

# ADOPTION MADE EASY

SELECTED TIPS - 76 PAGES!

Adoption Made Easy



76 Pages!

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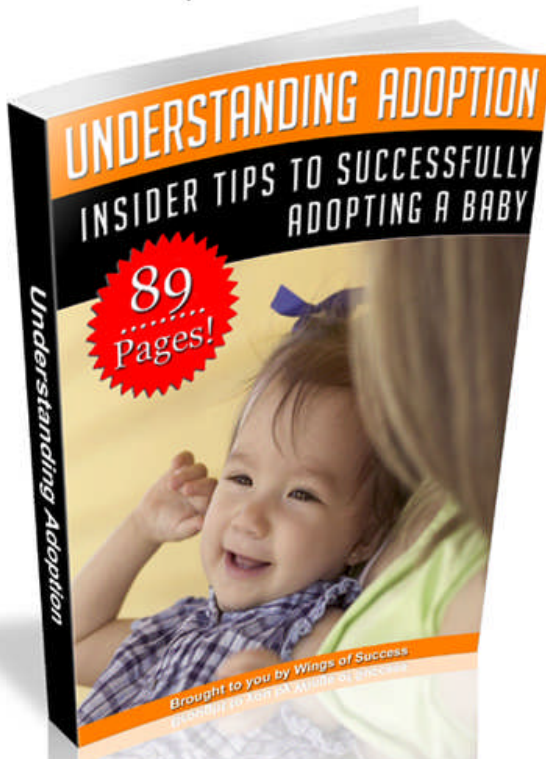
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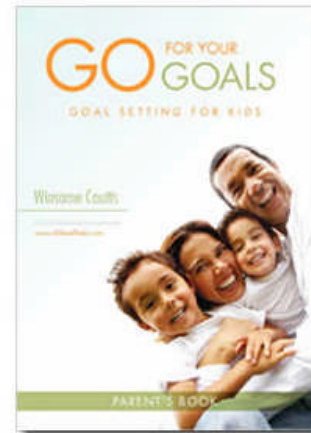
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


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## All About Adoptions

Adoption is when the birth parents of a child sever all legal ties to their child, and the parental rights are legally given over to the new adoptive family, who are strangers.

Apart from adopting a child from your own country, intercountry adoption is also available as there are also many children from international countries who need a family.

In the UK and the USA, children are usually given up for adoption because they have been mistreated; other reasons are due to teenage pregnancy, or because the birth parents are no longer able to look after the child, or they have given up the child because it isn't the right sex, it has some form of disability, or because they simply don't want a child.

There are many different reasons for wanting to adopt - if couples are unable to conceive, if they want to help others by adopting, and now there are same-sex couples who prefer to adopt.

The adoption process varies from one country to another. The ethics for eligibility can differ in each country which can include the age limit, the requirements for same-sex adoption couples, and whether a single person is able to adopt.

Placing a child into care and up for adoption is free in the United States. Adopting fees for the parents vary in different countries, and even in some, to charge an adoption fee would be illegal. In the United States, for adoptions you are given a \$10,000 tax credit.

The new parents face many concerns in adoption. The child's family history and their family medical history may be unknown, or kept secret until the child starts to ask questions about where they come from. This usually happens when a child is old enough to ask the right questions, or when they feel the need to 'find themselves'. There are always misconceptions about children who have been fostered and this is usually fuelled by the media. Some children are thought of as not being able to develop properly or will become problem, but that is not always the case, as children can fare well when given a new, loving home and go on to lead successful lives. However, many children lose out and some reach the eighteen when they are too old to be adopted and are legally adults. They fall out of the system.



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Not everyone chooses to understand or support adoption, although Americans are experienced in it. The history of adoption can be traced as far back as the 18th Century B.C. During Ancient times it was more popular to adopt adults rather than children so that they could carry on the family heritage or to protect the family's property rights. Men and women single or married had the right to adopt.

Modern adoption laws are based on the heritage in 18th Century B.C. of the Hammurabi Code. Adopting adults was the focus in Ancient Times as a means for someone to follow in one's footsteps; whilst the Middle Ages set some ground rules with their focus on the adoption of children. Certain laws were placed in order to protect children, so by this time adoptions were dealt with by the court systems. It was in 1851, in Massachusetts, that the first state adoption took place. Rev. Charles Loring Brace was the founder of the New York Children's Aid Society in 1853, which helped orphaned and abandoned children. He wanted to rescue these children and transport them to good Christian homes. They were placed on Brace's 'Emigration Plan' onto regular trains called the 'Orphan Trains' for families to view at each station, until they were taken up by one of many of the wealthy farming families.

Times have changed, although we still want the best for our children, although it is still sometimes difficult to know what that is. Adoption is one of the best things to have happened over the centuries, to give children without a home a good chance to find one.

## Why You Should Choose Adoption

All you need to know about adoption; is it the right choice for you and your partner, or your family if you already have children.

For many people unable to have children of their own, adoption is the only answer to their prayers. It answers all the hopes and dreams of ever having a child they can call their own. Many people all over the world are not able to have children due to health reasons or who have tried I.V.F. (In Vitro Fertilization) treatment and been unsuccessful. Some have tried many fertility treatments and still been unable to conceive. To experience so much disappointment is heartbreaking when a couple is desperate for a child. To be told by their doctor, that they will be unable to have children naturally is enough to shatter anyone's dreams.

If a couple cannot reproduce adoption is their only alternative and not a decision to be taken lightly. It takes a lot of time, research and discussions with health professionals for a couple to decide on whether this is the right option for them. For many couples, adoption provides them with any hope of raising a child they can call their own. Sometimes it is enough to find happiness in other people's children, related or not. The opportunity of becoming a family is a privilege and being parents can bring a lot of happiness and joy. Couples usually start by adopting one child, and then some years later, they may decide to adopt another.

There are other reasons for choosing adoption; some couples can conceive and reproduce, but opt for the alternative to adopt. Families used to consist of many children, up to five or more children. These days due to the cost of living and with couples both working, today families usually consist of one, two or even three children. It is only a few who choose to have larger families. To be financially secure, having a family and working is usually important. A mother will usually take maternity leave, then return to work either part-time or full-time, however they feel as there are also childcare fees to consider. By choosing to adopt, a couple are providing a home for one of millions of children in care around the world; children who are looking for a loving home and parents to love them. Luckily, for these children, couples who actively seek to adopt realize this need and choose this path, rather than reproducing their own. It is truly a selfless act when a couple decide to adopt and a lot of admiration for deciding to take on a child that is not genetically their own.

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Families that already have both parents and their own children, also choose to adopt a child. They are financially well off and wish to provide for another child who is looking for a family. Parents and their children alike, sometimes have the compassion on seeing those children that are in need. What better way to provide a home for them where they are truly wanted, helping someone who is less fortunate. The families are committed to welcoming a child locally, nationally and sometimes internationally into their loving, stable family environment. Some parents have children that have grown up, and feel they are not ready to give up being a parent; they are healthy and young enough to carry on bringing up another young child.

Adoption for anyone is a selfless and wonderful act full of compassion and love. For many unable to conceive it brings their only hope of ever having children of their own; for others it's a choice to help someone who is less fortunate and needs their love and support. Adopting a child, and sharing the love they feel brings happiness and the dreams of a bright future ahead.

## Adoption Statistics – Some Telling Facts About The Process Of Adoption

To know the bigger picture regarding what the nature and process of adoption is all about; adoption statistics are more than just numbers for people looking to adopt and those hoping to study the patterns and history of this vital way to building a family and therefore the nation, in turn. Many Americans have been touched by this process of adoption and just a decade ago, in 1997, Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute conducted a survey to report over 60 per cent of US families had experienced adoption in some form or the other. In some instances, the participant was a product of an adoption, in others, one or more family members or a friend had been adopted or had placed a child for the same process. Thus, we find that this interesting study reveals a major portion of American families have been affected in some way by adoption.

The other aspect of adoption relates to the female demographics: women who place their unborn kids up for adoption. This is known as prenatal adoption and usually such women tend to have an inverse relationship with their socioeconomic status (SES) and academic level; sometimes, the decision is influenced by that of the birth mother and at others, by those within her family who are linked to these factors. E.g. a woman with a mother having finished at least a year college is statistically 3 times more likely to place a child for adoption than one a woman whose mother did not graduate high school, reveal studies. Research claims that the latter come families less supportive of giving the child up for adoption which the former are lucky to have, but females from lower SES and academic backgrounds may equally be decisive about giving their children for adoption felt one California research.

Some of these adoption statistics and opinions may be somewhat outdated but as with other issues, the commercials have not been tampered with or changed much, giving us reasonable information that is accurate and revealing about the estimated cost of adoption: the adoption agency hired to find a child is the chief cost incurred by prospective parents. Hiring a local agency for a domestic adoption (public agency) may cost around \$2500 or even less than that to nominal amounts, especially the non-profit ones, whereas if handed over to a private agency, the cost of adoption can range from \$4000 to \$30,000 because these are not subsidized by the state and also offer support services later.

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However, the important thing to remember when discussing adoption statistics is that these numbers are only a small element of the adoption procedure and to be used merely to gain an insight into the past of adoptive processes and trends; they are not meant to be yardstick for future figures - go by insight.

## Adoption Dos & Don'ts

We cover some essential do's and don'ts regarding adoption in this article and we hope these will help the thousands of couples looking to adopt a child and build a family unit. It is necessary to comply with these state outlined adoption rules so as to make the adoption process a legal and successful one, therefore learning about the basics of proper adoption procedures is a big help for prospective parents and they should educate themselves about these to avoid disappointments and debacles later.

Some of the adoption rules are very strict and not following them to the 't' may cause the couple to forfeit their chances at a promising adoption, so prospective parents looking to adopt a child are advised strongly to learn about the rules and play by them too, in order to obtain lawful and above-board privilege to adopt from the state concerned.

