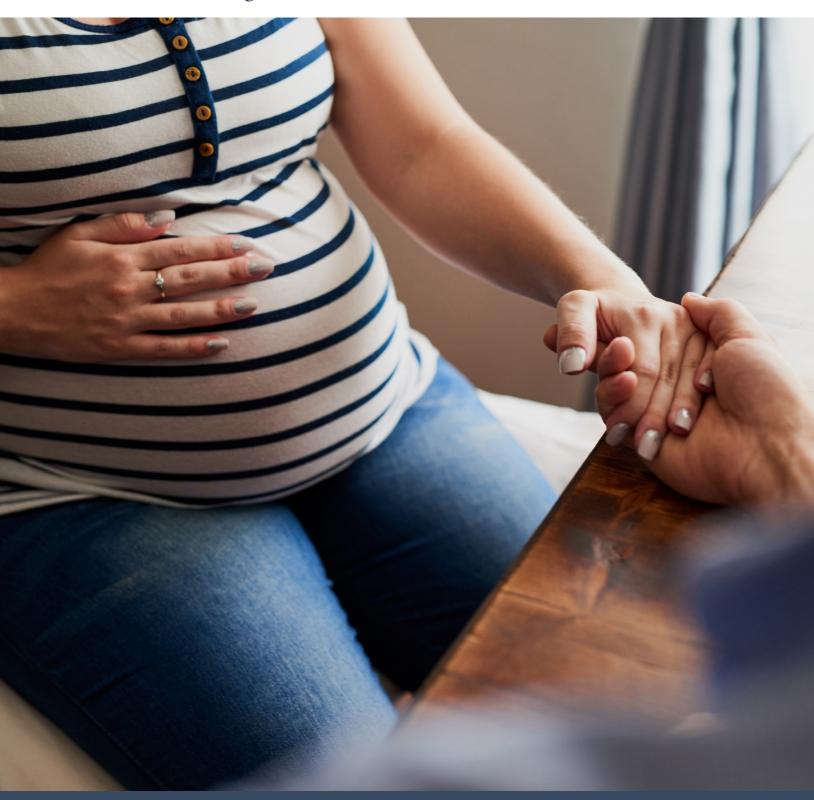
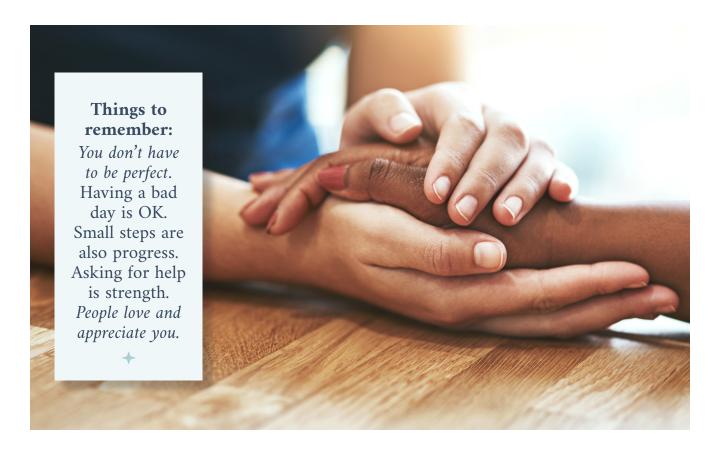
Considering Adoption

A Guide for Pregnant Women



American Adoptions

America's Adoption Agency



Our Promise To You —

Adoption can be a complicated journey. Without a trusted professional to guide you, it can quickly become confusing, overwhelming and stressful. You deserve support — and American Adoptions is here to ensure a smooth, safe process from start to finish.

As a full-service adoption agency, we can help you through every step. **We'll handle every detail**, including:

- 24/7 counseling and support
- · Providing education about the process to everyone involved in the adoption journey
- Screening adoptive families to ensure they're safe and ready to adopt
- · Showing you as many adoption profiles as you need to find the perfect family for your baby
- Coordinating a safe legal process
- · Finding support in your area, including financial assistance, counseling, and medical care
- Planning your hospital stay
- · Arranging post-adoption communication with the family, if desired
- Being there for you in the months and years after placement

All of these services are offered at absolutely no cost to you. It is always **100 percent free** to make an adoption plan for your baby.

When you choose to work with American Adoptions, you're never alone. We will always be here to answer your questions and help you feel comfortable in your choice.

