

Growing families through

Private Adoption



Adoption



Associates

WWW.ADOPTIONASSOCIATES.NET

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Welcome to *Adoption Associates*





We're thrilled that you're exploring *Private Adoption*

When you choose to work with Adoption Associates, you can be sure that making the best placement possible for each and every child we serve is our highest priority.

Since 1990, we've been helping expectant parents who are planning adoption find permanent adoptive families for their children. Adoption Associates has assisted with thousands of adoptions right here in the United States. ***In addition to agency matched adoptions, Adoption Associates can help if you've already established a relationship with an expectant parent on your own.***

As a licensed child-placing agency in the state of Michigan, we are specialists at providing professional adoption services. We're proud of our excellent home study services, personalized attention throughout the entire adoption process, and ongoing support after your adoption is complete.

We're passionate about our service to expectant parents too. When birth parents choose adoption, we believe this to be a tremendous act of love for their babies. We take our responsibility seriously - providing them with adoptive families who offer love, stability, and security. At the same time, we walk alongside birth parents so they can move forward with their lives, knowing they made the best decision possible.

We look forward to meeting you! Please review this packet, and then give us a call. We'll be happy to answer all of your questions, and help you along as you explore adoption.

Why Choose

Adoption Associates?

EXPERIENCE

Adoption Associates has a handle on how adoption has evolved over the years. We promote and facilitate the most up to date and beneficial practices available. We have been one of Michigan's leading private adoption agencies for over 30 years.

AVAILABILITY TO BIRTH PARENTS

We are available 24/7 to meet their needs and believe our success is a very direct result of this.

GENUINELY CARING

You will find that our caseworkers care about you and will advocate for you. In addition to this, expectant parent needs are personally attended to, including counseling, financial support, transportation, and medical care.

TRANSPARENCY

Fees for adoptive couples are competitive, transparent and reasonable.

ONE STOP SERVICES

In most cases, no attorney is needed.
We handle all aspects of the process, including legal work.

WE HAVE YOU COVERED

We have three locations in Michigan and work statewide.

Types of *Infant Adoption*

Open Adoption

While there are varying degrees of openness, most private adoptions are considered open. Typically, this means that there has been some exchange of non-identifying information between the birth parents and the adoptive parents. Often, there is also some ongoing contact during the adoption planning as well as after the adoption is complete. Adoption Associates has a wealth of experience with open adoption and will help to establish a plan that is unique to your case.



Closed Adoption

Occasionally, birth parents will request a closed adoption. The agency will then identify adoptive parents for the baby from among our approved and waiting families. In a closed adoption there is typically little or no information exchanged.



Safe Delivery

In Michigan, the Safe Delivery of Newborns Law allows for anonymous surrender of a newborn by his or her parent. The baby goes immediately to an already-approved adoptive family in Michigan. This law is meant to provide safety for a baby who might otherwise be abandoned. Adoption Associates has facilitated approximately 80% of Michigan's Safe Delivery cases since the law went into effect in 2001.



More on *openness* in Adoption



There is no single, easily defined idea of an open adoption.

There is no right or wrong idea of what an open adoption looks like.

It typically includes the opportunity for the birth and adoptive families to meet and make a plan for ongoing contact throughout the child's life.

- **The most common arrangement is a semi-open adoption.**
- *Meeting in person*
- *Continued contact throughout the pregnancy*
- *Both birth and adoptive family caring for baby during the hospital stay*
- *An agreement to exchange pictures/letters/updates*
- *The communication is often facilitated by the agency*
- *In person visits after placement are often requested by the birth mother*

Birth parents and adoptive families may also choose a more open adoption that could include 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.



ADVANTAGES FOR THE CHILD

- The child will have more access to information about the birth family, including health and background information.
- The adoptive family is better able to answer the 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 his/her 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.
- By seeing the child grow and develop, as well as the opportunities the adoptive family is able to provide, birth parents can be proud and know they made the very best possible choice with the top priority being the needs of their child.



ADVANTAGES FOR 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.

A *Step by Step* guide to a private adoption...



1. DECISION MAKING

Decide if a private adoption is right for you. It's important to personally identify your reasons before starting this life-changing process.

2. CONTACT AN AGENCY

Adoption Associates provides the full spectrum of adoption services both for the adoptive couple and the birth parents. It's important to contact a reputable, licensed child-placing agency that is responsive to your needs, makes you feel comfortable and answers all your questions.

3. APPLICATION AND HOME STUDY PROCESS

With Adoption Associates, you'll start by having an individual consultation. Then the formal application comes next. You'll attend an adoption orientation webinar. After the formal application has been completed, the home study process comes next. You'll have a series of interview meetings with a caseworker who then writes a full assessment of your background, your preparation for adoption and the suitability of your home. We'll also collect medical reports, background clearances, reference letters and provide adoption education resources.

4. CREATING A PROFILE AND AWAITING A MATCH

Once you have an approved home study, you will be guided through the creation of a profile. This is a compilation of pictures and information about you, which we will share with expectant parents. Whenever we have an expectant parent we're working with who's confident of her decision of adoption, we'll show her the profiles of waiting families who might best fit her situation.

5. BEING MATCHED AND PLANNING FOR OPENNESS

Once an expectant parent chooses an adoptive couple, one of the typical next steps is planning for an open adoption relationship that is unique to everyone's desires and needs. Then an Adoption Associates caseworker expertly guides you through this process.

6. COMPLETE THE LEGAL PROCESS

Once the baby is born, Adoption Associates facilitates all legal aspects of the adoption. The baby is typically discharged into the care of the adoptive parents directly from the hospital. One of the next steps is for the birth parents to sign a legal release of parental rights. The adoptive family will also sign legal paperwork to be filed with the court. Post placement reports are required to be done monthly in the home until finalization of the adoption. This usually occurs approximately six months after placement, but in some cases may take longer.