All details of the adoption process must be outlined before hand and prospective adoptive parents must make an effort to educate themselves on all aspects of the adoption procedure, including costs and timeline issues besides the state's adoption regulations and checking for their own eligibility criterion to ensure all details are in order.

They must also carefully go over the adoption contract to ensure they have not missed out on any relevant point or slacking in giving correct and updated information as well as submit and file all necessary documents for speedy processing of the same; if they do not understand some of the legal aspects or details, it is advisable to contact an adoption lawyer or consult an agency to clear these doubts instead of overlooking important issues. Being a long-drawn out procedure, prospective parents must also consider and prepare beforehand their finances for covering the decision to adopt as it can involve many different types of fees.

Prospective parents should understand the various risk factors associated with adoption and work to eliminate these! One of the most typical risk factors involved in adoption includes the birth mother suddenly changing her mind and wanting to raise the child herself; proper screening of the birth mother can help prospective adoptive parents minimize those candidates who exhibit a potential risk of indecisiveness and zero in on those that are likely to go through

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with the agreement. This precaution can help reduce disappointment at losing out on a child that could have been yours.

Besides the above factor, adoptive parents also need to keep their emotions in check and keep anxiety at bay to avoid making mistakes at crucial points in the adoption procedure as many nervous parents are prone to doing; unnecessary haste and ill-informed parents going in for adoptions make for bad decisions that do not bode well for wanting to build a real family. Understand that adoption process takes time and take this time to read, review and ascertain all aspects of legal documents to ensure an official adoption as well as a lawful one.

Do not be guided by just about anyone when you are looking to adopt a child: go over the legal, social, mental and medical aspects besides the cultural ones of the child as well as academic ones to ensure the right fit for your family environment and your emotional needs; avoid frauds and touts.

## Children Awaiting Adoption

Most people looking to adopt children always ask questions about what a child is like. This is an important factor to consider, as any parent who wants to welcome a child, who is not their own, into their home, needs to know all about a child and all the options available to them. Every child is different so it is difficult to know what to expect of a child, and also being placed in a different environment can change a child. By looking at children who have already been adopted, a general picture can be painted of what to expect.

By adopting children within the U.S. these will generally be infants who are African-American Hispanic, or of mixed race. Caucasian children are usually dealt with by private Adoption agencies and not put up for public adoption. There are many people who wish to adopt an infant from an early age, maybe to simulate the experience of bringing up a child from birth. There are long waiting lists for people wishing to adopt a baby as it is the most popular choice, and it is difficult to find a child that young who has been placed for adoption, so it could be some time before a child becomes available.

The second domestic option is to adopt a child from a foster family and waiting for a permanent home. Usually these children are older, ranging from grade school age up to adolescence. Some of these children have special needs - whether it be emotional, mental and or including physical disabilities. These are often called 'waiting children' and are treated as special cases which are handled by both public and the private adoption agencies. They have entities called adoption exchanges so that a suitable match can be found between the child and the parents. If a child has special needs, adoption subsidies are often available for the parents to help with the costs of caring for the special needs child.

The third option is to adopt a child internationally. There over fifty foreign countries to choose from that have children available for adoption. There are many reasons why a child is placed for adoption, which is usually connected to their race or culture of their parents. An example is that in South Korea, if a mother is unwed they are looked upon with shame, so the mother usually puts the child up for adoption. Many of these children can be found in orphanages,



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waiting for someone to come along and adopt them. Adopting a child internationally can be a long and arduous process, but there are agencies and attorneys set up especially for this.

Each individual has to find the option that is most suitable for them, but no matter: there are many children out there who available and hoping to be adopted. The children range from babies to adolescence, and can be found at home or abroad - children who have no families. For those parents expecting a child, and those wishing to adopt, adoption can be the solution and should be given careful consideration. More information can be found from sources online - Adoption.com and Adopting.org. These both provide essential information about adoption for all parties concerned. Adoptablekids.com has photo listings of many children who are currently available and waiting to be adopted; this adoption exchange internet service is excellent for those who like to search and browse and see who is available.

## Steps to Put Your Child Up for Adoption

Considering putting your child up for adoption? For whatever reason, read on so you can determine the best solution for all!

Some mothers become pregnant unexpectedly, at a time where they are unprepared and feel unable to cope with a child, and all the responsibilities of being a parent. Issues that a person may come across include financial worries or lack of funds, emotional problems or physical disabilities. When faced with pregnancy some people have an abortion; others may not feel that is right to terminate a pregnancy, and some have left it too late as they did not know they were pregnant. One option is to put your child up for adoption - this is a good idea if you feel that you truly cannot care for the child on your own as you don't have enough support. The following shows the process, step by step, for putting your child up for adoption.

Firstly, you should make an appointment to see your General Practitioner before the birth, and let them know that you wish to put your child up for adoption. If you feel more comfortable talking to a stranger rather than your doctor, you can always make arrangement to a professional at your local health center. They will have all the information necessary about adoption and put you in touch with the relevant agencies. There are many bogus adoption agencies claiming to be professional, so it is important to go to your local health services who have a list of licensed agencies. That way you can feel confident that the adoption agency you are dealing with are legitimate.

Next, you should get all the information on your medical records if you are going to put your child up for adoption. If at all possible, the father of the child should be encouraged to get hold of his medical records too as this is important information. It is important that the medical records of the child are recorded for future reference. The child's medical records can get lost in the process of adoption, so it is a good idea to have the parents' medical records. This is very helpful if a child becomes ill, especially if they need hospital care, to determine what could be wrong with the child, or if there is anything to look out for in the future. It could prove very beneficial if you can also obtain the medical records of the child's grandparents.

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Thirdly, now that you have decided to place your child up for adoption, you need to make a decision on whether to have an open or closed adoption. An open adoption allows the parent can continue to have interrelations with their child even though they have been adopted, so that they can keep close ties. Some parents opt for a closed adoption if they want to cease all contact with their child, in the best interest of the child, so that they consider their adoptive parents as theirs. It is more common for parents to choose an open adoption so they can continue to interact with their child and never sever that bond they feel for their child. If this is what you prefer and it works well for both parents, then an open adoption is the right choice for you.

## Adoption Resources

For adoption resources to be useful, couples looking to adopt may consult individuals or agencies that deal with this specialized family building up segment to get more information about types of adoption, (private, domestic, International, special needs or Open etc) and learn which one will suit their personal situation best.

Adoption resources help to educate couples interested in adopting a child about the various kinds of adoption processes, procedures and fees involved, professional expertise available for making the action an easy one and legal aspects of the decision to adopt. At times, written matter regarding adoption aspects help prospective parents learn more about the pros and cons of adopting, what are the mistakes they can make, how to avoid these and ways to avoid disappointments. It is important to learn about the downside of adoption as well to be aware of the all-round aspect of a major life-changing decision and thus adoptive parents are advised to focus on these as much as they are keen to know about the positive side of adopting their special child.

Prospective parents can further query adoption resources centers with other details that are not mentioned in the written resources given to them and these can usually be found at social services or child welfare organizations, state departments' agencies that support domestic adoption etc. Adoption resources usually contain basics about the nature, scope and regulations of adoption from the chosen place, besides restrictions on couples regarding the procedure, eligibility criterion for adoption and facts and figures to guide adoptive parents about the steps towards legal adoption procedures.

Besides local groups and adoption centers, there are many publications in the market today that deal with various aspects of adoption and even the Internet is a good adoption resource for those that cannot contact an agency or state center dealing with adoption. From books on adoption to associations and groups directly dealing with adoption procedures to helping find lawyers and professionals for the job, the web is a great place for helping adoptive parents reach out to appropriate contacts. From facts on International adoption to laws on Inter-state adoption to statistics about available children across different geographical locations, there is comprehensive information available on thousands of websites that is sure to benefit

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prospective parents looking to give a child a place in their heart and home. Besides the net, contacting an adoption agency or a non-profit adoption organization is also a good bet for prospective adoptive parents if the financial side of the adoption process is not much of a strain since the charges for searching and matching a child according to individual requirements can be considerable, especially in the case of International adoptions

## Adoption Photo Listing

Adoption Photo Listing is where an adoption agency, or even Social Services who deal with adoption, post pictures along with information about children up for adoption on the internet. This is a popular practice used in most counties and internationally which improves the chances of a child to find a family. The United States have about 100,000 children in foster care and all over the world there are many more in there thousands who live in children's homes, orphanages or in temporary care. All those children who are up for adoption and need a home are pictured on Adoption Photo Listings. Most children are over seven years old, and the majority are older than that and come with special needs. These children come with problems - emotional, mental and some have or include having learning disabilities. There are also children with physical disabilities. Many sibling groups will wish to be kept together, so it is better to do your homework and find out more about a child or children before you decide to adopt.

If you are interested in a child you can then request further information about them. It was in 1994 that Adoption Photo Listing started and since then more than 8,000 children have been pictured. On the internet, over two million hits a month have been received by the Adoption Photo list. People who have even the slightest interest in adopting can view the listings, which has been powerful at attracting people. They can browse and read about these children who need a loving, stable environment and parents to care for them. Most people have a fair idea of how many children worldwide who are in need of a home but that is just a number based on statistics. By reading about a child and having a picture in front of them gives a couple something they can visualize. They can find about a child's date of birth, their nationality and background, their likes/dislikes and where they come from.

Adoption Photo Listing benefits a child up for adoption greatly, as it gives them more of a chance to find parents who can adopt them. Having their picture and information available for those who want to adopt, allows potential parents to learn about the children. As websites are usually updated, they can also keep an update on how a child is doing physically and emotionally and to view more recent pictures as written information with updates is not much to go on.

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Adoption Photo Listing doesn't just list children available for adoption, it also has pictures of those prospective parents who wish to adopt. They have all been previously assessed and screened by Social Services and deemed suitable according to requirements. Some couples or families are unable to have children through one health problem or another, and so wish to adopt. The information about them include pictures, whether they are married or not and any other children they may have, biologically their own or adopted. It also includes their pastimes and where they live with information about their reasons for wanting to adopt, and the fact that they would like to be considered.

