

How Do I Choose an Agency to Help Me Make An Adoption Plan?



You've made the difficult decision of deciding to make an adoption plan for your baby. But now what? Which agency should you contact to help you through this process? There are many factors for you to consider. Not all adoption agencies are the same.

Personal Preferences

Ask yourself a few questions about your personal preferences for your child before deciding on an adoption agency or an adoptive family. Consider the openness of the adoption and what type of family you prefer.

"I want my child's birth mother to know he is happy, healthy & loved. But we don't know who she is. I promise he is the center of our lives."

These are just a few questions to ask before going to an agency and choosing your child's adoptive family.

- Do you prefer to have a fully open adoption with the possibility of visiting your child? Or would you prefer to receive only letters and pictures? Or do you want the adoption to be fully closed?
- Do you wish to live close to the family that you will choose? If you are looking to have an open adoption and visit your child you may want to choose a family who lives closer to make this trip easier.
- Do you prefer a two-parent family for your child, or are you willing to accept a single-parent family as well?

- Do you prefer your child have a stay-at-home parent or are you willing to choose a family who works outside of the home?
- Do you want your child to have siblings?
- Do you prefer your child to be raised with a particular religion?
- Does the race of your child's family have an impact on your decision?

Agency Checklist

When looking for an adoption agency be sure to ask a few specific questions, such as:

- Does the agency explain all of your options?
- Does the agency require or recommend counseling before looking at adoptive parent profiles?
- What other types of counseling and support does the agency offer and how long does it last? Is it from the time of the contact through delivery and placement?
- Does the agency have a separate counselor for birth parents and adoptive parents?

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- What topics are covered in the training required for the adoptive parents? Look for topics that discuss how adoptive parents will talk about adoption with the child. Training topics should also cover cultural issues and school issues. This will come in handy when the child gets older and has a family tree project or heritage project for class.
- May I see the fee agreement that you give to the adoptive parents? The fee agreement shows a breakdown of what the adoptive family is paying and if they are paying for any of the birth mothers expenses.
- How are your expenses covered? (Doctor visits, health insurance, housing, and food if needed.)
- What paper work will I have to sign and what's the deadline?
- Does the agency have a lawyer who can help you understand the legal documents you are signing?

Also go to <http://openadoption.org> for a checklist of questions to ask.

When making this very difficult decision, you may want to talk to others who have gone or are going through the same process. You may want to try different blogs or discussion boards if you have questions about the adoption process. (See resources for two examples of blogs.)

One birth mom found comfort in reading the following from a blog, "I want my child's birth mother to know he is happy, healthy and loved.

But we don't know who she is. I promise he is the center of our lives."

The birth mom then wrote in her own blog, "In the end, this is what so many birth mothers, both from closed and open adoptions, want to hear. Whatever the reasoning behind our choice or lack-of-choice to relinquish our child, we want to know that our child is happy, healthy and loved."

During this process, take your time and choose the family who you feel is right for your child. There is no need to rush the process. Just as it took time to decide to make an adoption plan, it takes time to find the agency that's a good match for you.

For a list of licensed adoption agencies or any other questions, contact us at Adoption Resources of Wisconsin at 800-762-8063.



Resources

Birthparent Checklist

<http://www.birthmother.com/first-mother/birthparent-check-list.html>

Open Adoption

<http://www.openadoption.org>

Choosing an Agency

<http://www.birthmother.com/first-mother/choosing-an-adoption-agency.html>

Blogs

- <http://www.birthparentblog.com/>
- <http://birthparents.adoptionblogs.com>
- <http://therhouse.blogspot.com/>