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Facing an Unplanned Pregnancy? You're Not Alone



An unplanned pregnancy can add a great deal of stress and uncertainty to your life. But, by considering adoption, you are taking the first step to providing the best future for yourself and your child.

Whatever you're feeling at this point — fear, anger, confusion and sadness — is normal. American Adoptions is here to support you through those emotions and, when you're ready, help you start your adoption process.

Our trained specialists are always here to provide free, objective unplanned pregnancy counseling. We are also available to provide support for women considering adoption for children under the age of 4. You can call our team 24/7 at 1-800-ADOPTION to connect with a caring specialist who can answer all of your questions.



Even though adoption was the hardest decision I will ever make in my life, American Adoptions also made it the best decision I've ever made in my life."

- Erika, American Adoptions birth mother



As you move forward, keep these things in mind:



If you haven't already, confirm your pregnancy with your doctor and start receiving prenatal care. American Adoptions can help you find a doctor, or you can seek initial treatment at a health clinic.



Decide who or who not to tell about your pregnancy. Think about who will be most supportive of your situation and can assist you through the months ahead.



If you have children, think about how you'll explain your pregnancy to them. Our specialists can provide advice and suggestions for these conversations.



Continue working through your emotions. It's normal to experience different feelings during different times of your pregnancy. Remember, your adoption specialist will always be there to help.

→ We know you're facing a tough situation, but we are always here to help. Don't hesitate to call us anytime at 1-800-ADOPTION. You can also look to our website for more unplanned pregnancy resources and advice.

Three Things Adoption Means to a Child



Moving forward with an unplanned pregnancy isn't easy. But, with American Adoptions, choosing adoption can be. We're here to provide the support and answers you need during this time.

Whatever your reasons for considering adoption, you are already showing you care about your baby and their future. Here are the amazing things adoption can give them: \rightarrow



My birth parents... wanted a different life for themselves and for me. They made an incredibly tough call, but it opened up a lot of opportunities for all of us, and that's something I've always respected."

- Adoptee Diana, who grew up with an open adoption

A Life of Love and Opportunity

As birth mother Janelle says, "You're not giving your babies up. You're giving them the opportunity to live the best life that they can, and the life you know that you can't give them."

Many adoptive parents have spent years waiting to have a child and they're ready to provide your baby the best. By choosing adoption, you give your child opportunities, advantages and — more than anything else — love.

According to a study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

- 85% of adopted children participated in extracurricular activities at school.
- 68% of adopted children were read to every day as young children.
- 73% of adopted children were sung to or told stories every day.
- More than half were also reported to have "very good or excellent" performance in reading, language arts and math.

Everything my dad does, he does for the sake of his family. He worked hard his whole life to make sure that we could have every opportunity and experience."

- Adoptee Diana

2 Two Sets of Parents Who Love Them

Often, women choose adoption because they want their child to grow up in a two-parent home with a family who can provide for them. But, you may be wondering: "Will the adoptive parents love my child like they would a biological child?"

Yes. The adoptive family you choose for your child will love them just like they would a biological child. They will forever appreciate the decision you made to place your child with them.

In return, you can know that your child will receive abundant love and opportunities. And, when you choose open adoption, you can tell them how much you love them in person!

I wondered what I was going to feel like with [our adopted son] Ethan. He doesn't ever seem like he was anything but our child. He feels like he's always been here."

- Adoptive father Scott



Respect and Appreciation for Your Decision

Many women ask, "What will my child think of me if I place them for adoption?"

When you choose adoption, you are putting your child first. You are thinking about the future you want for them and choosing the adoptive family you feel will provide those opportunities. The adoptive parents recognize that, and they will be forever grateful for your selfless decision to entrust them with your child.

Because of this, the adoptive parents will talk about you with love and respect, telling your child just how special and amazing you are. Your child will grow up knowing how much you love them, and they will understand that the life they have with their parents is all because of your decision. Adopted children today grow up with information and an understanding of their birth parent's courageous decision.

Take it from adoptee and adoption specialist Jenna:

Growing up, 'Jenna Day' was always a specific time when we talked about my birth parents — how much they love me and why they made this decision. And my parents would talk about how I was special because I had extra people that loved me."

- Adoptee & adoption specialist Jenna

Q&A with Birth Parent Specialist & Adoptee Jenna



Q: Why did you become a birth parent specialist?

A: I was driven to social work because of a passion to help anyone and everyone. Being adopted myself, this felt like such a chance to give back and honor my own birth mother. Being able to talk to pregnant women every day in a time where they are scared, overwhelmed and unsure brings so much meaning to my life. I have gotten to know so many amazing women.