Adoption Photo Listings have done much to help many children to find new parents to adopt them and also those seeking to adopt.

## Adoption Records - Why Are They So Important?

While it is true that most of the info collected on a child put up for adoption is documented on the child's adoption records and these are typical of most states, which means an inclusion of comprehensive medical and genetic background details besides social, mental health, religious, ethnic and educational records, some states may require even more in-depth information. This includes more detailed family history and racial origin details as well as dental history, vaccination and developmental health records and the mandatory academic progress records.

At times, adoption records may also contain eligibility information or exclusivity outlines that indicate the states where the child can be adopted with federal adoption support, such as extended to citizens of the States of Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Texas, Vermont, Oklahoma and Rhode Island.

Apart from birth parent's history and background details, a home study also serves the purpose of enabling the adoption agency or state department with the opportunity to gather info on medical history, socio-economic background, the family's mental health history, spiritual inclinations and to what extent the child's parents are educated; all these details help determine a child's future and are included in the adoptive records. Still other states ask for more detailed adoptive records that include description of parent's looks, skills, hobbies, career and medication that the birth mother may have been taking at the time of her pregnancy; other states exist that provide adoptive parents further identifying info about the birth parents and the child's background such as name and address (Colorado, New York and American Samoa are some examples.)

Adoptive records help prospective parents determine what kind of a family background they are willing to adopt a child from and also where vice versa i.e. help the birth parents and state/adoption agency ascertain whether the adoptive family's atmosphere and background will be suitable to the child concerned. Thus, the home study also includes aspects of a couple's life that may affect the adoption of a child, such as a criminal background, instance of child abuse or history of the prospective parent's health, emotional maturity and stability of finances besides the social aspects.



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Among the hardest states to adopt from, Montana is surely the one that tops the list, for they ask for occupational, drug or alcohol abuse and domestic violence history besides the racial-ethnic background details of the adoptive parents and some of these categories of information also need to be filled up by the states of New Mexico, North Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, Arizona, Illinois, Vermont, Puerto Rico, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia, for their adoption records.

After the final documentation for the adoption records as required by these demanding states has been filed properly and is found to be in order, they are duly signed by the judge and depending on the type of adoption procedure the couple concerned have opted for, these are sealed and kept confidential or left open to the public. In the case of an adoption record that is kept confidential, it is kept this way till such time as the adopted child becomes an adult.

## How To Prepare For The Home Study As Part Of The Adoption Process

When deciding to adopt a child, you will need to be assessed for suitability as an adoptive parent before you become a successful candidate. The Home Study is one of the processes you will need to go through if you wish to adopt a child. If you are involved in a custody case with your children's parent, a positive home study report will be very important for you. Here are the methods that you can use in the adoption process in preparation for a home study.

The mere mention of a home study can make some people suddenly quite nervous, though there is really nothing to be afraid of. The home study is needed before the custody of a child can be decided, whether it be to a family wishing to adopt or a child's biological parent, if they have suffered abuse or been neglected by the other parent. This process is a simple one usually carried out by a qualified social worker in the community. This procedure is necessary to find out more about you and all the members of the family who reside with you; and also to ensure that the child being placed in your future care will be in a loving and safe environment.

The home study is a long process so you must be patient and prepare yourself in the best way that you can. When the social worker comes into your home, they stay there for a few hours - sometimes even longer. This is so a thorough evaluation can be done, not in any way to make you feel uncomfortable, but to satisfy the social worker that the living environment is appropriate for the child being adopted. Any areas that the social worker is concerned will be discussed with you and opportunity will be given for you to make any necessary changes. You may be issued with a copy of detailed report if the social worker has compiled one. That way any concerns raised can be addressed given the appropriate of time necessary to address the issues.

The social worker should contact you in advance usually by phone and make an appointment for the home study, so that you have time to prepare and be ready for their visit. Anything that needs to be done at the last minute like cleaning, can be done before the visit so that the house is in order or as you wish it to be. Many people may do more than cleaning than usual and that is fine. It is understandable just before the home study, but it is also important to remember that the social worker may return, unannounced, so you must be prepared that this can happen

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unexpectedly. This gives a true test as you should keep your home in good order for those surprise visits. In some cases, many in fact, the initial home study has not been prebooked, so you should always keep your guard.

A series of questions will be asked to discover more about yourself. This will possibly include questions to do with your personal history, your work, your personal beliefs and values. You should at all times be honest and diplomatic with your social worker, be yourself, and soon they will get to know you as a person. You can start to feel at ease and you must remember the importance that it is better to tell the truth.

## Adoption Lawyers

The first step towards an adoption procedure requires prospective parents to file a petition with the court for a formal request to adopt a child; the couple need to give details of personal and professional nature including the child's birth certificate (or birth particulars e.g. date and place of birth), a legal statement as to why the child's birth parents have terminated their rights among other facts. All this requires the expertise of an adoption lawyer to represent the prospective parents in court, minimize hassles of petition filing etc and to follow a procedure that is most beneficial to their rights.

Especially in the final stages of the adoption procedure, the help of a qualified and experienced adoption lawyer is of utmost importance since this is the individual who will clue in the adoptive parents about how to approach the hearing, which takes place a year from the child being sent to stay with them in their home. While adoption agencies can educate parents about the nitty-gritty of adoption issues, it is mainly the onus of a true adoption lawyer to masterfully handle the legalities of the procedure and ensure the couple in question are granted permanent custody of the child through proper and timely follow-through of various legal procedures and ascertaining all documents are in order.

Adoption lawyers are professionals that play a vital role in ensuring International adoptions follow through smoothly as well since an adoptive child from a foreign country has different liabilities attached to the country's rules and regulations, which can at times, prove to be restrictions that regular parents without the knowledge of legal issues are helpless to deal with or find a solution to. Sometimes, these obstacles include language barriers, which may prevent them from comprehending vital legal issues stated in the adoption documents and a good adoption lawyer with the help of a capable translator can help overcome this challenge of foreign adoption.

In the case of a domestic adoption and more so for international adoption, the role of a good adoption lawyer cannot be emphasized more than the fact that this is the professional who has the ability and experience to understand and document citizenship details, health restrictions, explain and guide clients who are prospective parents on issues of a criminal background check as well as about their parental rights regarding various types of adoption and related formalities.

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Registration, legal rights of the child as well as those of the adoptive parents, termination of the rights of the birth parents, as well as the full scope of the adoption procedure are some of the vital issues adoption lawyers deal with on behalf of the prospective parents besides cluing them in about legal loop-holes and gray areas to avoid in adoption procedures.

Some agencies and NGO's involved solely in the matters of adoption hire their own adoption lawyers to smoothen out the process for their in-house requirements and to minimize hassles associated with adoption to encourage more people to take up this cause for building a family unit; thus, even as their fees may be a bit on the higher side, hiring adoption lawyers is a sure-shot way of staying on top of legal issues.

## Adoption Agencies

Finding the right adoption agency could be a difficult task. There are number of places to look and find the best resources to help prospective adoptive parents make the right decision..

There comes a time when a person decides they want to adopt a child. However, a person may be confused on where to look. Parents can try private adoption, which means searching on their own. However, the popular way is through an adoption agency. Adoption agencies are home to a wealth of information that one might not be able to get on their own. Just calling a random company is not going to work though. Research different companies, find one with a good reputation and one that works well its clients.

Adoption agencies can tell you how many children are available in certain areas and requirements for adopting children. The agencies also provide assistance in every aspect of adoption from filling out paperwork to finding the right child and finally getting to meet that special person.

1. Government Agencies: If you want to go through an adoption agency, there are a number of places to look. One of the first phone calls should be to a local or state government agency such as child welfare or social services. These government agencies should be able to provide you with a list of local adoption agencies as well as any information you might need. They might be able to send you a pamphlet or other material that could prove useful in your search for an adoption agency.

2. The Internet: The Internet is a valuable resource for finding adoption agencies. A quick search in any search engine will provide you with local and national directories of adoption agencies. It will also guide you to websites to find more information about the process. While on the Internet, check message boards and forums about adoption. There are online communities dedicated to adoption. You can post a message or contact parents through email about the adoption agency they used. This way you get opinions and insight on how adoption agencies handle their clients. You can find a wealth of information this way about local and adoptions in foreign countries.

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3. Phone book: You can try cold calling adoption agencies straight out of the phone book. Check under the yellow pages for adoption or social services. This should lead you in the right direction. It may seem like a crude way of doing things, but before the Internet this was how things got done. Give the adoption agency a call and ask if you can talk to parents who have been through the process. They might set you up with people who understand your plight. The adoptive parents can give you inside information and explain how the adoption process works. They can tell you about the agency you are considering and any pitfalls to consider.

4. Community Groups / Churches: Another way to search for an adoption agency is to check with community groups or churches to see if there is a support group for adoptive parents. The group people will provide thoughtful and honest experiences. In the case of the parents given to you by the adoption agency, you will probably get someone who is 100 percent happy with the company. It is in the agency's best interest to send you them. By finding the parents on your own, you will get candid accounts of what to expect during and after the process. These people could offer a ton of information and you may end up joining the group in the future.

There are so many ways to find an adoption agency. Just choose the one that is best for you. Don't stop looking until you find the perfect one because this is a wonderful life decision.

## Choosing the Right Adoption Agency and What to Expect

Picking an adoption agency can be tricky. Get opinions about different agencies and ask up front about any hidden fees.

When choosing to adopt a child, the first decision a person has to make is the course to take. Should you pick an adoption agency or strive out on your own? There are advantages to looking on your own, but there are also downfalls to this as the search is more difficult this way. Using an agency makes this part of the process easier, but there are things prospective parents should know before stepping into the adoption agency's office.