The overall time frame varies from case to case. Give us a call and we'll be happy to share details on current wait times and trends.

***** if you've already established a relationship with an expectant parent on your own, please contact us!*** While some of these steps will be the same, we will be happy to discuss your unique situation in detail.



Benefits

of working with an agency

There is a direct connection to providing support to expectant parents and their following through with the adoption plan. Some of the components are:

COUNSELING

The caseworkers at Adoption Associates understand the feelings, fears, and questions of birth parents. They'll talk honestly about options and provide resources to help make the best decision. The caseworker works closely with the birth parent to fully understand adoption, help find the ideal adoptive family, determine the amount of openness desired, prepare for labor and delivery, and provide steadfast emotional support.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Adoption Associates is uniquely skilled and experienced when it comes to providing appropriate financial support for birth parents, recognizing that not every case will require such support. The Michigan Adoption Code allows an adoptive family to help with reasonable pregnancy related expenses during pregnancy and for up to six weeks after delivery.

TRANSPORTATION/HOUSING

Adoption Associates staff can assist with transportation to appointments, or can help access available community resources. We can also assist with locating housing resources as needed, and help meet more emergent needs as well.

MEDICAL CARE

Adoption Associates wants to make sure that babies are well cared for from the start. We can help expectant mothers obtain prenatal care or Medicaid. Medicaid will cover the birth of the child. then the adoptive parents insurance will take over.

Do I need an adoption attorney, consultant or facilitator to adopt a child?

We often hear the question, “Do I need an attorney to adopt a child?” The quick answer is “No”. Michigan doesn’t require that a family hire an adoption attorney to complete an adoption. At a full service private adoption agency like Adoption Associates, you are provided with all legal services, in addition to the valuable services not typically provided by an attorney during the adoption process.

Whether the adoptive family and birth mother are already connected, or an adoptive family is looking for assistance in connecting with a birth mother, Adoption Associates can facilitate. We provide full legal services from start to finish. Your legal paperwork is completed by our experienced legal coordinator who has been working with us since 1996. Our caseworkers provide home studies in addition to all of the services that go along with it. And, professional profile services are provided to all couples who are not yet connected with a birth mother. Birth parents receive social work services, resources, ongoing support and 24-hour assistance. Birth parents are never charged for any services and 100% confidentiality is always maintained.

Adoption Associates provides all of the services that an adoption attorney provides, and more! Both adoptive parents and birth parents receive full adoption services throughout the process and beyond.

*Adoption is **SO MUCH MORE** than just a legal process! Expectant parents, adoptive parents and adopted babies and children can **ONLY** be expertly, fully, and uniquely cared for by a reputable, licensed agency.*

**One attorney cannot represent both parties in an adoption*



Frequently Asked Questions

FROM ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

What are some of the characteristics of birth mothers who are working with Adoption Associates?

Women who are serious about adoption planning are often in their twenties, but can range in age from young teen to middle age. They could be married, single, divorced, or in a domestic partnership. We work with women of all different races and backgrounds. Many have children they are currently parenting. Some might be homeless, abused, have unsupportive families, be using drugs or struggling with mental health challenges. Each woman has a unique situation and personality, but they all share the love that they have for their child and courage to give their baby the best future possible.

Can the birth parents come back to take the child?

Birth parents voluntarily release their parental rights. The termination of parental rights is a permanent decision made by a judge.

Does the birth father have any rights?

He may choose to voluntarily release his parental rights. If he is not in agreement with the adoption, there will be a hearing in front of a judge.

Can we work with Adoption Associates even if we don't live in Michigan?

Adoption Associates is able to facilitate an adoptive placement in Michigan for couples from other states. If you do not live in Michigan, you will need to obtain a home study from an agency in your state, but the rest of the adoption process will be facilitated for you by Adoption Associates.



How long will it take to adopt?

Many families waiting with Adoption Associates have a successful placement within 18-24 months after beginning the adoption process. Birth parents generally want to select and meet the family they have chosen, so patience will be needed while waiting for the birth parent who decides that you can offer the family and future she wants for her baby. Applicants open to adopting a child of any race, situations with in utero substance exposure and/or greater degrees of openness will in most cases have a shorter wait.

What kind of costs are involved with private adoption?

You can expect to pay for things like the home study, birth parent expenses, adoption service fees, outreach and education fees, and travel expenses. A detailed fee schedule is available, and you will have plenty of opportunity to fully understand and anticipate the applicable fees.

Are there financial resources to help me adopt?

There is currently a Federal Tax Credit available for most domestic adoptions. You can learn more about the federal tax credit eligibility and benefits through the IRS website. There are also a growing number of employers that offer adoption reimbursement. Check with your employer to find out if your company offers such benefits. Further, many adoptive couples apply for grants and/or seek crowd-funding options or adoption loans.

What birth parent information will we receive?

Adoption Associates will obtain as much information as possible about the birth parents' health history and background. We also seek a release from the birth mother to obtain her prenatal medical records if available. We will share all non-identifying information obtained with the prospective adoptive parents, as well as information received from the hospital regarding delivery and newborn medical care.







Mission Statement

Adoption Associates, Inc. promotes domestic and international adoption for God's glory. The benefits of our Michigan adoption agency offered to birth mothers, their children from unplanned pregnancies, and orphaned children abroad reflect the spirit of adoption modeled by God in Ephesians 1 of the Bible. While AAI is a Christian organization founded on Christian beliefs and values, our pregnancy and adoption services are open to clients of all faiths.

WEBSITE

www.adoptionassociates.net

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