



Adoption Access, Inc.

PROSPECTIVE ADOPTIVE PARENT APPLICATION

Please complete the following application. When returning this application packet, please enclose everything listed below. Also enclose your application fee in the amount of \$2,650.00 if in Texas to cover the cost of a homestudy and the processing of your application or \$1650.00 if out of state. This application fee is not refundable, and it is separate and in addition to the adoption fee. The adoption fee is subject to change at anytime. Please do not send any documentation which needs to be returned to you. We ask that you complete the questionnaire as a couple, if applicable. This information will assist in a home study evaluation. ALL applicants will need to have FBI prints completed. Please contact our Dallas office to help with this.

For your convenience, below is complete list of attachments that will need to be sent along with your application.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE APPLICATION BACK INCOMPLETE.

1. One original album and two color copies, including family pictures (please do not include original photos in album)
2. Check in the amount of \$2,650.00 or \$1650.00
3. Marriage Certificate
4. If applicable - Divorce Decree or Death Certificate
5. Birth Certificates for everyone in the home
6. Three Personal References (send one of the enclosed Personal Reference forms to each of your references)
7. Physical Examinations for everyone in the household (Exams are good for 12 months from date of visit)
8. Both Adoptive Parent autobiographies
9. First page of most recent tax return (1040)
10. Floor Plan of Home (identify each room) with Dimensions
11. Photos of front and back yard
12. Copy of driver's license
13. Copy of Medical Insurance card
14. Pet Vaccination record
15. FBI fingerprint cards completed for each household member over the age of 13.

If you are working with an outside agency to complete your home study any documents listed above may be sent by your social worker and DO NOT need to be redone.

If you need additional room to answer questions, please mark "See Attached" and add to the end of application.

I. PERSONAL Husband Wife (Maiden Name)

Full Legal Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

D. License #: _____

SS#: _____

Race: _____

Religion: _____

Height: _____

Weight: _____

Hair: _____

Eyes: _____

Complexion: _____

II. RESIDENCE Address: _____

County: _____

Phone: () _____

All Email: _____

(Please put the email checked most often at the top of your list. We will use this to send your medical and

genetic history, and pictures of possible birthmother matches)

(Please list any additional cell phones)

Adoptive Father Cell: () _____

Adoptive Mother Cell: () _____

Give a brief description of your residence, including the number of bedrooms, baths, living area, and yard facilities:

III. EMPLOYMENT

Present Income (please attach a copy of the first page of your most recent tax return, and if applicable list other assets on a separate sheet)

	Husband	Wife
Salary:	\$ _____	\$ _____
Co. Name:	_____	_____
Address:	_____ _____	_____ _____
Phone:	() _____	() _____
Fax:	() _____	() _____
Email:	_____	_____
Occupation:	_____	_____

What are your long term employment goals?

His: _____

Hers: _____

WORK HISTORY last ten years

Name	Supervisor	Reason for Leaving
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If both of you are working outside of the home, what will be your child care plans?

IV. STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES

ASSETS

Cash:
 Bank: \$ _____
 Other: \$ _____
 Other: \$ _____
Securities: \$ _____
Net Cash Value:
 Insurance \$ _____
 Annuities \$ _____
Real Estate: \$ _____
\$ _____
Personal Property & Automobiles:
 Furnishings: \$ _____
 Collectibles: \$ _____
 Vehicles: \$ _____
Other Assets: \$ _____
TOTAL ASSETS: \$ _____

LIABILITIES

Mortgages: \$ _____
\$ _____
Notes Payable: \$ _____
Taxes Owing: \$ _____
 Income: \$ _____
 Other: \$ _____
Account's Payable: \$ _____
Credit Card Debt: \$ _____
Other Liabilities: \$ _____
TOTAL LIABILITIES \$ _____

Total Assets: \$ _____
Less Total Liabilities: \$ _____
Total Net Worth: \$ _____

V. MARRIAGE STATUS

Date of Marriage: _____

Place of Marriage: _____

If either of you have had a previous marriage, please briefly explain the reason for divorce, date of marriage, date of termination (i.e. death, divorce), attaching a copy of Divorce Decree or Death Certificate.

VI. REFERENCES

Please give the names and addresses of three references with whom you are well acquainted, including zip codes and telephone numbers. **Please do not include any family members.**

Name: _____

Name : _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone:(____)_____

Phone:(____)_____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____)_____

Email: _____

Who referred you, or from what source did you come to this agency? _____

VII. CHARACTER (these sections can be completed on a separate page)

1. Describe your personalities (introvert, extrovert, quiet, cheerful, serious, etc).
2. In your opinions, what are your positive and negative qualities and characteristics?
3. What do you do for entertainment together, and individually?
4. State your religious preference, and briefly its place in your life (i.e., how frequently you attend a church, the influence it has on your lives).
5. What has been each of your most rewarding experiences?
6. What has been each of your most disappointing or tragic experiences?
7. Do either or both of you drink alcohol or use recreational drugs? If so, please provide the amount and type of drinking in which you engage. If you have been or are involved in AA or NA, please indicate your length of sobriety. It is our policy to require a minimum of 5 years of sobriety. If you meet this requirement and have adopted a child previously, there will be at least a 2 year time period before placing another child.