The first step is finding a good, reputable adoption agency. Finding an agency is difficult but there are resources available to help. There are directories available on the Internet that will lead clients to local and international adoption agencies. Search these first and try to find testimonials about the agencies. Get as many opinions about different adoption agencies as possible. It is important to know what you are getting into.

The next step and arguably most important thing to do is research the company you plan on dealing with. This can't be stressed enough because you don't want to get any rude surprises during the adoption process. Talk to former clients, call government agencies to see if there have been any reports and ask around. An adoption agency's reputation will say a lot about them. Finding a reputable company will make the process that much easier.

Once you have done the research, it doesn't get any easier. The next decision is whether to use a public or private agency. Public agencies are funded with tax money and usually focus on placing foster children (wards of the state) in permanent homes. These are usually older children who have bounced around foster homes most of their life. Private adoption agencies are run by private companies. These companies provide a wealth of services such as counseling, matching prospective children and more. However, this type of service doesn't come cheap. Adoptions through private adoption agencies can run from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars.

One has to be careful though about the cost of adoption. When meeting with an agency ask about costs on all aspects. There is usually a fee to get the process started, but some



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companies charge extra along the way. Get the pricing up front and know what you are getting into. This is why researching companies is so important.

There are some companies that offer assistance in paying for the adoption such as staggered payments. Ask about this as well and check with local government agencies to see if there are any grants or financial assistance available.

If there is a certain type of child you want, check with different adoption agencies. There are specialty agencies out there that could suit your needs. Perhaps you want a Vietnamese baby and want to give a home to a child with a disability, there are agencies out there that specialize in these types of adoptions. They will have better insight in what needs to get done and are familiar with all the paperwork and issues that come with getting these types of children.

Finding the right adoption agency is difficult. Be well informed and take time before making a final decision on an adoption agency. It will be well worth the wait in the end.

## Four Places to Help You Find the Right Adoption Agency

Choosing an adoption agency may seem like a daunting task, but these are four places to help make the search easier.

Choosing an adoption agency may seem like a scary task. There are some companies that want your business and might make promises that seem too good to be true. That's why it is so important to follow these few places you should look when choosing the right agency. In the end, when you are holding that child in your arms, it will be more than worth it. Make sure you do your research and ask lots of questions along the way.

1. Hit the Child Welfare Information Gateway by visiting [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov). This government run website is going to give you a wealth of information about adoption and other topics. The CWIG was formed when the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect and the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse combined. Here, you find statistics and data about adoption, what options are available to you and what to expect before, during and after the process. There are other pertinent websites to visit such as [www.adoption.com](http://www.adoption.com), but this should be your first visit. This is such an informative website, it's a must read for anyone considering adopting.

2. Find directories on the Internet. There are many sites out there that can give you directories for international, national and local adoption agencies. Check with each adoption agency that suits your needs. Once you have decided to contact an agency check the requirements of the adoption agency. This is very important. Find out your state regulations for adoptions and make sure the agency you choose meets all of them. You could also explore online community groups to get opinions on different adoption agencies. You don't want to be in the dark when choosing one because this is an important decision.

3. Check with local libraries, schools and churches. Many times these places hold classes or seminars about adoption. They are informative by giving you information you will need in the process. They will explain the procedures involved, what types of decisions that will be made during the course of the adoption and what to expect. They will also explain paperwork and timetables. These programs are informative because now you have something to speak to about any questions you might have about adoption. There will be other prospective parents

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who are in similar situation and can help each other out. There will also be people who have gone through the process who will be able to help you out.

4. Find other parents. By finding people who have adopted children, you can find out every little detail about the process from choosing the right agency to preparing your home for a child. Pick their brains and get as much information as you can. It will make the process easier for you if you know what is expected.

You will find out that choosing the right adoption agency is probably the most important step. It begins a long process of finding the right child to bring into your home. Don't be afraid to ask questions or ask for help during the process. Also, be vigilant throughout the ordeal. You do not want any surprises along the way.

## Where To Find Financial Help When Adopting A Child

Adopting a child could be costly, but there are many ways to help defray the cost. Check with different government agencies, adoption agencies and employers for help.

If you have decided to adopt, you already know that it is going to be a pricey endeavor. Adoptions are not cheap and cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$40,000 and possibly more. The more expensive adoptions are usually the international adoptions. Finding enough money to fulfill this dream could prove difficult especially when you have other burdens. There are many options to consider such as personal loans or refinancing your mortgage. If you don't have the money readily available, you can end up in debt, which is the last thing you want when you finally get a child into your home.

There are ways to relieve the problem. One of the first places to look is the North American Council on Adoptable Children. The NACAC provides help to prospective parents in the United States and Canada, and is a reliable resource. The NACAC has set up counseling for professionals to educate parents on where to find financial assistance. For more information visit the organization's website at [www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org).

There is plenty of information available at the Child Welfare Information Gateway. The government-run agency has information on public assistance, including a free downloadable packet to review. You can download the packet at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov). This is a must read.

In the United States, there are ways to help defer the cost of adoption. National and state governments offer tax credits and benefits for adopting parents. The tax credit does not cover any reimbursed money you may receive, but is applied after the reimbursement, which is still a great help. To learn more about the benefits of the program contact your local child welfare program or tax department. You could also speak to your accountant to find out what is available to you.

Check with adoption agencies about any programs it offers. Some agencies might reduce its fee if you find the birth parents on your own, but this isn't a guarantee. Check with each agency about its rules.

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If you are adopting a foster child, there are specific programs available. This is also something to consider because these fees are usually kept to a minimum and may be waived entirely. Usually the children that are placed through public agencies are children with special needs. Special needs are defined differently in each state.

Adoptive parents could be eligible to receive a grant to help offset the cost. There may be specific requirements for the adoption, so learn all you can about financial assistance for adoptions before jumping into the adoption game right away.

In addition, employees should check with their companies to see if help is available. Some companies might be willing to help ease the burden. Member of the United States military can get help and should seek it.

Another of searching for financial assistance for adoption is by using a search engine, such as Yahoo! or Google. You will get information on grants on how to defray the cost of adoption. You will also find many websites that link you to government agencies that can help.

Whatever your course, know there is financial help in adopting. You don't have to shoulder the burden alone.

## First-time Adoption

Anyone thinking of adopting for the first time will have many questions and concerns. Adopting is not a simple process and much consideration and deliberation is necessary. It is a very serious matter and not to be taken lightly. There is much more to adopting a child - it is not like shopping for a car; a child is a precious gift. The following is a list of common questions that those wishing to adopt for the first time might ask:-

\* In North America, who is able to adopt? Potential adoptive parents should meet the criteria set by an adoption agency or a non-profit making adoption organization. Then they can adopt.

\* How long is the process for adopting a child? This can vary and usually depends on the type of adoption that is chosen, and the period can be anything up to a year or even many years in some cases. This also depends on the child's needs and also what the adopting parents are looking for in a child. If they are willing to spend more time and money in the search for their ideal, then this can be a deciding factor on how long an adoption takes.

\* What is the cost of adopting a child? This all depends on what the adopting parents are looking for in a child, and the criteria they have set for themselves. A public adoption usually doesn't involve any cost. When adopting through a private agency or a foreign adoption, the costs can vary and can go up to about \$35,000.

\* How does the adoption process operate? Every adoption is individual so the time it takes can vary. It may also depend on which province or state is involved in the adoption, as they each come under their own government jurisdiction; they each keep their own rules and regulations for adoption.

\* Is one able to adopt from another province or state? Every province or state has their own laws and regulations which need to be adhered to, and some areas are very strict compared to others.

\* Can one adopt a child from abroad? It is possible to adopt a child from another country. In North America, many Americans choose to adopt a foreign child from countries like China,

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Colombia, Ethiopia, Russia, Vietnam and many others. The adoption criteria for the country where the child is being adopted must be met before the parents can adopt.

\* What are sources available for first time adoption? Detailed information can be found from many individuals, groups and organizations who have the resources. People usually like to ask a friend or someone they know who has already adopted, before making their first appointment to see a Social Worker or someone else locally who deals with child welfare. There are also adoptive parent's support groups which people can attend to help in the decision making. The Internet provides lots of useful information regarding adoption, including names of adoption associations and contact details of who they can approach.

\* One a person has collated enough information regarding first-time adoption where does one begin? Once individuals have decided on what is the best type of adoption for them, an adoption plan needs to be drawn up. This is so the adopting parents know what goals to aim for, and also it serves as a backup plan if things don't quite work out the first time.

Those proceeding with a first-time adoption will have many questions that need answering and they will find some of those answers here. The relevant people must be contacted so that if they have any more questions that haven't be answered, or they have more at a later date, they can find out all they need for the all important decision.

## Meeting Your Adoptive Child

One of the goals that prospective parents have is getting to meet the child they are considering adopting, a child who will become special to them. This makes all the time and lengthy procedure all worthwhile in the end. Once the adoption agency have informed the couple that they are to meet the child, this becomes their priority.

There could be an advantage to private adoption. Prospective parents may be able to meet the birth mother of their adoptive child, as the adoption process is usually more open. A relationship can then be formed between them so that trust can be built up. If the mother is still pregnant, they can share the pregnancy and some can even witness the birth of the child they are adopting. This is an extraordinary moment for any adoptive parents to witness as they can meet their baby as soon as it is born.

There are opportunities for parents adopting internationally to meet their child, but usually their first visual sighting is of a photo. The photos are provided by the relevant adoption agency, and this is enough to stir up excitement and anticipation in the parents to be. The concept of meeting their child for the first time is once which is indescribable and unique to each couple. Once all the relevant paperwork has been completed and passed through, the couple usually have to travel to the child's home country to meet them initially.

This is necessary so that they can see the child in their own native homeland and within their own culture. The parents to be can then experience and learn about the culture and customs of the child in their own country. This is also the ideal opportunity to meet the child they have seen and heard so much about for the first time. The child is also given a chance to meet their new parents, although the language barrier could pose a problem.

