

ADOPTION

GUIDE FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS



Prepared by

Tapestry  Adoption

A Journey of Hope



Often when I sit down with an expectant mom, to discuss adoption, the tears will begin to fall. It may be the first time she's really shared her heart about the fears of adoption, parenting, or even surviving. While no two stories are ever identical, we do see many of the same scenarios that lead women to our office.

You are not alone.

Pregnancy has a way of forcing you to look at your relationships. Often the relationship is not stable or involves addiction and abuse, and you know you cannot continue in the environment, much less bring a baby into chaos. Or perhaps you are already parenting and the promise to support a family is just not there.

You are fighting to work and build a life.

Instead of offering support, those closest to you begin to share their doubts about adoption. "Your child will hate you." "I could never give up my baby."

"Do you not love this baby?"

Shame.

We see the words in accusations of others bring confusion and shame upon the women we work with almost daily. Regardless of your decision, there is no shame. We want to let you know adoption is a journey of hope. We truly believe this because we've seen it time after time. Adoption can be a new beginning for you. By utilizing the support available, you may be able to find a new career, housing, or create stability in your life. At the same time, you are offering safety and security to your child. It is a hard and sacrificial decision that can provide hope for both of you.

We love Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you. To prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Is Adoption For You?

In adoption, a child is not given up. A birth mother gives life and a family to this child, unconditional love. She gives another mother a part of her heart that has always been missing. You give a lot -- just never give up.

- Terra Cooper

Choosing adoption is an important decision. No one else should make it for you. You need to weigh all the factors in your specific situation to determine if you should consider placing your child. While you may have others in your life trying to influence your choice, remember: it is YOUR baby, and YOU decide who gets to parent it. Adoption is not the act of giving up on your child, but rather giving *for* your child and providing them with the opportunity to experience things you may not be in the position to do.

If you don't feel confident that you can parent, adoption is a real and responsible option for you. It provides for your baby in ways that may not be feasible for you. Raising a newborn is a full-time job, and not something easy to do alone, while working, or while still in school. Having a child demands financial stability, emotional readiness, and a lifelong focus on your child's needs. Additionally, you must baby-proof your living space, and this might affect those who live with you. If you feel unready or unprepared, you may want to look into adoption.

Adoption Can Give Your Baby:

- Unconditional love
- A safe, stable home
- Financial security
- Emotionally prepared & available parents
- Loving relatives and grandparents
- Comprehensive health care
- Educational opportunities
- Cultural and social connections

Myth Vs. Fact

Myth

“My child will feel angry and abandoned.”

Fact

Actually, the opposite is true. Most adopted children are very grateful for the sacrifice their mother made for them.

Myth

“I can never see my child again.”

Fact

As a part of your adoption plan, you can establish a relationship with the adoptive family, you can even request pictures, letters, and visits as much as you wish.

Myth

“Adoption is giving up your child.”

Fact

Adoption is making a plan for your child to ensure that their physical, financial, and emotional needs are met.

Myth

“A baby will improve my relationship with my boyfriend or husband.”

Fact

Unfortunately, this is just not true. Even for healthy relationships, the physical and emotional demands of a newborn often add strain to a relationship.

Birth Fathers



There are two types of birth fathers,; **Legal fathers**, and **Putative fathers**.

Specific rights for each type vary from state to state. Legal fathers are currently married to the birth mother. A Putative father is anyone who has the potential of being the baby's father. There can be more than one individual. If you aren't sure who the father is, each putative father must all be notified of the adoption plan, at which time they may decide to prove paternity and engage for custody, or consent to adoption. Your adoption agency and social worker will help you walk through this.

Legal Father

- Is currently married to the birth mother or listed on the birth certificate.
- Has automatic parental rights.
- Must consent to an adoption plan - without this, the adoption cannot proceed.
- Has legal rights until they are legally terminated.

Putative Father

- Was never married to the birth mother.
- Claims to be the father OR mother thinks they may be the father.
- Does not have any automatic parental rights.
- May be required to register to assert rights.
- Must be alerted of the adoption plan.

FAQ's



Q: “How should I tell the people around me about my adoption plan?”

