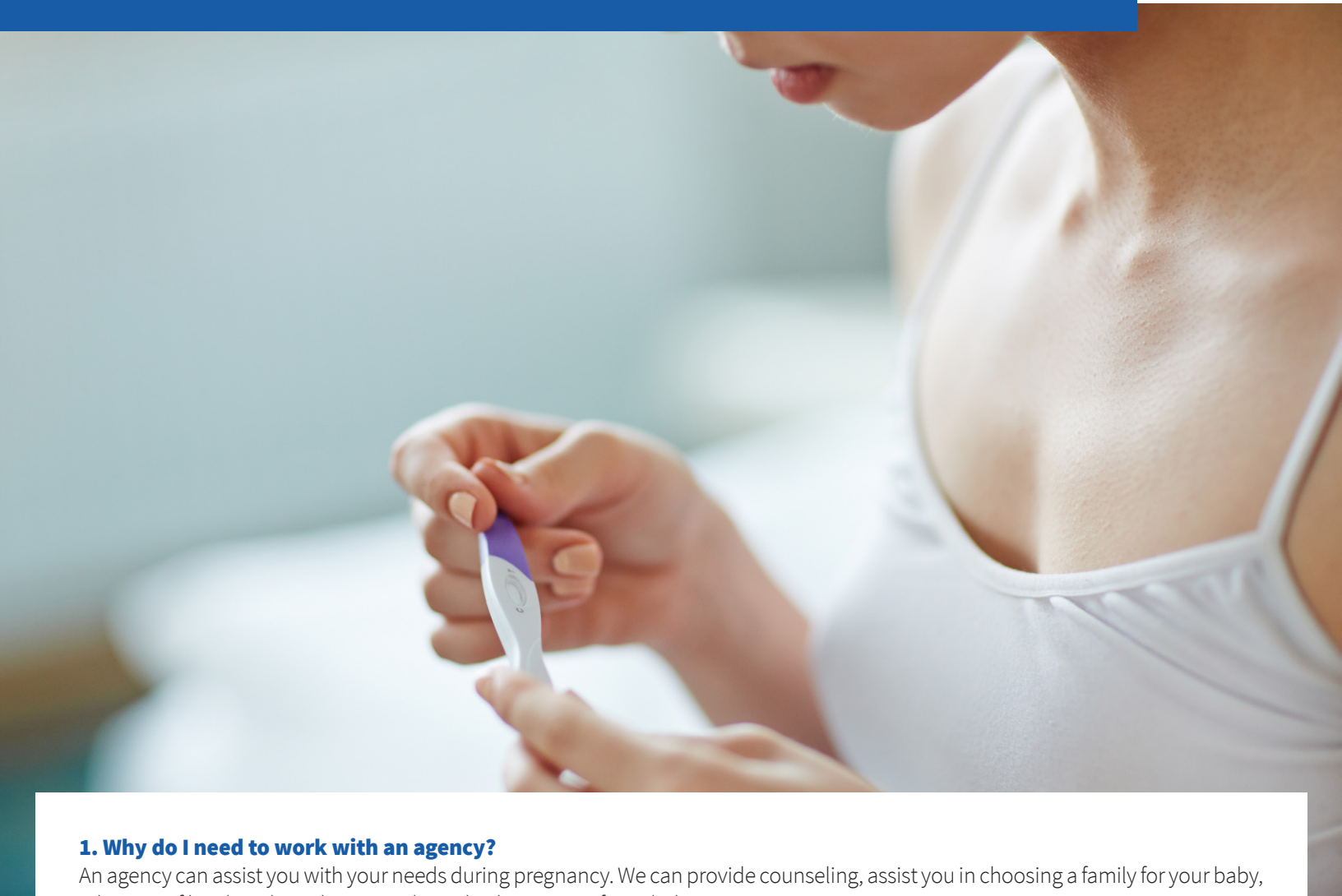
FOR BIRTH FATHERS

We know you might be overwhelmed, but you can educate yourself about the choices you and the child's mother have by reading through our materials or speaking with one of our caseworkers.

We are here to help you learn about adoption as you try to decide what is best for your baby. We have years of experience helping birth parents find the best solution for their unplanned pregnancies. We will provide education, counseling, support, and legal services throughout the pregnancy.