Usually, an interpreter is provided for such an occasion. Meeting their child for the first time brings great joy for any parents to be, knowing that this is the child they can in the future take home to nurture and care for as their own. As the adoption process focuses on all the homework and the legal documents that need to be processed, the adoptive parents only have a photo of the child to motivate them. All the challenges and the hard work pays off at the end, when the parents to be finally get to meet and hold their adoptive child for the first time.



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All sorts of emotions are unleashed when meeting your adoptive child at the first meeting. To most it has taken years of applications, being screened with home assessments, medical and any criminal backgrounds being checked out and watching your life savings deplete, so a flood of emotions are released. Any worries or stress that came in relation to the adoption process, are soon erased when meeting your adoptive child for the very first time. The very first meeting needs the adoptive parents to be understanding and most of all patient.

## Preparing The Home For An Adoptive Child – 5 Steps

Once you have a newly adopted child, there is a transition period parents have to endure. Try these five steps as a starter to make the transition move smoothly.

Anytime you bring a new child into a home, there are certain concessions one has to make. Parents have to give up certain things while adding others. Bringing an adopted child into a new home is a particularly daunting task because the child was already used to another home. Now, you have to make the new home inviting and caring while maintaining a sense of normalcy. These are a few things to consider when preparing the home for an adopted child.

- Change insurance and legal papers to reflect the new family member right away. This is one of the first steps that should be taken care of to ensure a healthy future for the new child. Babies need constant check ups, vaccinations and will get sick. You do not want any delay when it comes to taking care of the health of a child. Take care of all insurance related issues immediately. Try to get a hold of the child's original birth certificate. This document will come in handy in the future.

- You will need to get new documents for the child made up such as a social security number and a birth certificate. The social security number is needed because you cannot claim the child as a dependent on your taxes without one. Also, get an updated birth certificate to reflect the new family status.

- Now, it is time to prepare the physical home for an adopted child. With any child, birth or adopted, a home has to be made child-safe. This requires going over a few simple things to ensure the safety of the child. All electrical outlets should have a cover over them. The cabinets under the kitchen sink, where all the cleaning supplies are kept, should be locked or the supplies moved to a place where the child cannot reach them. Make sure children cannot pull anything down from a shelf or a table. Also, rooms that could be potential hazards, such as libraries or offices with bookshelves should be kept off limits with a child gate or a locked door. Common sense also comes into play here. If something looks dangerous, it probably is. Make the house safe for the child before bringing it home.

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- Depending on the age of the child, the child's past is a strong thing to consider. Babies don't have many memories, but do have habits. Try to keep the habits and the baby's routine as similar as possible. In older children, there is a lot more to consider such as favorite foods, favorite games, if they had a bedtime story read to them. It could be anything. Learn as much about the child's past as possible to make the transition easier for an adopted child into a new home. The adopted child is already going through a traumatic experience by changing homes and family, try to make it go as smoothly as possible.

- It is not just the adopted child that parents need to consider. If there are other children already in the home, parents have to think about their feelings as well. This is a new and exciting time for the whole family, however, other children could feel left out if they are not part of the process. Talk to the other children and get their feelings on having an adopted child in the house. Ask them what they could do to make the baby feel welcome. Give them tasks such as helping change a baby's diaper, showing them a new game or picking out new clothes to make them feel involved.

As the process goes along you may find there are other things that need to be changed to prepare the home for an adopted child. These are not ground rules when it comes to bringing in an adoptive child, but it is a great place to start.

## Types of Domestic Adoption

Learning the difference between an adoptive child and a foster child is important for couples looking to adopt as are the facts regarding various kinds of adoption and the process involved in adoption.

The main types of adoption include domestic and International adoption; domestic refers to within your country and the latter, to adoption across International borders. We focus on the former type here: for US citizens, it is important to understand that once the procedure for adoption has been rightly followed through, the adoptive children will be deemed as having the same legal rights as biological children as they are regarded as equal members of the American family system.

Besides this, adoption can be further classified as Open, Semi-Open, Closed and Foster Care adoption. In the first case, it can be of 2 kinds: in the US, it refers to the process of adoption where the child's birth parent(s) is(are) involved in the process from start to finish and this includes meeting the couple looking to adopt to determine the caregiver's commitment to looking after their child. Many a time, this meeting between birth parents and prospective ones is conducted before the birth of the baby and in certain cases, both set of parents may decide to let the birth parents stay involved with the child, though carrying out non-parental roles e.g postal and telephonic communication or even in-person kinds.

This sort of arrangement is pretty common and allows the adopted person to access personal records too; the UK allows those below 18 this privilege.

The second scenario of semi-open adoption involves a limited interaction of the birth parent(s) in the life of the adopted child leave for the initial meeting at the time of processing the legal matters, after which stage, there is usually no in-person contact maintained by them except for infrequent correspondence or photo-exchange.

In the case of minimal information exchanged between both sets of parents, the closed adoption type is believed to have occurred; it typically suggests a complete breaking away from information exchange of any kind once the formalities are completed. It is especially evident in cases of neglect or child abuse with birth parent(s) often suggesting the clean break.

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The last type of adoption procedure involves taking in a child for looking-after for a certain period, though legally they are not adopted. At times, foster parents can choose to get legal custody of a child in their care but usually they act as guardians till the time adoption is legal and official.

## The Differences Between Open and Closed Adoptions

Open and Closed adoptions offer different opportunities. Open adoptions are not for everyone. Learn about the options available and decide which situation is best.

Once the adoption process starts, there are two ways it could go down. It will be either a closed adoption or an open adoption. Closed adoptions are the way adoptions were traditionally done. There is no contact between the prospective parents and the birth mother. All information, the limited information, is given through the adoption agency. In an open adoption, both parties have an open line of communication. The birth mother actually picks the family she wants her child to go to and then spends time learning about the family.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both scenarios. The prospective parents have to know how they are going to be most comfortable. Parents might get the jitters of knowing the birth mother and have an issue with knowing who she is. Others want to know exactly where their child is coming from.

The term open adoption might seem misleading. Just because it is open doesn't mean anyone is privy to the information regarding the adoption. Only the birth mother and the prospective parents are allowed to know details. An adoption agent will pair a mother and a potential family and exchange information about the parties. If it progresses further, the two clients will meet and possibly exchange contact information. This way the two families can stay in touch with each other. Prospective parents need to be cautious in dealing with this type of adoption. While there have been loads of successful cases, there have been horror stories associated with open adoptions. The birth mother uses this as a way to get extra money from the parents. More money than was initially agreed upon. Be cautious and vigil.

The key to a good open adoption is having great communication. Ask as many questions as possible and don't be afraid to answer any questions. Being honest will go a long way in open adoptions. Another thing to consider in open adoptions is the future of your child. When the child learns that they were adopted, they might want to meet the birth mother. In this case, it will be easier to find the birth mother.

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Some prospective parents might feel uncomfortable in this situation. The parents are desperate for a child; they don't want to do anything to scare away the birth mother. They fear saying or doing the wrong thing. They worry the birth mother will not like them. If this type of situation is too much to handle, closed adoptions might be a better fit for prospective parents.

Closed adoptions offer limited information about the parties. Historically, such limited information led to problems between the clients, but that is not the case anymore. Adoption agencies handle the situations with utmost care. The agencies are there to make both parties are happy with the least amount of complications. In this situation, it is usually left up to the adoptive parents to let the child know he or she was adopted. It is also usually harder for an adopted child to find his birth mother, which could lead to problems down the line.

There are many things to consider when deciding on either an open or closed adoption. Go through the list of options and decide what situation you are going to be most comfortable with to make the adoption process as painless as possible.

## Deciding Between Open and Closed Adoptions

Adoptions come in different varieties, open and closed. Learn the differences between the two in deciding which one to pick.

When you are adopting, one thing to think about is whether you want an open or closed adoption. Closed adoptions have been the norm for quite some time. It is the way adoptions have been traditionally done with the two parties involved not knowing anything about the other, not even names. In this scenario, there were many secrets and no way to tell if any sort of information you got on the other party was true. This at times could lead to resentment between the parties and caused problems in the future if the two had ever met. Closed adoptions are still similar in the respect that no information is given on any parties, but they are handled with more care than history recalls.

Open adoptions are very different. The particulars of an open adoption are confidential except to the parties involved. Open adoptions give the birth mother an active role in decided where her child is going to end up. In this situation instead of an agency finding a match and telling parents there is a baby available without any other information, the birth mother selects candidates. After going through a list of potential parents, the birth mother will pick who she wants her baby to live with. This begins the process of an open adoption.

The two parties do not meet right away. They are gradually brought together. In the beginning, only first names are given. More information is given to both parties as the adoption progresses further and with each party's comfort level. In open adoptions, the parties often meet and can exchange contact information. This way the birth mother has a way of meeting the people her child is going to and the prospective parents know about the child from the mother. In an open adoption, the mother can never claim ignorance that she didn't know what was going on. The terms of the adoption are spelled out for her right from the beginning giving an advantage to the prospective parents.

Open adoptions can bring complications or joys depending on how an individual sees it. With open adoptions, there are ways to keep an open line of communication between the two parties once the baby is given to the adoptive parents. The birth mother can stay in the loop on what is going on in the child's life. However, there are some adoptive parents who may not feel



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comfortable in this situation or even knowing anything about the birth mother. Some adoptive parents want to remain as anonymous as possible and not share more information than needed with the birth mother.

These are people who definitely need to consider closed adoptions. Another disadvantage to an open adoption is the actual communication itself. By the birth mother meeting the prospective parents, she may see something or hear something she may not like and change her mind on that family. Some prospective parents might not be able to handle this type of rejection. Open adoptions require a lot of communication and the better the line of communication, the better the process will go.

In a closed adoption, usually the only type of information that is given is non-identifying medical information or any background that is pertinent to the child. Once a closed adoption is finalized, the file is sealed and usually never made available again. This can pose problems in the future when the adopted child wants to know more about his or her birth family.