A: *It is totally up to you who you tell and when. Sometimes it may be easier to tell individuals who you know will support you and give you courage than to tell others.*

Q: “What will my friends and family think of me if I choose adoption?”

A: *Often family and friends can put a lot of pressure on you to parent. The reality is, they aren't paying for diapers, groceries, or rent. You have to do what's right for you and the baby. Their opinions do not define you.*

Q: “What if the birth father wants to have a relationship with the adoptive family and I don't?”

A: *Your agency will create separate adoption plans for both of you.*

Q: “Do I have to live in Indiana to work with Tapestry?”

A: *No, we work with expectant moms from all over the United States.*

Q: “Is there any cost to me for a lawyer or my medical bills?”

A: *No, all services are free for birth mothers. This includes counseling, medical, and all attorney fees.*



For more FAQ, visit: www.tapestry-adoption.com/faqs



Choosing An Agency

Additionally, consider reading reviews and testimonials from other families who have worked with the agency. These can offer valuable insights into what you might expect from the experience. Don't hesitate to reach out to multiple agencies to ask questions and get a feel for their level of transparency and support.

Remember, this journey is deeply personal and unique to you. It's okay to take your time to make the best decision for you and your baby. Seek out support groups and forums where you can connect with others who have been through the adoption process. Their shared experiences and advice can be incredibly reassuring and helpful.

The right agency will respect your choices, offer genuine support, and work with you to create a positive outcome. Trust your instincts and prioritize your well-being and that of your child throughout your journey.

Red Flags In An Agency:

- Pressures you to place your baby for adoption.
- Offers you money in exchange for your baby.
- They offer to keep your baby while they find a family.
- They require you to pay for their services.
- They do not screen nor require adoptive families to have a home study.

Questions To Ask

- What are my options?
- What services do you provide for expectant mothers?
- How can you help me make an adoption plan?
- How do I find an adoptive family through your organization?
- How do you screen your adoptive families?
- What financial assistance can I receive during my pregnancy?
- What counseling services are available for birth parents?

Choose Type Of Adoption

There are three different types of adoption: open, semi-open, and closed. There are benefits to each. Each type of adoption offers varying levels of contact and involvement, allowing you to decide how connected you would like to be with your child and the adoptive family. Your adoption agency will help you match with a family who is interested in the same type of adoption that you are.

As the birth mother, you are in total control and it is up to you what kind of adoption you would like to choose. Your assigned case worker can help you clearly understand the options and can help you process or talk through what may be the best fit for you.



Open

Varying degrees of communication, relationship and visits. This is typically agreed upon in your post-adoption agreement. Not all states have binding agreements.

Semi- open

Like open adoption, but limited to the exchange of photos, videos, emails, and phone calls. The child usually doesn't have any direct communication with the birth parents.

Closed

No identifying information is shared with the adoptive family and there is no amount of communication after the child is placed for adoption.

Choosing A Family



You have every right to choose a family for your baby. You will work with your agency to choose from multiple profiles, and you can even have the chance to interview families so that you are not simply picking them out of a book. Every family presented to you has gone through adoption training as well as a series of local and federal background checks. Their criminal and work history, their credit, any involvement with CPS, as well as the sex offender registry have also been checked. In addition, they have health physicals and multiple references.

If you'd prefer your agency make the decision of whom to match your baby with, that is also an option.

Communicating with the Family

Open communication is the foundation of a healthy and successful adoption journey. It is important to feel comfortable expressing your thoughts, concerns, and preferences throughout the process. If, at any point, you find it difficult or uncomfortable to discuss certain topics with the adoptive family, don't hesitate to reach out to your agency representative, attorney, or social worker for support. They are there to facilitate these conversations and ensure that everyone involved feels heard and respected. Clear, transparent communication is critical for setting expectations and building trust. It ensures that all parties understand the plan for before, during, and after the adoption, creating a smoother experience and a stronger foundation for the future relationships between you, your child, and the adoptive family.

During Your Pregnancy

- What forms of communication work best for everyone?
- Are you comfortable with any of your adoptive family members coming with you to any of your doctor appointments?
- Will you be sending the family updates?