I feel fulfilled that I can provide women with support and education in order to make the best choice for them and their child. Even for the women who ultimately go on to not choose adoption, I feel meaning in being a part of their journeys while they figure out life's next steps.

Q: What's your favorite part about being a birth parent specialist?

A: Learning about the women I work with — they have all had their own struggles, strengths, life experiences, and personalities. I love hearing from them months or years later and all the things they have been able to accomplish. It warms my heart that so many still stay in touch.

Q: Why do you do what you do?

A: I feel so lucky to be able to support women in a time where they need it the most. Pregnant women considering adoption need someone in their corner, and many women that come to us don't have that yet. I think about what my own birth mother's experience would have been like through this process, and I just want to be the support I hope she got during that time — because she deserved it.

Q: What would you want pregnant women considering adoption to know?

A: I can't imagine how scared you are about your child's future. No unplanned pregnancy option you have is an easy decision. But you are way stronger than you ever know.

Don't be afraid to accept help and support. There are listening ears like me ready to hear your story and figure out how to make the tough stuff easier to sit with.



How to Place a Child for Adoption in 6 Steps



If you're considering placing your child for adoption, American Adoptions will be here to help you every step of the way. We know how difficult this journey can be, so we'll offer you the financial, emotional and practical support you need to make it as easy as possible.

You will be in charge of your individual adoption plan, where and when we start is up to you.

Here's what you can expect if you move forward. ightarrow



[My adoption specialist] was there for me when I didn't have anybody, and she always knew just what to say. She's someone that's going to check in on me from time to time. She was just amazing, and I'm so glad that she's in my life."

- Birth mother Lindsey, who placed her daughter for adoption in 2019

1 Decide Adoption is Right for You

Some women contact our agency knowing that adoption is right for them; others need a bit more time and information to make the best choice for their baby. We will always support whatever decision you make regarding the future of your child; we will be happy to provide answers to your questions and help you better understand the adoption process.

Whenever you're ready, we'll help you get started. Remember, starting the process does not commit you to anything; your adoption decision never becomes final until after your baby is born and you choose to complete legal paperwork.

2 Create Your Own Adoption Plan

You will always be in charge of your own adoption plan. You'll make the big decisions, including:

- · The family you want for your child
- The type of contact you want with the family before and after birth
- · The childbirth and hospital experience you want
- · And more

You'll be supported with 24/7 counseling, as well as financial assistance for pregnancy-related living expenses.

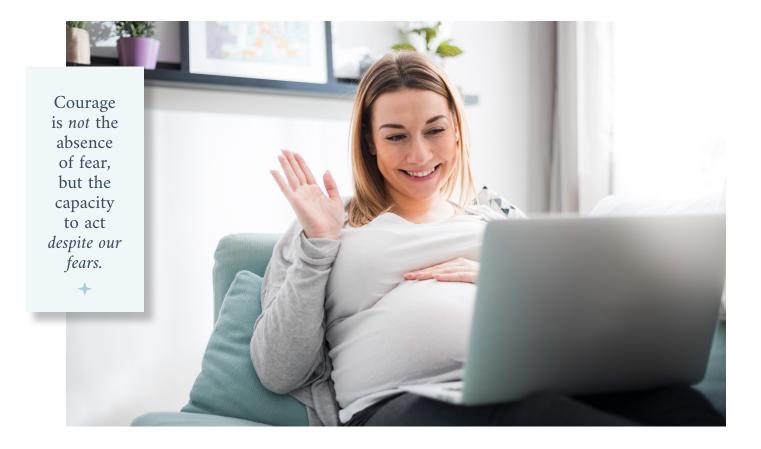
3 Choose an Adoptive Family

You will choose the right family for your child, and if you want help finding a family, your adoption specialist can assist you in whatever way you need. You can connect with a potential family whenever you are ready and determine if they are the perfect fit for you.

All of our families are thoroughly screened and ready to give your child the love and opportunity you want them to have. They also get education and support to prepare them to provide the best home for your child.



- View our families' text and video profiles on our website: www.americanadoptions.com
- * American Adoptions works with families of all races, religions and backgrounds, including same-sex couples, single parents and more.