There are many options to consider in when adopting. Deciding on open are closed adoptions is just one of those choices.

## Adopting Your Stepchild

How to Adopt your Stepchild - the reasons why and the important decision making process is given below; involving all parties for a successful, happy adoption.

If the parents of a child separate, some parents find a new partner and may even remarry when they feel ready to start a new life together. The child is then involved in this new family with their stepparent. The new member of the family may decide to adopt the child from their spouse's previous marriage or relationship. This is usually beneficial for the whole family, as once again the child belongs to a proper family unit again and can feel safe and secure. The stepparent develops a bond with the child as they play an important role in their life, and also the child's well-being as they grow up. There are important issues to consider to successfully adopt a stepchild.

When considering to adopt your stepchild, you need to discuss it with your partner or spouse first. As it is their biological child, they should be involved in every step of the process of the adoption and to support you if they feel comfortable in making this life changing decision. They need to consider if it is in the best interest of the child to go ahead with this, as they have to weigh up the circumstances of the current relation against the old one. If it is considered to not be the best decision, you may need to discuss why and whether it can be resolved in any way. After some considerable time, this issue can be raised again at a more opportune moment.

If your spouse considers it a good decision for you to adopt then child and you are ready, you should then ask your stepchild how they feel about your decision, that is, if they are at an age where they understand the proposal you are making to them. Your stepchild needs to realize the importance of what it means to be adopted by you and to know what all the options to consider. Give them time to make a decision on their own. Answer any concerns they may have and let them know that ultimately the decision is theirs; should they not feel comfortable about being adopted let them know that you support their decision, and that you still love them and will be always there if they need you. Your stepchild should not feel pressured into accepting the decision, but allow them to get used to the idea, and they will come to you once they have made their mind up. They should not be placed in a demanding situation which requires them to give you an immediate reply.

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Adopting your stepchild needs the consent of the biological parent. If the other biological parent is unable to make the decision, then the case must go to court for them to decide. If the child has been abandoned by the other parent, or is unfit to consent to the condition, the court can then offer the consent. However, if the other parent is deceased, submitting a consent to a court is not necessary.

## Adopting Siblings

Thinking of Adopting Siblings? The process for adopting sibling children for parents who can love and care for them together in one stable loving environment.

If a child is adopted into a permanent home, it is a very upsetting for them if they have siblings who are also up for adoption and get left behind. Often, new parents only want to adopt one child. If brothers and sisters are separated and they have grown up together in a children's home, it can have a dramatic effect on the adopted child's life. If the child is old enough to understand what is has occurred in being adopted, they would have mixed emotions. They may be happy at going into a permanent home where they will have parents to love and care for them, but they are leaving behind their siblings who are still waiting for a family when they should be together, because they are family.

Fortunately there are potential families who wish to adopt siblings, so that the whole family can stay together. These parents show that they have lots of compassion and commitment in adopting all the children in one family, so that they have a loving, stable home. This proves to be a huge expense - there are the expensive adoption process fees, as well as the daily living expenses which an immediate expense increase with adopting a whole family of children. Couples should be financially stable before they are approved for adopting siblings.

One of the countries that have sibling groups up for adoption is Colombia. They are usually to be found to be living in one of the small or large orphanages and some of the foster homes. Most of these children have come from families in poverty and poor backgrounds, abandoned by their parents who have lost all parental rights. The siblings stay together to give each other comfort and the strength they need in these orphanages and the foster homes. If the siblings are separated, this could have damaging effects which last long term. A child that is adopted without their siblings will also feel anxiety at the separation. Sibling adoption is permitted in Colombia. Parents wishing to adopt have to meet the requirements which are laid down by the Colombian adoption department, before being allowed to take home their whole family of adopted children.

The adopting parents first need to find out the history behind why the children were abandoned. If parental rights were not terminated, it can cause a be disappointing and heartbreaking to find

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that out at a later date, if the birth parents then decide that they would like their children back. This would devastate both the children that have been adopted and their adoptive parents, as then a battle would ensue in court for custody which can be a long drawn out process. In most cases, unfortunately, the court decides that the children would be best returned to their birth parents, although it may not always be in the best interest of the children. All the adoptive parents can do is allow the children to return to their birth parents, with all their hopes and prayer that the children will be loved and cared for in a loving and healthy environment.

For those interested in sibling adoption, contact an adoption agency for consultation, or use the Internet and browse for information. The internet is a great source of information on how to adopt, including sibling adoption and you can also read stories about parents who have successfully adopted siblings. You can collate vital information before deciding that adopting siblings is right for you as a couple.

## Adopting A Special Needs Child

Adopting a special needs child may seem like a difficult task, but there are advantages if prospective parents are willing to go this route. They are cost little to no money and have less wait time than a regular adoption.

Normally when people think of adoptions, they think about the healthy, perfect baby that finds its way into a loving family. But there are many children out there that are far from perfect. There are children who may not be in perfect health, but they need a home as well. These children are waiting to be adopted just as eagerly as anyone else. These are special needs children and there is no shame in a special needs adoption.

Special needs is defined differently in each state. Get a definition from your local government on what constitutes a special need child. Most of the time it is a child with a physical or mental disability. Other times it could be a child with an emotional issue or even siblings who need to stay together in a home. There are advantages to giving special needs children a home. The first is there is usually no or low fee involved when adopting a special needs child. These children are usually placed through public agencies and waive the fee in special needs adoptions. The other advantage is the considerably less wait time than it would be to adopt a regular child.

Both of these advantages sound enticing, but parents might be worried they do not have the skills involved for a special needs child. The first set of skills parents need is patience, caring and flexibility. These three assets will go a long way in child's life, particularly a special needs child. The next set of skills will be provided by the agency or the local government to help out.

The agency or public department that placed the child will give specific classes and information on how to deal with the specific needs of the child you are considering adopting. They will teach you all the important information that is needed. Prospective parents will also get all the proper information when it comes to the child's past that is important to the special needs child's future. There are not many things left out when it comes to special needs adoptions.

If this sounds like a task you know you can do, there are procedures to go through. First a prospective parent has to fill out the proper paperwork. The next step is for a case worker to do

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a home study where the case worker describes the home environment to see if the child will be a good fit. Once all the requirements are met, the special needs child is placed in the home, but this is on a probationary period. Case workers will make regular visits to the home to ensure the special needs child is adapting well and everything is moving smoothly. The prospective parent's job isn't over. They have to complete a post-placement report and submit it to the proper government agency. After all this is done, the parents finally receive the adoption order.

One of the biggest disadvantages to special needs adoption is the emotional toll it could take in caring for one these children. It is not easy an easy job and no one will pretend it will be. That is why it is important to be patient and flexible with special needs adoptions. Many times these are older children who have been in multiple homes. They may find it hard to accept their new life right away.

Special needs adoptions are difficult. However, these are children who need caring homes. As the old saying goes, anything hard is worth fighting for.

## Transracial Adoption

What transracial adoption is and the challenges you will face. What to expect and the reasons why this could be for you.

Transracial adoption is placing a child of a different race or ethnic background with parents who are not of the same race or ethnic origin. This is usually referring to children who are of a different color and race, placing them with Caucasian parents; with the knowledge that it shouldn't make a difference to the love and care they will receive from their adoptive parents. There are much more children available of a different race and color, compared to the availability of Caucasian children. Couples wishing to adopt feel the need to reach out to any child, regardless of the color or ethnic background. There are mixed opinions on this as it is viewed that children may fare better with a family where one parent is of the same race, whilst others believe that race doesn't matter at all.

Preparing for adoption is always an important matter, but in transracial adoption there are even more concerns that you need to think about. What are your reasons for a transracial adoption - is it down to your beliefs; what are your feelings about race and different ethnic origins. Look at the area in which you live in, the community and in the schools. How many different cultures are there and how are they accepted by Caucasians? If it is widely accepted, then going ahead with a transracial adoption could be right for you.

It is important that as parents you do not allow any racial or ethnic prejudice remarks to enter your home. All your family should be supportive of your decision, and be happy to continue to help your child not to forget their ethnic background. You can do this by cooking traditional food and learning about the different culture and language. This is a huge benefit for all in acceptance. You should let your child that you will always love and protect no matter what prejudices they may encounter and help them to grow and love themselves. They also need to be taught how to teach others how to be more accepting, instead of starting a fight or verbal abuse.

Not all agencies are open to Transracial adoption policies, as it is a sensitive area to broach. Always find out about an agency before using them. In 1994 the subject of Transracial Adoption was brought out in a bill before congress. After much debate, an agreement was reached that



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adults from all different backgrounds should help all adopted children to reach their full potential in life, regardless of where they came from.

It was after World War 2 when transracial began due to the large number of children left homeless or without any family to care for them. Many American couples were family orientated so even if they had their own children, they felt they needed more to complete the family. By adopting transracially, it was accepted that the family would probably become a minority, being open to strange looks and remarks; some were even ostracized. Research proves that children brought up in a transracial environment handled the cultural differences better than their parents. Parents had to work harder than parents of the same race, to make sure their children were taught about the diversity of cultures, races and religions. They also helped to empower them to handle social situations.

Transracial adoption can be successful and the right family can enjoy the wonderful experience. All the effort is worthwhile in the end - very rewarding!

## Adoption from Same Sex Couples

Homosexuality is now a major social issue slowly being widely accepted. Here we talk about adoption by Same Sex Couples and where to start.

If partners are in a same sex relationship, one may decide to adopt a child. In the U.S. the legal requirements of adoption from same sex partners differs from one state to another and also in countries worldwide.

'Second parent adoption' is one of the options open to same sex adoption, where a partner is able to adopt the biological child or adopt the partner's child with the parent still having parental rights. One of the partners, in theory could as a single parent adopt a child. The other partner can also adopt the child, so that they too become the child's parent. This process is not available in Florida where adoption by homosexuals is forbidden, nor is it possible in Utah, where any couples who are cohabiting and not legally married, are unable to adopt anyone. However, it is possible for single people to adopt in Utah.