During & After Delivery

- How will the adoptive family be notified when you go into labor?
- Are you comfortable with any of the adoptive family being in the room with you?
- How much time would you like to spend with your baby in the hospital after he or she is born?

After The Adoption

- How often would you like the adoptive family to send you updates?
- What would you expect these updates to include?
- Would you like to give a picture/video/letter or something else for them to share with your baby in the future?

Creating A Birth Plan



- Are there any family members or friends you'd like to have in the delivery room with you?
- Who will drive you to and from the hospital?
- Who would you like to hold your baby first?
- Do you want the adoptive parents in the room with you?
- Do you have a preference about whether you'd like to deliver vaginally or have a C-section?
- How much time do you want to spend with your baby after he/she is born?

Financial Assistance

Depending on the agency you choose to work with, the level of financial assistance available to you during your pregnancy can vary. Most reputable agencies will offer comprehensive support for essential expenses such as medical bills, legal fees, and counseling services to ensure your health and well-being throughout the adoption process.

Additionally, many agencies may also offer financial assistance for living expenses, which can include rent, utilities, groceries, transportation, and even maternity clothes to help alleviate financial pressure.

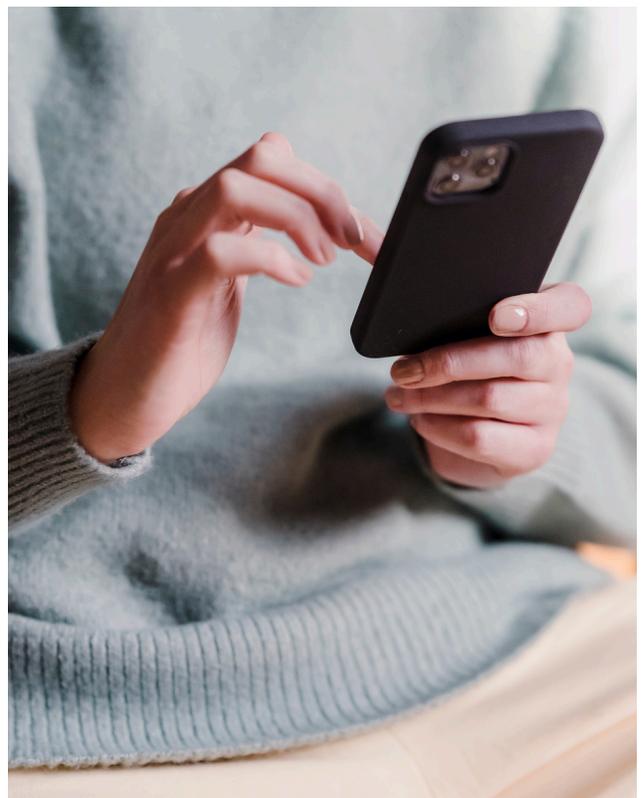
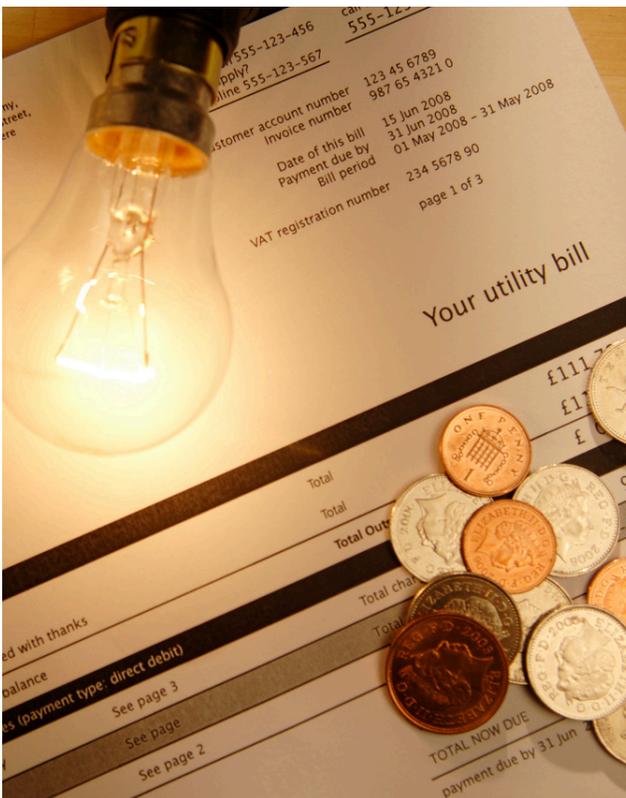
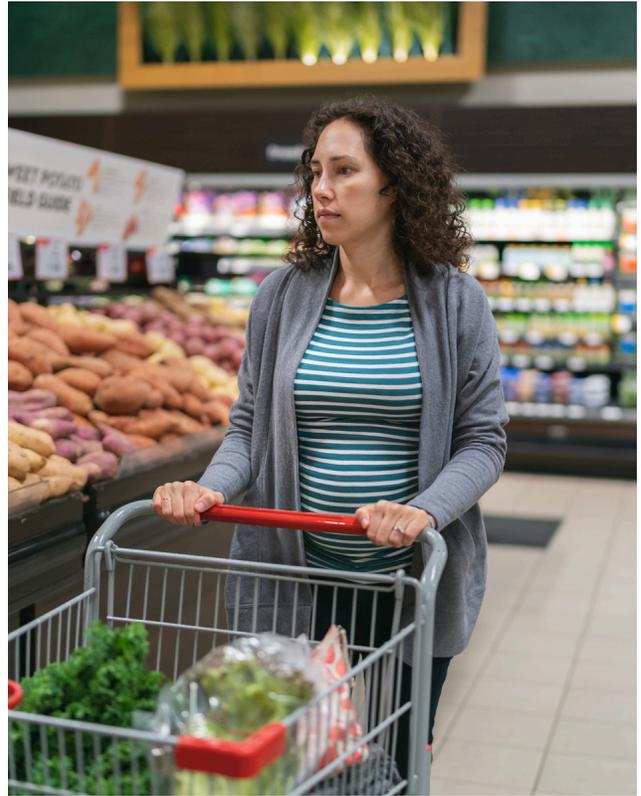
It's important to remember that, by law, you should never receive direct financial assistance from the adoptive or prospective adoptive family. All financial support must go through a licensed attorney, social worker, or agency to ensure that everything is handled in compliance with state regulations. Depending on the state you live in, the rules and limits regarding financial assistance can differ. Your adoption agency or caseworker will guide you through these regulations to ensure that you understand what assistance you are eligible for and how it will be managed throughout the adoption process.