VIII. HEALTH

1. Do either of you have any physical or health problems? And if so explain on a separate sheet, providing current medical status and dates of illnesses or disabilities?
2. If you cannot, or choose not to have a child through the biological process, explain why.
3. Feeling on own history of abuse and/or neglect, and your resolution to experience.
4. Have either of you been diagnosed with Cancer? If so when and what is your long term prognosis?

IX. HOUSEHOLD

Give the following information on any other persons living with you: Please include if your children are adopted or biological.

Name	Relationship	DOB:	Sex: M /F
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Give the names, dates of birth, and dates of death if applicable, of any children either of you have who are not living with you at the present time.

Do you have any pets? If so, what kind?

X. CHILD

1. Why do you want to adopt a child?

2. Whose decision is it to adopt a child?
3. When did your interest in adoption begin and why?
4. Describe your attitude towards adoption, and people who Choose to place a baby or child for adoption.
5. Type of child desired:
6. What are your education expectations for this child?
7. Do you have goals in mind that you wish this child to achieve, and if so explain?
8. Are there any physical, medical, or social factors you do not wish to accept in an adoptive child? If so, please explain:
9. What qualities or physical conditions do you feel you absolutely could not accept in a child?
10. Do you want only a newborn, or would you consider an older child?
11. Describe the type of child to whom you have the least positive feelings or responses.
12. How do your parents and families feel about your decision to adopt?
13. Could you turn down or reject your newborn adoptive child if you feel uneasy about him or her?
14. How do you express affection toward a child?
15. What are your basic concerns or fears about adopting a child?
16. Could you live comfortably with a child who did not respond to you as expected in regards to learning, affection, and discipline?
17. How would you handle a conflict in your home?

18. How would you expect to deal with your child's feelings of anger, sadness, insecurity, rebellion, etc.?
19. How do you plan to discipline your child?
20. How would you deal with your adopted child's inquiries as to his or her biological parents or where he or she came from?
21. What do you think a good parent/child relationship is?
22. What should a mother be expected to do?
23. What should a father be expected to do?
24. Define a good sibling relationship.
25. Define the meaning of "Trust" as spouses and between parent and child.

XI. LIFE INSURANCE

	Husband	Wife
Name:	_____	_____
Address:	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Phone:	() _____	() _____
Beneficiary:	_____	_____
Amount:	_____	_____

XII. MEDICAL AND HEALTH INSURANCE (please include a copy of your health insurance card)

	Husband	Wife
Name:	_____	_____
Address:	_____	_____

Phone: (____) _____ (____) _____
Extent of Coverage: _____
Amount of Deductible: _____
Hospital: _____
Who is covered? _____

XIII. ADOPTION READINESS

Please check and list any materials or events that you have used to help prepare yourselves for adoption.

___ Books ___ Workshops ___ Support Groups ___ Other (explain below)

ADOPTIVE PARENT & FAMILY TRAINING

Adoptive parents will receive recommendations for educational materials at the time of their homestudy. These will include both general adoption topics, and also include specific materials as determined necessary to further prepare certain applicants for becoming a family through adoption. Adoptive parents outside of Texas will receive this information following a review of their homestudy.

Adoptive parents may be required to obtain additional help in preparing for a placement as a recommendation for approval in the homestudy. The issues to be addressed will be clearly defined along with the best means by which to accomplish this. An example might include a referral for counseling to determine resolution of grief over the loss of a biological child.

Information on workshops and seminars in the community as well as organizations on the local and national level will be provided to adoptive parents. Support groups are also considered educational resources.

Our agency requires that adoptive parents exhibit sufficient knowledge of adoption issues in preparation for placement. Requirements for approval may include any of the above modalities to increase knowledge and understanding of adoption issues.

Quarterly contact with adoptive parents will be maintained in regard to their education and readiness, i.e. bonding and parenting issues, and will be documented in their adoptive parent service plan.

XIV. RESIDENCE HISTORY

Please provide the 10 year residence history of each applicant. It is necessary to include detailed addresses; specifically street names, numbers and dates you lived there. If you have lived in the same house for more than ten years, then that is your residence history. Please do this on a separate sheet of paper and add to the end of your application.

For our Texas families, if you have resided in the state for more than 5 years you are not required to complete FBI clearances.

This information will be used in the home study and also to comply with the federal law for Adam Walsh Background Checks.