In the United States, second parent adoption is allowed for couples of the same sex in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Washington and in Washington D.C. The other 38 states that the laws for adoption by partnerships of the same sex are ambiguous. Homosexuality has become a major social issue with civil unions and marriages of same sex couples becoming legal status in many countries. It may only be a matter of time before all these issues regarding same sex partnerships are wiped out.

Adoption by homosexuals is still a relatively new social issue as the jury is still out on public opinion and its' slowness for acceptance. The subject of homosexuality is still a sensitive and controversial one to touch on, with hotly contested issues and opinions from both sides.

Gay adoption is rejected by the opponents usually on moral grounds as homosexuality is regarded as immoral. Adoption by same sex couples is seen as highly immoral, as parents are traditionally thought of as being female and the other male. It is thought that heterosexual couples make better parents and that homosexual couples may not be able to fulfill all the requirements of a child. There are several organizations that strongly support homosexual

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couples - the American Academy and the American Psychological Association of Pediatrics believe that they qualify as parents equally as heterosexual couples.

Many people fear that a child being raised by homosexual parents influence a child greatly into becoming a homosexual, or that the child's well-being could fall detrimentally. Research shows that this is not as preconceived, and that children do fare just as well with same-sex parents as they do with heterosexual parents, as sexual orientation has no bearing on the child. A study conducted by the UCLA estimated that by not allowing child adoption by LGBT couples set the United States annual costs which ranged from \$87 million and \$120 million. This was because researchers found that homosexual couples were more likely to adopt children that didn't appeal to heterosexual couples. This includes children that behavioral problems, children that are HIV positive and also older children. Those children that are not adopted are cared for by the State, and this can place a financial burden as they fall under foster care, a system which is draining on government funds.

As same sex adoption is still a controversial issue, progress is still ongoing but moving along. Same sex couples have to look into the laws and regulations where they live and explore all the options to them.

## Public Adoption

Public Adoption - all the pros and cons to adopting through a public adoption agency. The whole process explained and the advantages.

Simply put, Public Adoption is when a public adoption agency or government arranges an adoption. Adoptions were arranged like this in the past. These days, most couples adopt using private adoption agencies, especially if they are looking for a child overseas. There are fewer choices available in public adoption, which usually focus primarily on the children's safety and welfare. The main priority is to find ideal parents for the child, rather than looking for the perfect child for the couple adopting. In public adoption, it is the agency who take over the whole process of choosing, and parents do not get much of a look in or given enough options.

In the public adoption process, prospective parents still need to meet the basic requirements during their screening, to be approved and deemed acceptable. This is regardless of where the public adoption is taking place. An information session is set up for them to attend, so that all the relevant information which is very important can be collated. This is required for the public domestic adoption process as the parents who are to adopt must pass the complete police clearance and medical reports on their health. They will also need to attend the adoption classes so as to complete a full family and social history, as this is all vital information which is needed to build up a portfolio of the couple. Personal references should also be provided which gives a good character reference. An adoption practitioner is also assigned to the adopting parents so that a home study can be carried out. Once they have met all the requirements, a child can then be placed with them in their home. There is, however, a probationary period in the public adoption, for the placement of the child. Follow-up visits by the adoption practitioner are made for continual assessment during this period. Once the probation period is over, the parents must then submit a post-placement report to the relevant parents in charge of the adoption. Once all the requirements have been met and everything is found to be in order, an adoption order from is given to the adoptive parents.

Usually, there is no charge for adopting through a public agency. The entire process for a public adoption can be quite a lengthy process which a couple must be prepared for. It also depends on what the adoptive parents are looking for a child so if they are not too choosy, the time it takes to adopt can improve somewhat. It can take up to a year and sometimes more to

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complete the home study along with the information sessions. All this depends on what the parents who are adopting are looking for in a child - if they are wanting a newborn child that is healthy, there is a minimum wait of about eight years. Newborns are few and far between. There are many children with special needs so an immediate placement can usually be found.

There are a lot of advantages to a public adoption, as usually there is no cost involved with a public agency. Those who are eager to adopt, and willing to adopt a child with special needs, find that the time it takes for the whole process is very short and more favorable. Another advantage in public adoption is that the mother is more likely to have given up their child with good reason and not look back on that decision. Most of these children given up for public adoption are looked after by the state as they have been subject to abuse, neglect or even abandoned. Their parents may have been declared unfit and the child taken into care for their own welfare and safety.

The disadvantages of public adoption are the restrictions that are imposed and the rules regarding child placement, the types of children that are available and the wait involved, and also it depends on what the adoptive parents are looking for in a child. They usually have a picture of their ideal child.

## International Adoption

Going overseas to find that baby is so much easier and faster for North American and Canadian couples that International adoptions are fast becoming the preferred choice of many prospective parents keen to adopt, especially those hiring the services of a private agency. Some non-profit organizations are also effective like adoption agencies in helping prospective couples from these States adopt a child though choosing a child may be less of a privilege than in their home country as the organization handling the adoption usually has the onus of picking a child based on adoption laws and regulations of their nation.

The drawbacks of International adoptions include more complex and considerably more expensive adoption procedures since travel, hiring of outside agency and perhaps an international adoption lawyer and possibly, an interpreter or translator services may be required even as it is a quick resolution for those looking to adopt a child.

Multiple lawyers are used involved in a case of International adoption and depending on whether the adoption is private or public, there may be legal complications as well as state and provincial adoption law matters as well as foreign immigration laws to deal with effectively, which gets further complicated with additional issues like language differences and cultural aspects that also need to be considered in order to make the adoption a successful one. Due to these reasons, an International adoption process comes with added tension for some and fees for this type of adoption process may be quite high, including travel overseas.

Even though babies are aplenty in countries like China, Columbia, Russia, Romania, Vietnam and Korea and thus, the waiting period considerably less for American and Canadian couples looking to adopt, the legal processes are different from those in their native countries and require many expenses such as hiring a suitable and expert foreign adoption agency, going through pre- and post-adoptive formalities, clarify the age-group, sex, race and health conditions for their preferred adoptive child. This freedom is curtailed a bit in China as most children given up for adoption are girls but, other countries do allow prospective parents to select a child based on a series of photographs after going through various applications an agency or the central registry of the child's country of origin that has these records.

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However, these are not the only concerns involving an International adoption: among the major drawbacks a couple considering foreign adoption are the series of cumulative expenses on their shoulders. Fees for foreign adoption range from fifteen thousand to thirty thousand dollars and since adoptive parents are required to bear legal as well as administrative costs, just attending to the costs of translating documents, using the services of a notary, travel and living besides medical needs brings the expenses up considerably. All of these costs depend on how much time is spent in the foreign country finding a child to adopt and these figures may differ, based on this factor.

But, all is not lost for those couples looking at foreign adoptions and willing to learn about a different culture while using their valid passports to build their family; getting a child is quicker through International adoption as many children may be abandoned or brought up in orphanage that the hurdle of a birth mother backing out on her decision doesn't exist. Besides, there are children available for adoption at all times and the rules and eligibility criteria for American couples is easier overseas than it is in North America.

Once, couples have armed themselves with proper, updated information and laws regarding International adoption and have the time and finances resources to travel and stay overseas for finding their adoptive child, cutting through the red tapism, language barriers and eliminating the fraudulent intercessors comes naturally if they keep their eyes and ears open to these existing challenges.

## The Pros and Cons of International Adoption

Adopting internationally has become a more normal trend in the adoption world, but it's not easy. There are benefits and downfalls going in this direction.

When considering adoption there are several different avenues one can take. One of the more recent trends has been looking for a child outside of the United States borders. There are children, just like in the United States, that need a home. This is an option to consider, however, like anything there are benefits and downfalls in taking this route. One of the things to be wary of is when dealing with another country's child, the United States government cannot get involved. You will be dealing with a foreign court on behalf of its government and the U.S. has no jurisdiction there.

Here is the good part about adopting a foreign child:

- There are not as many children available domestically and broadening your search gives you more options. You are not limited to a certain area and can now open the search worldwide. Many people are going this route as the number of foreign adoptions has increased by three times since 1990. Too many people have been discouraged by the long wait time domestically and are looking internationally for a different path.

- There are countries where children are in desperate need of a better future such as China and Russia. China has a population problem and has mandated rules governing how many children a family could have. This forces a family give up a child more often, which tend to be mostly girls. Russia is a downtrodden country with economic issues and families cannot afford to keep their children. By adopting these children, you are giving them a life they didn't have the opportunity to have before. This is why these two countries are more popular than others to adopt internationally, but these should not be the only two places your search is limited to. There are children all over the world who need a loving home.

By adopting a foreign child, you are helping someone who would not have gotten the benefits you could offer such as a better school system, food to eat or a loving family.

Let's look at the pitfalls to adopting internationally:



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- Money. It costs lots and lots of money to adopt a foreign child. There are adoption agencies that charge around \$30,000 to get this process done because of the bureaucratic red tape that is involved. The agency is at the mercy of the other country and has to go by its policies. There are rarely instances where the U.S. is able to get involved on the behalf of the family, so if there is a falling out with the potential adoptive child, you might be out luck and money.

- The waiting process could be longer than a domestic adoption. There also might be extensive travel involved. Prospective parents might have to spend time in the foreign country having to miss work and will need to take care of everything is involved with being away for a substantial amount of time.

Before deciding to adopt internationally, prospective parents should do research on the idea. There are many resources available on the Internet and from government and adoption agencies. Check out [adoption.com](http://adoption.com) and the United States State Department. Both websites offer pertinent information on foreign adoption. You might also want to call adoption agencies that specialize in foreign adoptions. Before going that route, the agency will be able to give you information and explain all the pros and cons to adopting internationally.

In the end, while it could be costly and the wait time astronomical, it will be forgotten while you are holding that beautiful child in your arms.

