

How To Adopt A Child

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Before you commit to adoption, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the different types of adoption avenues available. Adoption agencies in your state can supply you with information on how to qualify to be an adoptive parent and can help you locate children in need of families.

Your chances of finding a child more quickly increase if you are open to adopting children of different race, older children, two or more sibling, and children from other countries. In the United States most infants adopted through private agencies or attorneys are placed through some form of open adoption. Open adoption is when the birth parent selects the family and usually has some type contact with the adoptive family after placement. The amount of contact after placement varies. The waiting times and fees involved vary accordingly to individual circumstances.

Increasingly, many couples are turning other countries to adopt children. Most foreign-born children adopted by Americans come from Russia, China, Korea, India, and Guatemala. With a foreign adoption there are strict country requirements and immigration requirements to adhere to and the agency fees for transportation, legal, administrative and medical costs can be high. Make sure that you are dealing with a licensed, professional organization with reliable references.

Adoption agencies in the United States and Canada must comply with licensing and procedural standards, which vary from state to state. If you decide to use an attorney, seek out a lawyer who specializes in adoption. Should you undertake an adoption from another state you must comply with laws in both states before the child can be taken across state line.

In most states, adoptive parents may be married, single, childless, or already raising other children. Many people mistakenly assume that adoptive parents must own a home or have a high income in order to be approved. Agencies seek applicants who have sufficient income to provide a stable environment plus a willingness to commit to making the adopted child feel cared for and a part of the family. Being divorced or disabled does not automatically eliminate you as a candidate.

Adoptions arranged through a public agency usually involve modest fees since the agency services are funded through state and federal taxes. Federal and state subsidies may be available to assist families in adopting children with special needs. Many of the children placed in public agencies have been abused, neglected, or abandoned by their birth parents and they may have physical or emotional problems. Before you agree to adopt such a child it is important to review the child's history, and find out if additional counseling may be needed.

Keep in mind that fees charges by private adoption agencies for domestic and foreign adoptions can range from \$4000 to more than \$40,000. Independent adoptions arranged by attorneys and intermediaries may include medical and hospital costs as well as living expenses for the birth mother for several months prior to the adoption.

There are many different avenues and types of adoption to choose from and not every one is the best fit for your family. Research and education are your best allies. Talk to families who have adopted, attend information sessions at different agencies, and sign up for adoption conferences to help you figure out which avenue is best for you. Also make sure you understand all regulations and fees completely. Adoption is a wonderful way to build or add to your family.

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