PLEASE PROVIDE THE CITIES IN WHICH BOTH OF YOU HAVE EVER HAD RESIDENCE IN THE STATE OF TEXAS.

Husband: _____

Wife: _____

By signing this application, you are agreeing to submit your names for a criminal history and Child Abuse and Neglect Screen check. Texas licensing standards require that this check be completed and you should be aware that these checks will provide information dating back at least 20 years. Have either of you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime? Y / N If so, please explain in writing and know that each offense is considered on an individual basis and proof of rehabilitation will be required.

We authorize ADOPTION ACCESS, INC. to use the above and foregoing information in making a study of our application. We authorize ADOPTION ACCESS to discuss our file with any agency or adoption consultant involved in our case. By signing this, we are also giving Adoption Access permission to run a criminal and child abuse background clearance. (Application form must be signed by both parties to be valid).

Signature of Husband

Signature of Wife

Date

Date

ADOPTION FEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Application Fee: (Non-refundable)

Due at the time you submit your application. This fee is separate and in addition to your adoption fee.

\$2,650 for Texas residents. Additional services included with this fee are: agency orientation, criminal/child abuse background and fingerprint checks, home study and home study update, and post-placement visits.

\$1,650 for out-of state residence : This does not include your homestudy, homestudy updates if necessary, or post-placement visits.

Criminal Background Checks and/or Fingerprint Checks:

Must be completed on each individual living in the home 13 or older. If you have lived in Texas less than 5 years or reside in another state, you must also submit current FBI clearances. Please contact our Dallas office to request FBI cards.

**Out-of-state families will also abide by licensing guidelines in their state of residence.*

Home Study & Updates:

If Adoption Access does not place a child within 12 months of the date of the completed adoptive screening the adoptive screening must be updated within the 30 day period before a child is placed in the home. For adoptive homes that are not providing foster care this written update must include two items

1. A review and any update under each category of your home screening and,
2. Documentation of at least one visit to your home when all household members are present within the 30 day period before a child is placed in the home.

After a family is accepted as potential adoptive placement, the agency must maintain at least quarterly contact. This quarterly contact and any training provided must be documented in the applicant's record.

Placement Fee:

After a family is approved for placement, they will receive an Adoption Contract. This contract, along with your placement fee, **is due within 10 days from being matched with your birthmother**. Your adoption fee is not at risk even if the birthmother decides to parent. If this should occur, your entire adoption fee would be forwarded to your next match and you become a 'priority' family. If a refund is requested, \$10,000 of the adoption fee is forfeited.

This fee **must be paid by personal check, cashier's check or wire transfer**.

Adoption Access does not accept credit card payments. This fee includes, but is not limited to, the following services:

Counseling: Services for birth families are extensive. They can include, but are not limited to, medical referrals, social services facilitation, transportation, vocational planning, legal aid and other services. Counseling is designed to assist birth parents in reaching a decision that represents the best interests of the child. Educational supplies, lunches, cards, clothing, and other items are frequently provided in this process. This fee includes scheduled counseling visits during pregnancy and for six months following the

release of child. However, ongoing support via phone, contact, and support groups is provided for as long as a birth parent desires.

Placement Services: Processing necessary paperwork, facilitating contact between the birth family and adoptive family, post-placement supervisory visits (for Texas families only), submitting necessary legal reports to the court (for Texas families only) and the consent to adoption; as well as ongoing support and adoption education.

Legal Fees: Processing and terminating birthparents parental rights. This includes the termination hearing, but does not include the finalization hearing. This is done at your own expense.

ICPC: This fee includes processing of the ICPC from Texas to your home state.

Marketing/Education: Educate, inform and counsel potential birth parents about the loving choice of adoption. Direct contact through community-based counseling and education; newspaper, internet, and telephone book advertising; and the production and distribution of brochures, posters, mailings and other materials to community groups, crisis pregnancy centers, mental health professionals, schools, social service agencies, medical clinics, and hospitals.

Foster Care: This applies only to those children who are not placed with their families directly from the hospital. It also includes other costs, such as formula or medication.

Medical Expenses: Medical expenses are included as well when medical-related bills are not fully covered by the birthmother's personal insurance or Medicaid or the birthmother has no medical coverage. Medical Expenses include mother and baby, which are: doctors, hospitals, and labs.

ADOPTION ACCESS, INC. FINANCIAL POLICY

It is our policy to act in the best interest of every child, including offering homes to infants and children in which the parents are best suited and most qualified to care for that child. In some situations an infant may require special care, special cultural considerations, and/or the agency may be unable to find appropriate adoptive families from Adoptive Parents currently on board with our agency. Fees are adjusted accordingly. Some fees have been lowered to bring more families on board for hard to place situations, including minority placements. We will always attempt to act in the best interest of every child, thus we have lowered some fees to accomplish this.