- You may choose to be involved in the adoption plan and participate in the entire process with the birth mother, including selecting the adoptive parents.
- Some adoptions include meeting the adoptive family and receiving letters and pictures over the years.
- All legal arrangements are handled by the agency. After the baby is born, birth parents voluntarily release their parental rights in court.
- Some reasons birth parents choose adoption are because they:
 - realize they lack the stability or life experience to be parents at this time in their lives
 - have other children and do not have resources to raise another child
 - are opposed to abortion
- Supporting an adoption plan and making sure your child is well cared for relieves you from future legal and financial responsibility.
- It is extremely beneficial for a child who is adopted to feel like he or she knows a bit about their birth parents. Providing health and background information to the adoptive family will be priceless for the child as he or she grows and wants to learn more about their adoption story.
- Children raised in adoptive homes:
 - do well in school and are likely to attend college
 - have strong feelings of security in their family and have high self-esteem
 - do well economically over their life times
- If you are the legal father, married to the birth mother or on the birth certificate, you must release your parental rights. If you are not the legal father you can choose to sign a document during the pregnancy showing that you support the adoption plan. If you are not in agreement with the adoption plan, you will be notified of a hearing. The judge will then make a determination as to what is in the best interest of the baby.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM BIRTH MOTHERS



1. Why do I need to work with an agency?

An agency can assist you with your needs during pregnancy. We can provide counseling, assist you in choosing a family for your baby, take care of legal work, and assist with medical expenses if needed.

2. Can I choose a family for my baby?

Yes! You can choose the family for your baby by selecting from parents screened by Adoption Associates, Inc.

3. How can I be sure that my child will not be abused or neglected?

Adoptive families approved by Adoption Associates, Inc. must meet the standards of being a stable family, having excellent personal references, employment verification, health and medical forms, and approved clearances by the State Police and Michigan Protective Services. If your adoption includes the exchange of photos and letters, you will see for yourself how well cared for and loved your child is.

4. How soon after birth will my baby go to the adoptive parents I choose?

This will depend on your choice, the legal aspects of the adoption and the cooperation of the birth father. Many birth mothers want their baby placed with the family by the time they leave the hospital. The agency can also provide temporary host family care for a week or so.

5. How do I know my baby will be well cared for if I choose host family care?

Adoption Associates, Inc. has several selected families who provide excellent pre-adoptive host family care. These families have been working with us for a long time and are loving, caring homes. We can share photos and information about them if you are interested.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM BIRTH MOTHERS

6. Will I be able to see my baby in the hospital?

Yes. Your caseworker will work with you to make a well thought-out hospital plan. You will have the opportunity to decide ahead of time about the amount of contact you would like with your baby.

7. What kind of contact can I have with my baby after the adoption?

In most cases, you can choose an adoption that allows for ongoing updates through letters and photos arranged through the agency, for a specified period of time. Adoptive families respect your need to know that your child is well cared for.

8. Is adoption permanent?

Yes. After you go to court and sign a release of parental rights, the child legally becomes a permanent member of the adoptive family.

9. Does the birth father have any rights?

The birth father's rights must also be considered when planning adoption. Adoption Associates, Inc. will work with the court to determine if his rights can be terminated if he disagrees on adoption, or if you no longer have a relationship with him.

10. What if I can't locate the birth father?

You will need to provide Adoption Associates, Inc. with any information that you have regarding the birth father, and we will attempt to locate him.

11. What kind of information will my child know about me?

We encourage you to pass on medical information and social history to your child. You may send photos and letters to the family through the agency or as arranged. You may want to write a letter to your child sharing special information about yourself or send a gift that will tell your child in the future that your decision for adoption was based on love and wanting the best for their future.

12. What kind of information will my child receive about his or her birth father?

This will depend on the birth father's cooperation with you and Adoption Associates, Inc. Some birth fathers will give their full medical and social history, recognizing how important it is for the child. At other times, only the information you provide will be passed on.

13. Can my child find me in the future?

According to current Michigan law, at the time a child turns 18, if he or she decides to search for their birth parents, they will have access to identifying information about you if you have not filed a form to deny information through the Central Registry in Lansing, Michigan. If future contact is acceptable to you, all you need to do is keep your address current with the Central Registry or agency.

14. Can you help with medical costs?

Many young women are eligible for medical insurance or public assistance, and we can assist you in determining your eligibility. If you are not covered by medicaid, Adoption Associates, Inc. can help with medical expenses.

15. Do I need an attorney or do I have to pay the agency fees for adoption?

You do not need an attorney and there are no costs to you. Adoption Associates, Inc. will handle all legal details on your behalf.

16. Is adoption a selfish decision?

Adoption is a loving, sacrificial decision focusing entirely on the best interest of the child. Adoptive parents are prepared in every way to provide for your child, and it could actually be the most caring, selfless decision you ever make.