## Canadians Adopting From The US

While the US and Canada have different governments and citizenship rules being 2 entirely separate countries, it is not often that laws of International adoption being prevalent for Canadians adopting from the US are discussed, even as this is a definite advantage for people choosing to do so.

Geographical proximity is one of the biggest advantages that prospective parents looking to adopt from the US have for their Canadian home as they can easily conduct the search themselves besides getting to travel around the neighboring country at pretty reasonable rates. The modes of searching out the adoptive child include scouring personal adverts, looking through dailies detailing info given by US birth mothers and Internet searches conducted personally as well as going through a professional adoption agency.

Whether conducted personally to maintain a certain amount of privacy or through an agency, adopting from the US is not a difficult proposition for Canadian couples and details can be kept private, if so desired by the couple concerned; however, since birth mothers and Canadian adoption agencies do not work together, prospective parents may need to go through a US agency or opt for a facilitator. A facilitator is actually a baby-broker and may come with high costs for their go-between work, thus they are typically the very last option for adoptive parents. One of the most important things to keep in mind when hiring the services of a facilitator is to check for a valid license as many may be practicing this trade without one and the whole adoption procedure may be illegal in Canada as well as some parts of the US, so at the end of it all, the money, hopes and efforts spent towards adopting from the US may leave many couples disappointed.

It is recommended that when dealing with issues of adoption that are of a sensitive nature, Canadian couples utilize legal means to secure an addition to their family to avoid heartache and loss of precious resources, be it time or money.

Canadian couples looking to adopt from the US have the added advantage of being in charge of choosing the timeline that suits them; they do need to however, complete the home study in the Canadian province of their residence as this is a rule that cannot be ignored. It may take between 3 to 6 months to complete and once done, the adoptive Canadian parents are free to

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search for an available child. For the lucky few, this process takes a few months only but it is not unusual for adopting from US to take some years too; this is because apart from the timeline and home study factor, there are other aspects of adoption that are deciding factors for the adoption process to carry on smoothly. Some of these include how finicky the adoptive parents are, the type of child they want, methods used to locate such a child and their fortune - both monetary and luck-wise.

So, we find that besides geographical nearness that makes the US a good bet for adopting, Canadians also have it good with a convenient timeline and the large number of birth mothers available who opt for adoption, so much so that some agencies can promise Canadian couples newborn babies in as little as a year's time! For couples that have no objections to adopting biracial children there are greater chances of seeing this wish come true even sooner than others. Of course, in the face of so many advantages, there are bound to be some drawbacks in adopting from the US too, such as a change of heart the birth mother may have about the adoption and her wanting to keep the child.

## Russian Adoption

A Russian adoption could be time consuming, but it is worth the wait. There are many things to consider when choosing this path.

When exploring international adoptions, Russian children seem to come up more often than others. It is one of the two most popular countries for United States families to adopt from. The reason Russian adoptions are popular is because it is a poor country that has many children who need homes. Many of the children come from teenage mothers or families who are too poor to support a child. These children are kept in institutions while waiting for a home, which hinders their growth. The good thing to note is that with proper care and nurturing, Russian children bounce back and assimilate well. Before you hop on the first flight to Moscow, there are things to note before starting the adoption process of a Russian child.

- Russians are not immediately available. Russian children are only allowed to be adopted domestically for six months from the date they are put up for adoption. Only then, will they be allowed to be adopted internationally. This allows the child a chance to remain in their own country with people of the same background. However, if a suitable family cannot be found, Russian children will get a chance at a life with a family from another country.

- Fees for Russian adoptions are not cheap. Fees are in the \$20,000 range. Note that this does not include travel expenses, visas and similar documents. This sum is usually just for adoption agency.

- Not anyone can adopt a Russian child. The government only allows single mothers or married couples to adopt.

Choosing the right adoption agency is important when adopting an international child. Make sure the agency specializes in Russian adoptions or at least has a considerable amount of experience in the field. These agencies will be able to give all pertinent information when it comes to Russian adoptions. They will be to explain the whole process and tell you what to expect. The adoption agencies will be able handle any questions you have about Russian adoptions.

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From start to finish, a Russian adoption takes an average of nine months. The process starts with a home study on the adoptive parents. A social worker creates a report listing everything they know about the prospective parents. Once the home study is finished parents are asked to fill out a dossier, which is a packet of paperwork that is required by the Russian government. The dossier should be notarized, but before you do this, find out when the notary's stamp expires. Most countries allow a leeway of one year when it comes to this. Once this is finalized, the adoption agency will send the paperwork to Russia. There it will be translated and given to the Russian government.

Once there is a child ready to be adopted, the Russian government will inform you that there is a match. Parents have to go to pick up the referral in front of the Russian Ministry of Education. It includes a video of the prospective child and any pertinent information such as medical history. There is a possibility that parents are not content with the referral. The adoption agency will work with you in finding the right one.

When you are pleased with the referral, the adoption agency will contact the proper authorities. The correct documents are prepared and you will then be informed on when you can meet the child. Usually, a family takes two trips to Russia. The first is to meet the adopted Russian child. This trip lasts about a week. The second trip is for a court hearing, which is usually a few months after the first trip. It takes ten days from the date of the hearing for your newly adopted Russian to go home with you.

Adopting a Russian child may seem like a long wait and a lot of hard work, these are children who will be served better in a loving home. Russian adoptions are time consuming, but both parties will be better off in the end.

## Vietnamese Adoptions

Learn the many requirements when adopting a Vietnamese child and what to expect in the adoption process.

One of the most popular foreign countries to adopt from is Vietnam. This country is highly populated and poverty stricken, which leaves many children out in the cold. One of the reasons the country is popular for adoption is because of the high number of children available. There is also less wait time than with domestic children in Vietnam.

The age range of children that get adopted in Vietnam fall between four months and one year old, though, there are children who are older that need homes. Also there are many more male children waiting to be adopted than female. If you are looking to adopt a girl from Vietnam, the wait could be a very long time.

A person cannot just get a plane and hope for the best. There are stipulations when it comes to adopting Vietnamese children. The Vietnam government has set up certain requirements for its adoptive children.

- Anyone wishing to adopt must adopt a Vietnamese child that is at least 20 years younger than them. However, if the prospective parents are over 50 their options are limited to only older children.

- Married couples (are considered a man and a woman in this situation) should be married for at least two years before applying to adopt a Vietnamese child. If a couple is divorced, they may not be divorced more than twice or they will not be considered.

- If you have a large family, you can be denied the right to adopt. Families who have no children are not allowed to choose the gender of a child if they are wishing to adopt in Vietnam. If prospective parents only have a couple of children, they can be specific in the type of child they would like to have.

The cost of Vietnamese adoptions is also very high. Between the agency, costs of travel, paperwork and anything else that goes into the adoption, prospective parents could be looking

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at \$30,000. Make sure you find an agency that specializes in Vietnamese or foreign adoptions. While the cost may be high, getting the right agency will make the hassles less and the adoption process easier to handle.

There is no time table on the length of the adoption process. Vietnam passed new laws in 2005, which changed some of the adoptions laws. This is another reason why it is imperative on finding the right agency. The process starts by filling out an application to be considered for adopting a Vietnamese baby. Once the paperwork is filled out, notarized and sent to Vietnam, a home study is done on the applicants. A home study is a report by a case worker on the prospective parents.

Once all the requirements have been accepted and verified, prospective parents will get referrals on children they could adopt. When parents have decided on a child, they fill out a dossier, a packet of paperwork, and send it to the Vietnamese authorities. If the dossier is approved, you will be given a date on when you pick up your new Vietnamese adopted child. The stay can last anywhere from a week to two weeks, depending on the circumstances.

Then, you get to bring your Vietnamese child to its new home.

## Adopting from China

Only married couples are allowed to adopting from China and their age range is 30 to 50 years when their papers are registered in China; besides this, those looking to adopt a child of 6months to 18months need to be between 30-44 while those between the ages of 45-50 can adopt children 18 months to 3 years old and older couples (51-55 years) are only eligible to adopt via the Waiting Child Program as China's adoption facility for outsiders is based on age factors mainly. This means if one potential foster parent is under 30 years or the other over 55, they are not eligible to pursue adopting from China.

Besides the strict age criterion, a positive health history is imperative to raise the chances of married couples keen to adopt a child from China as issues like depression, a major illness or any other severe delimiting health condition can prevent them from living out this dream. Adoptive parents need to prove they have led a medication free life for at least 2 years if there is any history of depression or excessive anxiety. Those with alcoholism problems in a recent history (10years) are not allowed to adopt a child from China as well as those using a wheelchair, mobility support device or those with missing limbs. Thus, naturally, those with a disease at the infectious stage, an illness requiring long term treatment that can affect life expectancy or even cases of blindness, auditory problems (though deaf couples can adopt a deaf child) or other such severe illnesses are some restrictions regarding adoption rules in China governed by health factors. More details are available on this issue on the Internet and even a good adoption agency can help provide additional facts.

Besides health and age, the financial stability factor is also an important one for married couples looking to adopt a child from China; their combined net worth must prove to be a minimum of \$80,000 with the applicants earning over ten thousand dollars per head as far as those living in the home is concerned, which includes the child to be adopted. Thus, the adoptive parents need to have a minimum annual income of \$30,000 or more, which brings it to \$10K per person living in the home besides the stipulation of the same amount per child, in case of more than one.

A criminal background check is also conducted for those looking to adopt from China and those with current warrants against them are fail the eligibility criteria for adopting from China as well as those on probation at the time of application; this restriction also applies to those applicants with a history of substance abuse, charged with violent crimes, including domestic violence



## **Adoption Made Easy**

issues and sex abuse, desertation and felony of any kind besides naturally undesirable issues such as child abuse. These restrictions regarding adopting from China are studied against individual petitions and agencies and programs do differ in laws and regulations in various places.

Besides these main facts about adopting from China, there are other essential details such as marriage, household and citizenship requirements besides religious issues that are pertinent to couples looking beyond geographical borders to adopt through an International adoption agency.

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