ANY FAMILY WHOSE INCOME EXCEEDS \$200,000 WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY THE FULL FEE OF \$44,000 REGARDLESS OF THE RACE OR ETHNICITY OF THE CHILD. We will subsidize the fees for families making less than \$200,000 for adoptions other than Caucasian, Asian, Caucasian/Hispanic, Caucasian/Asian, Asian/Hispanic. These fees are noted below.

Our fees run as follows, and are separate from and in addition to the application fee:

Caucasian, Asian, Caucasian/Hispanic, Caucasian/Asian and Asian/Hispanic placements: \$44,000

Full Hispanic Placements:
\$41,500

Bi-Racial (Caucasian/African-American or Hispanic/African-American)
\$31,500

African-American
\$25,000

Fees are paid at the time a family is matched with a birthmother. Once an official match is made, **the fee is due within 10 days**. The timing of a match depends on the birthmother's wishes and counselor's evaluation of readiness to choose a family. **Prior to being matched with a birthmother, the adoption fee is subject to change at any time. You will be notified by email if the adoption fee changes. You are still responsible for the current placement fee even if you did not receive the email. Our current fees will always be listed on our website.**

Some situations arise that preclude the agency from accepting the adoption fee until the actual placement in order to protect your finances. Examples of this would include the following:

- Birthmother coming to the agency for services late in her pregnancy, i.e. 9th month.
- Birthmother under the age of 18 years old. Statistically we know these are risky placements as the majority of teenagers will choose to parent.
- Any situation wherein a counselor has doubts regarding the motivation or genuineness of birthparents.

Facilitated Adoptions: This option is potentially less expensive but carries greater risk. A family, again with our guidance, advertises for a birthmother, or brings their own birthmother to the agency for services. The family uses an 800 number they have installed in their home and would be taking the birthmother calls directly. Once they connected with a potential birthmother, they would contact the agency and a counselor would begin working with the birthmother. The fee is \$15,000 plus "hard costs" which could be very low depending on the birthmother's needs. For instance, if she were eligible for Medicaid, she might have negligible medical expenses. With this option it is important to understand that the family assumes the risk of losing funds spent on a birthmother's expenses, if she does not end up placing. A family would pay \$7,500 up front, the birthmother's expenses as incurred and approved by the family, and the remaining \$7,500 at placement. The \$7,500 paid up front and the birthmother's expenses are at risk if she doesn't decide to go through with the adoption plan. The only time a family has funds at risk is with a designated adoption. However there can also be the possibility of a much lower adoption expense.

Adoptive Father

Adoptive Mother

Date

Date

OUTLINE FOR ADOPTIVE PARENT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In order to establish background material, an autobiography is needed from both adoptive parents. We would like for each of you to write your own autobiography, not sharing the responsibility with your spouse. Please write in narrative form on a separate page rather than simply answering these questions in short sentences. We realize it is difficult for some people to express themselves in writing. Therefore, please do not concern yourselves with correct grammar or spelling, as it is the content in which we are interested. This must be completed by all families (in and out of state) if you have completed a similar document for an out of state agency we will gladly accept it as your autobiography. Please include the following information in your autobiography:

Your Childhood

What is the ethnic origin of your family? When and where were you born?

Describe your parents and your relationship with them. Tell about your parents' employment and levels of education. What were your parents' occupations during your childhood years? How many brothers and sisters do you have? What position were you in the family (oldest, middle, or youngest)?

Who disciplined you the most, what forms of discipline were used, and for what types of misbehavior was it used?

Describe some unpleasant childhood memories.

Did you have any relatives with whom your family spent a great deal of time, such as holidays, etc? Describe any favorite relatives you had.

What values did your mother and father try most to impress upon you?

What memories do you have about school?

Your Teen Years

Describe your relationship with your parents during this time. How were you disciplined and for what types of behaviors?

Did you feel the discipline your parents used was appropriate? What would you do differently?

What do you wish your parents had done differently regarding your teen years?

What responsibilities did you have at home?

Describe your dating habits. At what age were you allowed to date? What activities did you enjoy?

Describe your school experiences, activities, interests, accomplishments, classes, etc.

How important is education to your parents? How important is education to you?

Did you complete high school? College? Vocational training?

Were you ever in the military? What were your likes and dislikes about this period of your life?

Did you join any clubs, groups, or other organizations?

What significant experiences did you have during these years which you feel affected you later on? How were you affected?

Describe your feelings about your own history of abuse and neglect if applicable, and your resolution to the experience.

Adulthood

Describe yourself. (Your personality, interests and physical description)

How do you feel about your vocation? (Your likes, dislikes)

What are some of your individual interests?

What are some of your interests together with your spouse?

How do you feel you have changed over the years of marriage? How has your spouse changed?

If you could change anything about your current situation what would it be?