How I Feel About Being Adopted

PERSPECTIVES ON ADOPTION THROUGH THE YEARS



Lea • Age 19 I have always known I was adopted since the first day I can remember. I would lie in my mom's arms and she would tell me the story of how she couldn't have a baby from her tummy and how at first glance of my pictures, she knew I was to be her baby forever and ever. I would cuddle closer to her and she would tell me how much my birthmother and father must have loved me. She would tell how hard it was for them, and how grateful she was that they were willing to make such a painful decision. She knew that they had loved me so much. I am adopted. I have two sets of parents, both adoptive and birth. Both loved and sacrificed for me so that I could one day love who I am. Not a day goes by that I'm not thankful for both of them. God blessed me with the love and dreams of two mothers and two fathers, all of which I carry with me each day of my life.

Kevin My name is Kevin and I am a child that has been adopted, and also a parent of adopted children. Needless to say adoption has been a big part of my life. At the time that I was adopted it was a lot different, there was no openness, and my parents did not know who my birth mother was. I grew up most of my life not knowing who my birth parents were. I remember as a teenager thinking that if I could ever meet my birth parents I would just simply say "Thank you." There are other options like abortion that they could have chose. Instead they chose to give me life, and I grew up with a great family. Later on in my life I was able to meet my birth mother and was able to tell her those exact words, and she was so happy to see that things turned out so good.

Hannah • Age 7 My birthmother was my favorite birth mom and I love her very much, but I feel happy that I have another mom and dad.

Jamie • Age 11 I don't usually think about being adopted much during the year because I have so much stuff to worry about—math homework, spelling tests, and seeing if my friends can come over.

Kayla • Age 11 My birth mom is nice. I get to go to the movies with her, and I see her on holidays and on my birthday.

Bill • Age 25 I do think about my birthmother. Every year, I look up at the stars and hope—I wish, that she is looking up at the same moment. If I could say anything to her, it would be "thank you."

Max • Age 17 Having my adoptive family and birth family has helped me stay open-minded. I grew up in a different kind of family, but for me it's normal...just like for my best friend who was born to his family—that's normal for him. And I've seen all kinds of families—but for me, this is just life, and its normal."

"Openness in adoption is a blessing. The relationship we have with our children's birth mothers is healing for them, and gives our children a sense of the deep love their birth mothers had for them, by making such a selfless decision to make a better life for their children."



QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE DECIDING TO BECOME A SINGLE PARENT

An unplanned pregnancy can make your whole world seem out of control -- so many unanswered questions, so many emotions to deal with. Oftentimes, the stress that birth mothers are facing can be greatly reduced by simply receiving more complete information about their choices and the future that an adoption plan can offer.

This list was created to give you the opportunity to think deeply about your options. We have selected these questions from the hundreds that come to us from birth mothers who are trying to make a very difficult decision. These are also the questions that have led so many birth mothers to choose an adoption plan for their baby. We hope that by seriously looking at your answers, you can find some resolution and understanding of what an awesome, loving choice adoption truly can be.

1. **Can I count on friends and/or family for support?**
2. **Is the neighborhood I live in now the place where I would want to raise a child?**
3. **Never ending love—do I have it to give?**
4. **When my child is misbehaving, how will I discipline him or her?**
5. **How do I feel about being responsible for kids 24/7?**
6. **How do I handle my anger? Would I take it out on my child?**
7. **Do I have the patience that a child requires?**
8. **Within the first three months I will get very little sleep. How would that affect me?**
9. **What are my hopes and dreams for myself?**
10. **What are things I would have to give up because I now have a child?**
11. **Am I organized enough to schedule and plan for myself and my child?**
12. **Am I expecting my child to make my life happy and complete?**
13. **Will I allow my child to affect my personal growth and development?**
14. **Having children can be stressful at times. Am I ready to take this on?**
15. **How well do I take care of my own health and safety?**
16. **Do I have what it takes to keep my baby healthy and safe?**
17. **My ability to do whatever I want whenever I want will end. Is that okay with me?**
18. **Am I making enough money to support my child and myself?**
19. **Could I handle a child and a job and/or school at the same time?**
20. **What lessons have I learned from my parents? Any mistakes I want to avoid?**
21. **Asking for help, and telling people how I feel -- does that come naturally to me? Is that what I want for my child?**
22. **Do I plan to continue dating? How will this affect my child? How will having a child affect future dating?**
23. **Do I expect my child to be like me?**
24. **What do I value and treasure? Do I want to pass these onto my child?**
25. **What kind of future can I offer my child?**

After answering these questions you should have a better idea if being a single-parent is right for you, at this moment of your life. Adoption is not an easy decision. The final question you must ask yourself: “What is best for my baby, and what is best for me?”

Our Sample Waiting Families

Below are examples of the online profiles our adoptive families create for prospective birth mothers. To view available profiles, please call **1.800.677.2367** or visit our website at **PlanAdoption.com/waiting-families-new** and **AdoptionAssociates.net/waiting-families-new**.