Ways An Agency Can Financially Assist You:

- Medical expenses
- Legal fees
- Counseling services
- Rent assistance
- Utility bills
- Groceries and food
- Transportation costs
- Maternity clothing
- Household bills
- Childcare for other children



Financial Assistance



After the Adoption: Moving Forward

Even when a birth mother feels confident and secure in her decision to place her baby for adoption, it's crucial to understand that she may still go through a significant period of grief. This emotional response is a natural and inherent part of the adoption process. Despite the certainty she might have had when making the decision, the act of placing a child for adoption often triggers profound feelings of loss and sadness.

This complex and deeply emotional journey can involve a wide range of emotions, even when she knows that adoption is the best choice for both her and her child. It's important to acknowledge and support her through this intricate and challenging experience, recognizing that her feelings are valid and deserving of compassion.

Come To Terms

Your experience with adoption will always be a part of who you are. Being a birth mother is a significant aspect of your identity, and it's natural for feelings of grief and loss to resurface occasionally, especially on holidays or your child's birthday. It's important not to dismiss these emotions but to acknowledge and embrace them, allowing yourself to process them fully.

Set Goals

As you move forward, set goals and work towards them. Consider starting or finishing your education, exploring a specific career, volunteering with a charity, or joining a support group for birth mothers. Pursuing these goals can be empowering and aid in your healing process, providing a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Over The Years

Your experience with adoption will always be a part of who you are. Feelings of grief and loss are natural, especially on significant dates like holidays or your child's birthday. Recognize and embrace these emotions. Focus on the incredible gift you gave your child and the joy your choice brought to another family's dream of becoming parents.



Tapestry Adoption

~ Weaving lives ~

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