Are you a member of any civic groups? If so, what are they, and what is the extent of your involvement?

What is your current state of health? Have you ever had any serious illnesses or operations? Do you have any handicaps?

Have you ever received any counseling or therapy? What did you gain from it?

If you have any children:

1. When and where were they born?
2. Are they adopted?
3. Are they in school? What grade? How do they do in school?
4. Describe them briefly: their personalities and interests.
5. What form of discipline is used most often, and which parent is the disciplinarian.

Please describe your relationship with your parents and siblings. Ages of each and location, how often you see them etc...

Previous Marriage

Were there children by your previous marriage? If so, where are they now?

Who has custody?

Do you visit them or pay child support?

Why did you and your previous spouse divorce?

ADOPTION EXPECTATIONS

These are the parameters used to assist us in the matching process, and they are considered to be the most important issues in accepting or passing on a match.

Adoptive Parents: _____

GENDER:

Adoption Access, Inc. does not request sonograms for the sole purpose of determining gender. Sonograms are performed for MEDICAL REASONS only. Please do not ask for a sonogram to determine gender, it will not be done. Gender determination by a sonogram is NOT always accurate. We cannot give an approximate wait time for families who are gender specific.

_____ Open _____ Male* _____ Female*

* We cannot have you turn a child down at the hospital because of the wrong equipment!

BABY'S AGE RANGE:

_____	Newborn only	_____	0-3 months
_____	3-6 months	_____	6-12 months
_____	12-24 months	_____	2 yr. & older

RACE / ETHNICITY:

_____	Completely open	_____	Caucasian
_____	Caucasian/Hispanic	_____	Hispanic
_____	Caucasian/African-American *	_____	African-American
_____	Caucasian/Asian	_____	Asian
_____	Other: _____		

Bi-racial includes half African-American and any other race.

* If you check this box, are you really comfortable with a child that looks more Hispanic or African American than Caucasian?

HEALTH ISSUES:

If you have any questions regarding certain conditions, diseases, handicaps, or learning disabilities, please consult your physician. You are not obligated to accept a child whose health is not acceptable to you. You would not lose any of your adoption fee if you decided not to accept a situation like this.

Are you open to Special needs? ____Yes ___NO

PREMATURITY:

_____ Not acceptable
_____ Less than 34 weeks gestation acceptable
_____ Beyond 34 weeks gestation acceptable

MULTIPLES:

Twins _____ Would consider _____ Would not consider
Sibling Groups _____ Would consider* _____ Would not consider

HIV Exposure: This is rare but we do see occasions when a birthmother is HIV+. We encourage each family to research this.

_____ Would Consider _____ Would not consider

BIRTHMOTHER'S SUBSTANCE USE:

If you have any concerns about drug or alcohol exposure during pregnancy, please consult your physician. HIV and drug screens and are requested. We also do a sonogram to determine the development progress and health of each child. Marking that you would consider a situation with any of these does not mean you would accept it only that you would want to consider it. Please always remember that drug screens only test drugs in the system for a period of time. We NEVER gurantee that our birthmothers have not used drugs during her pregnancy. We do our best to provide you with information. Most of our birthmothers will smoke during their pregnancy. If you are not comfortable with smoking during pregnancy we would not be able to provide a wait time for a placement. We would encourage families to look

Would consider _____ Would not consider _____
Alcohol _____
Marijuana _____
Amphetamines _____

Cocaine	_____	_____
Heroin	_____	_____
Non-prescribed medication	_____	_____

BIRTHFATHER SITUATION:

A known birthfather does NOT guarantee any medical and genetic information.

Would consider

Would not consider

Unknown Birthfather: _____

This means she *may* only know his first name and hopefully a physical description.

Known / Whereabouts Unknown: _____

This means she knows him, but his whereabouts are unknown. She may or may not know him very well. With these cases we will ALWAYS encourage nursery care for the first 31+ days until the Texas Paternity Registry can be checked.

Known Birthfather: _____

She knows who he is and where he is.

The law does not require that we notify the birthfather of the pregnancy or birth. His responsibility is to notify the State Paternity Registry, if he desires, within 31 days to try and establish a legal relationship to the child. He is charged with knowledge of the pregnancy by having had a sexual relationship with the birthmother. Legal fathers are married to the birthmother and must give consent or be served with due process.

RELATIONSHIP WITH BIRTH PARENTS:

Unless you choose a completely open adoption, ALL of your continuing contact is facilitated through the agency. There is no disclosure of identifying information, and all pictures, letters, cards, gifts, etc. are seen by the agency before passed on to the receiving party. We do require that all families cover the cost of postage so that all items may be sent to your birthfamily.