KIDS IN FAMILY ▾

RELIGION ▾

COUNTRY/STATE ▾

STATUS ▾

SORT BY ▾

RYAN & ALYSSIA

MICHIGAN

ED & LIZ

MICHIGAN

ERIC & MICHELLE

MICHIGAN

See parent's that you really like ? Click on the contact icon to get in touch with their agency

MARCIN & KASIA

UNITED STATES

JEFF & KELLY

MICHIGAN

RICK & KATIE

MICHIGAN

Parentfinder also gives you the ability to "like" profiles, so you can come back and view them later.

BRANDON & HANNAH

WASHINGTON

ANDY & ANDREA

MICHIGAN

ZACH & JODIE

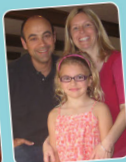
MICHIGAN

Adoption profile PDFs can be downloaded to your phone or computer and viewed later.

Below are examples of the profile books our adoptive families create for prospective birth mothers. To view available profiles, please call **1.800.677.2367** or visit our website at **PlanAdoption.com/waiting-families-new** and **AdoptionAssociates.net/waiting-families-new**.

OUR SAMPLE WAITING FAMILIES

Meet Ben & Laura



Hello! Thank you for taking the time to get to know us a little better. We are Ben and Laura, and we're really looking forward to welcoming another child to our family. We understand that your greatest concern is finding a loving family for your baby. Our family has a lot of love to share! We promise to be there through the good times and offering encouragement and support. We love being parents and are excited to experience the joy of another child.

Family is very important to us.

About Us

We have been happily married for twelve years, in a relationship built on love and trust. Having struggled with infertility, the gift of parenthood through adoption is very special to us. We were raised in the same small community and attended college together. Not only have we known each other since childhood, but our extended families have also known each other for many years as well. Laura was raised Catholic and Ben was raised Episcopalian. We are members of a local Episcopal Church (Christian) where we were married. As parents, we work together to provide a loving and stable family life for our daughter. Our hope for our children is that they will experience joy and happiness, knowing that we will always be there for them through life's ups and downs.



Laura and Ava at the ballpark

Laura

Laura is a friendly, gentle person who loves being a mom. Her love and time are focused on our family. She is calm and patient, always willing to lend a hand or listening ear to friends and family. Laura loves spending time with our daughter, our extended family, reading, exercise, taking family vacation, and enjoys Detroit Tiger's baseball. Pets and children have a special place in her heart. She is a very caring and dependable mom. She has a master's degree in nursing and works 10-15 hours per week as a nurse practitioner. Together, she and Ava enjoy making cookies and muffins, painting toenails, tending to the flower beds, going to museums, shopping, and coloring.



Ben and Ava playing baseball

Ben

Ben is a wonderful dad, loyal friend, and hard worker. Ben loves spending time with our daughter. He is a trustworthy, caring man who is loved by family members and respected at work. He also enjoys reading, travel, exercise, playing the guitar and restoring old motorcycles. Ben works in purchasing at a local university. Though he works very hard, family is his top priority. He is a hands-on dad; riding bikes, playing t-ball, going to swim lessons, and teaching Ava to play the green ukelele she picked out for her birthday. Our daughter is the apple of his eye. He is known to make up silly songs, sneak candy, and go on spontaneous scavenger hunts.

Our Family

We have a lot of fun! Our lives center around our family. Our daughter has 33 first cousins. The kids love getting together. Most of our extended family live in Michigan. We celebrate birthdays, holidays, and vacations together. Both extended families are fun loving and friendly. They would welcome a new family member with open arms.

Ben is the youngest of 8 children. He has 5 sisters and 2 brothers (1 deceased). Laura is the middle of 5 sisters. We believe education is important, but we are not strict or pushy. Our daughter loves school, Scouts, dancing, swimming, hanging out with cousins, special time with grandparents, and dates with friends. We all enjoy vacations in Michigan, Chicago, and Florida.

We give your child the opportunities that we have growing up, interacting with many cousins, parents, aunts, and uncles, as well as a big sister.

Our Home and Community

We live in a suburban area outside a university town. Our home is spacious and safe with a swing set, slide, and a small garden. Our neighborhood is great for riding bikes and is close to many beautiful parks. There are lots of fun activities nearby. We all enjoy the zoo, children's museum, planetarium, and Aquatic Park. We attend many local fairs, festivals, and parades. We currently have one cat and are looking forward to adding a dog soon. All of us enjoy the changing seasons, making trips to the beach, skiing, building snow forts, raking leaves, and playing in the rain or sprinkler.



Ava's preschool graduation

Our Promise

Providing a loving and nurturing home for your child. We have adopted such a wonderful child and cannot have too much love, care, and support. Thank you again for taking the time to consider our family and knowing that each day is a blessing. We have been the most amazing parents and are grateful for you for considering us and being blessed by your important role.



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