The minimum requirement for continuing contact in a semi-open adoption is that the Adoptive Parents send the Birth Parent(s) pictures and letters twice a year for 18 years. At least 6 pictures must be sent each time along with your personal letter updating the

birthparent(s) on the child. This is to be sent via email to admin@adoptionaccess.com unless your birthmother does not have email, in which case hard copies would be expected. This is sacred commitment and one that our agency takes very seriously. Please do not disappoint.

Prior to placement for both semi-open and open:

There will most likely be a match meeting between you, your birthparent(s), and the case worker prior to delivery. If a birthmom comes to us so late in her pregnancy that there is no time for an official meeting, you will still most likely meet her at some point. A meeting is ultimately up to the birthparent's desires, and most of them do wish to meet the adoptive parents they choose. Thus, it is a requirement of this agency that you be open to meeting your birthparent(s). If this is not acceptable to you, please contact our office to further discuss the matter. Please check the scenarios to which you are open:

- _____ Willing to attend labor and delivery
- _____ Willing to care for baby in hospital
- _____ Willing to assume temporary foster care (Please note: It is our firm, non-negotiable policy that adoptive parents will not take possession of baby if baby is released before 48 hours have passed, and the birthmother has not signed relinquishments. Absolutely no exceptions.)

Semi-Open Adoption:

Please check the varying levels of openness to which you are willing to commit:

- _____ Willing to write letters *and* send pictures for 18 years*
- _____ Scheduled phone calls with counselor as mediator
- _____ Face-to-face meetings with counselor as mediator
- _____ Willing to accept letters and pictures from birthparent(s)
- _____ Willing to accept cards, Birthday / Holiday gifts, etc.
- _____ Willing to send a video to birthparent(s) for a specified number of years
- _____ Willing to send and receive emails to private accounts
(this is not monitored by Adoption Access)

*Again, this is the agency minimum. If you are not willing to engage in this minimal relationship with your birthparent(s), then we cannot work with you. Sending pictures and letters to your birthmother via email is not only beneficial for you and the

birthparents, but it is a way to honor your child, and to get answers to questions your child may have in the future. We will execute an ongoing contact agreement signed by both birth and adoptive parents. This will identify the exact two dates each year by when your pictures are due to the agency. **This is a sacred promise. Please do not make us call you.** Please send them as promised unless the agency informs you otherwise.

Completely Open Adoption:

In an open adoption there is full disclosure of names, addresses, and phone numbers to and from both parties. There is no anonymity.

_____ Open Adoption

ADOPTIVE PARENT STATISTICS:

Adoptive Father

Age _____
Height _____ Weight _____
Eyes _____ Hair _____
Ethnicity _____
Religion _____
Occupation: _____
Any children: _____
Are the children Adopted or biological?
Date of Marriage: _____
Child Care Plans: _____

Adoptive Mother

Age _____
Height _____ Weight _____
Eyes _____ Hair _____
Ethnicity _____
Religion _____
Occupation: _____
Any children: _____
Are the children Adopted or biological?

The more open your parameters are, the shorter your wait time will be. However, you are encouraged to set your parameters where you are comfortable, with the understanding that the wait time may increase. Please remember that your child will grow up the way he or she is raised. Just because your birthmother may not be in school or have what you think is an ideal lifestyle does NOT mean that your child cannot thrive scholastically and prove to be successful. For us, a birthfather in jail

is great - we know where he is and he's not going anywhere. We realize you may not share our enthusiasm. The key is open communication. If there are other important issues that you specifically need to have addressed prior to a match, please indicate here.

PERSONAL REFERENCE INFORMATION

Adoptive Parents Name _____

1. What is your relationship to this family?
2. How long have you known this family?
_____ Husband _____ Wife _____ As a couple?
3. How would you describe the character of the applicants as a couple and individually?
4. What are their primary interests and activities?
5. What experience have they had with children?
6. If you have children, have you ever left them/would you ever leave them in the care of the above named family? Why or why not?
7. How would you describe their marriage?
Average _____ Exceptional _____ Unhappy _____
Any additional comments:
8. Do you feel that either person has any instability such as drinking, drugs, gambling, poor health, financial, legal or emotional problem?
9. Describe the skills that this family possesses that will be helpful in raising a child by adoption?
10. How would you feel about placing a child in this home if you were responsible for his/her future?

This can be answered on a separate sheet and please feel free to add any additional comments.

Signature

Address

Date

(____) _____

Phone

*Please return to Adoption Access, Inc.
Thank You!!*

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

for _____

Full Name

On the ____ day of _____, 20____, I personally examined and found him/her to be free of any communicable diseases.

It is my opinion that this person is in good general physical, mental, and emotional condition and his/her expected life span should be such that he/she may expect to see a child reach maturity. There is no history of substance abuse.

Date

Signature Attending Physician

Typed or Printed Name

Address

(____) _____
Phone

*Please return to Adoption Access, Inc.
Thank you!!*

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION of a CHILD

Name: _____

Child's Full Name

On the ____ day of _____, 20__, I personally examined _____ who is ____ years old and found him/her to be in very good health, and to be free of any communicable diseases. All immunizations for this child are current.

It is my opinion that this child is in good general condition and that his/her life span should be such that he/she may expect to reach a normal life expectancy.

Date

Signature Attending Physician

Typed or Printed Name

Address

Phone:()

*Please return to Adoption Access, Inc.
Thank You!!*

ADOPTION ACCESS, INC. DISCIPLINE POLICY

(Please sign and return with your application)

In accordance with licensing regulation, the following is the policy for Adoption Access, Inc.

Discipline is an essential aspect of child rearing; it should be viewed as a learning, experience so that the child will develop accepted patterns of behavior and understanding of responsibility and accepted rules of conduct. The purpose of discipline is to teach the child to get along as a member of a family and community and eventually to be a responsible, mature adult.

With all discipline the focus should always be within the context of helping the child build a positive self-concept. Foster parents should always praise the kind of behaviors that are desired and let the child know what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.

Reason for punishment must be explained. If restricted to home for more than 24 hours it must be documented.

- 1) Only foster or adoptive parents or adult care givers may discipline a child.
- 2) Discipline shall be individualized and related to the misbehavior, the child's age, the child's previous experience, and the child's previous reactions to discipline. Great care and caution must be exercised when disciplining an abused child.
- 3) Children may not be spanked. Physical punishment is not an acceptable form of discipline, therefore, other forms of discipline, such as time-outs, withholding privileges, grounding, etc., should be used in place of spanking. All discipline measures should be age appropriate for the child.
 - a.) With infants and toddlers, time-outs would be an appropriate form of discipline. Time out is a form of positive discipline in which the child is removed from playing, etc. and isolated from any enjoyable activity for an age appropriate length of time. Generally, a child is made to sit in a chair or a designated area for time out. The time out concept is that for each year of the child's life, the child should be in time out for that many minutes; (example: a three year old would be placed in time out for three minutes)
- 4) Discipline of any child must not result in bruises, welts, burns, fractures, sprains, exposure or poisoning; nor may it consist of withholding food, shelter, supervision, medical or educational care or violate any of the specific prohibitions in the Minimum Standards or state laws that protect children from abuse or neglect.
- 5) A child must not be denied mail or visits with their families as punishment.

- 6) A child must not be subjected to verbal remarks that belittle or ridicule them or their families.
- 7) Children must not be threatened with the loss of foster or adoptive home placement as punishment.
- 8) No child shall ever be shaken.
- 9) A child must not be placed in a locked room.
- 10) With older children, physical holding may be used in situations where a child's behavior demands immediate control in order to protect him/her and/or other individuals.
 - a.) The use of holding and length of time must be recorded in the child's case record.
 - b.) Mechanical restraints must not be used.

Foster or Adoptive parents who have questions about this policy should contact their foster home development worker or Adoption Access, Inc. director.

DISCIPLINE POLICY COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT/REVISED

I (We) _____ and _____ have read and discussed the above and foregoing Discipline Policy, for Adoption Access and have received a copy of such policy. We agree to adhere to such policies.

Date

Foster/Adoptive Father

Date

Foster/Adoptive Mother



Adoptive Parent Release of Information

Adoption Access, Inc. requests information on the following Adoptive Parent applicant or applicants.

We feel that it is important to have full and open communication with all professional parties involved at any time in the application, homestudy, and/or adoption process for Adoptive Parents. All information is confidential and only to be used by this agency and any other agency with which the Adoptive Parents have a signed release. This agency does not share information with other professional parties unless they have a signed consent form. Should you have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact our office at any time. Thank you for your cooperation and help in this adoption process.

We, the undersigned Adoptive Parents, understand that by signing this release form, Adoption Access, Inc. may contact and seek information from any professional party with which we have had contact during our application, homestudy, and/or adoption process. We understand that all information is necessary and helpful in making my adoption process a success. We allow the parties with which we have worked to release any and all information about ourselves to Adoption Access, Inc. during our adoption process.

Adoptive Parent

Adoptive Parent

Date

Date

INTERSTATE COMPACT ACKNOWLEDGMENT (23)

We understand that our adoption will be governed by the requirements of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The Interstate Compact (ICPC) restricts the ability of Texas from placing a child, or authorizing the placement of a child, in any other state (the receiving state), until Texas has received approval from the ICPC office of the receiving state. These requirements prevent any person, or licensed child-placing agency, from removing a child, or authorizing the removal of a child from Texas or any state without the approval of the receiving state. We understand that when the child is born, we will be required by law to stay in Texas a minimum 7 to 14 working days, excluding weekends and holidays, until approval is granted from the ICPC offices in both states. We understand we need to provide the agency with a number where we can be reached. After having possession of our child for 7 working Texas days, we understand we can call the agency once a day after 2:00 p.m. to check on ICPC approval. We also understand the agency has no control over delays in ICPC approval. Processing problems in the receiving state, several placement requests received in one day, or even bad weather, may precipitate delays.

We understand that failure to comply with the requirements of ICPC will result in criminal and civil remedies being levied against this agency and us. We understand that we have no choice but to follow these regulations.

We, the Adoptive Parents have read, and we understand the only information we will be given is yes, you are approved to travel home, or no we have not received approval. We understand the above information will be given to us only 7 days after relinquishment by birthmother. We understand and agree to the above information.

Adoptive Parent

Adoptive Parent

Date

Date

TIPS FOR ASSEMBLING A PHOTO ALBUM

Our main office is in Dallas; however, we have satellite offices across the state and work with birthmothers from all over Texas. Our families are required to have at least three copies of their photo album. That way, one copy can stay in the Dallas office, and the others can float between offices as needed. There are many occasions in which we get phone calls from birthmoms who are near delivery or at a hospital, and we will need to present albums quickly. The main thing that I always ask families to consider is to make sure that their album travels well. A traditional photo album with a cloth covered cover and ribbons, etc. may look pretty, but it is hard to fit in a mail slot or a FedEx envelope. On the other hand, do not paper clip or staple loose sheets of paper together and put in a clear plastic binder or a school folder. These types of albums do not present well when compared to the other types of albums we have.

These days, it is easy to use digital photos and makes a great presentation on a computer. Unfortunately, most of our birthmothers do not have computers or Internet access, so these types of e-mail albums or Power Point presentations will not be acceptable. Some of our offices do not have the printer capability or the time to print color photos for a birthmom, and it is not always possible to have the birthmother come into the office and look at photos on a computer.

Another thing that I ask is to make sure that you do not use any original photos in your album. You can make fantastic color copies at any Kinko's that look as well as the originals. No counselor wants to be responsible for losing your wedding proofs! Quite a few of our families have Kinko's do their books and bind them together. These are the best because they do not show wear and tear like paper pages. Your album may be presented many times before the right situation occurs. Most birthmothers will look at every page of an album many times so they need to be somewhat sturdy.

Please always include a birthmom letter in your album. Often, it's what is said in the letter as opposed to the photos that will reach out to a birthmom. Make sure the following information is covered either in your letter or your photo captions:

Names, occupations & educational background
Ages

Ages, names and information on your children
Length of marriage/relationship
Hobbies
Travels/Vacations
Photos of pets in your life (even if you only “baby-sit” the neighbors dog or cat)
Photos of other children in your life such as nieces, nephews, godchildren, children of friends
General information about your home including photos of exteriors, interiors and backyard, neighborhood parks and recreation areas
General info about your neighborhood
Photos of immediate family such as future grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins etc.

Some families choose to discuss religion in their album or letter, some do not. It's your choice. Please be aware that some birthmothers are a bit leery if a huge emphasis is put on religion. Some families share an amusing or touching story on how they met, their first date, their most embarrassing moment, or what they love about their spouses. Keep the information brief but informative. I have some albums that I feel are very vague and I have some that are way too busy. The albums that I feel are vague have several photos on a page with a heading that says something like: “We love spending time with family!” and no other explanation or caption. The albums that I feel are too busy have several photos on a page that has captions for every photo saying something like: “Grandma Sue with Grandpa Bob, Aunt Sally Uncle Joe, Aunt Jan with her 1st husband Ronnie, 2nd cousin Shannon with his college girlfriend, our neighbor Bubba...”. I'm sure you get the idea. The best albums have between two to four photos on a page with captions like: “Skiing with friends in Vail, Colorado” or “Ann and her mother decorating the Christmas tree”.

If you have any questions about your album or birthmother letter, please do not hesitate to contact our office and speak with Ashley Hug. If we receive your album, and we truly feel it will not present well with other albums, we will contact you and suggest you make some changes. Remember – HAVE FUN!!!

ADOPTIVE PARENT REFERENCES

We are providing this list of references for prospective adoptive parents who are considering working with Adoption Access, Inc. We appreciate the generosity of our former adoptive parents and birth parents who are willing to give their time. Please be considerate of this. We appreciate your interest in our agency and look forward to working with you!

**Jeff & Diane Elias - Adoptive Parents
(651) 578-2732**

**Matthew & Kathy Polston Dalton - Adoptive Parents
(606) 688-2709**

**John & Nancy Chapman - Adoptive Parents
(281) 570-4548**

**David and Christian Alperson- Adoptive Parents
717-385-3897**

**Brian and Lori Casto- Adoptive Parents
919-677-0677**

**Mark and Amy Garcia- Adoptive Parents
210-367-5400**

Previous Birth Mother

**Jami Creager
(940) 300-5961**