4 Get to Know the Adoptive Family

Adoptive parents are excited to get to know you at a pace you're comfortable with. Together, you can build a relationship that will be lifelong. After choosing a family, you can get to know them through:

- Phone calls
- Texts
- Emails
- · In-person visits
- Video calls

Take it from Caitlin, who has established regular contact with her son's adoptive family:

I'm like a cheerleader on the sideline, and that's more than I could have asked for. He gets this family who can take care of him and do everything I couldn't, but he can also know that I didn't just give him away. I had a purpose for him, and it was meant to be."

- Birth mother Caitlin

5 Give Birth and Complete the Legal Process

Your adoption specialist will help you create a hospital plan to help you prepare for your labor and delivery. You'll get to make all the decisions about this time, and you can have as much or as little time with the baby and the adoptive family as you wish.

When you're ready, you will complete the adoption paperwork after your baby is born. Your specialist will always provide counseling, and you will also have access to your own adoption attorney.

6 Share Open Adoption Contact

When you place your child for adoption, you can have an open adoption plan with your child's parents. You can choose what kind of and how much contact you want to share with them and your child in the months and years to come, including:

- Pictures and letters (digital and hard-copy) sent through the mail, email or private photo-sharing sites/social media
- Phone calls, emails, video chats and texts, sent through direct phone number sharing or private messaging apps
- · In-person visits on a set schedule determined by you and the adoptive parents after placement

Don't have reliable access to a phone or internet? You can still share open adoption contact with the adoptive parents. Not sure what you want yet, that's OK, too — your specialist will discuss your options with you.

American Adoptions will assist you in creating a written post-placement contact agreement that will outline the contact you want to have with the adoptive family. With post-placement contact, your child will grow up knowing who you are and why you made the choice you did. They will respect and love you for it — for giving them the best opportunities you could.



The [adoptive parents] told me, when I had Charlotte, that I'm family. They weren't going to be given the baby and never talk to me again. Even though Charlotte is now their daughter and they're Mom and Dad, she is still my daughter, as well."

- Birth mother Lindsey

Frequently Asked Questions



At this part in the process, you probably have a lot of questions about adoption — what it will mean for you and your baby, what it involves and how to get started.

American Adoptions will take care of anything and everything you need along the way. Get answers to all of your questions by calling your specialist 24/7 at 1-800-ADOPTION.



I knew in my heart that everything would be okay. Seeing how happy she made them and their family and seeing how happy their family was just reassured me that I had made the right decision."

- Birth mother Angelica

Q1: How will I choose an adoptive family for my child?

Your adoption specialist will guide you through every step of this process by:

- · Identifying what kind of adoptive family you want for your child
- · Showing you print and video profiles of waiting families
- · Setting up phone calls and in-person meetings between you and the adoptive family

Q2: How do I know an adoptive family is safe and will provide a good home?

All of our families are pre-screened to ensure they are committed to raising an adopted child. They go through several steps before being shown to you, including in-home visits and background checks. Many hopeful parents choose adoption after years of longing to grow their family, and they have a deep desire to be parents. Given the opportunity, these families want to be the very best parents they can be. They are also thoroughly educated about adoption before starting the process. They will be excited to get to know you and share a relationship for the years to come, if that's what you want.

Q3: Will I ever get to see or talk to my child after the adoption?

You always get to decide how much contact you want in the future, including:

- Pictures and letters (digital and hard-copy)
- · Phone calls, emails and texts
- Video chats
- · And even in-person visits

Your specialist will help you create a plan to build a lifelong relationship. Not sure about contact yet? We will keep your options open and help you find a family who shares your preferences, whatever they are.

Q4: Can I receive financial help?

Adoption will always be 100% free for you, and we will support you with any financial assistance you may need during your pregnancy.

Many prospective birth mothers receive financial assistance to help with the costs of:

- Rent
- Traveling to prenatal appointments and work
- Maternity clothes
- Food and utilities
- And more

You can also receive a scholarship after placement to advance your education.

For more information, please reach out to your adoption specialist at 1-800-ADOPTION.

Q5: Does the baby's father have to be involved?

Many pregnant women have complicated situations with their baby's father. American Adoptions will help you navigate this situation and your state's laws to do what is best for your child and the safety of your adoption plan.

Your specialist will talk in detail with you about the situation with your baby's father. We know this can be a sensitive topic, but the more information we know, the more likely your adoption plan for your child will be safe and successful. We ask that you are 100% honest about your baby's father so we can provide the best support and guidance moving forward.

If you are choosing adoption with the father's support, he can be involved in the process, too! We would be happy to include him in the adoption process — just like in birth parents' Josh and Alyssa's journey:

Alyssa (the birth mother) and I felt so privileged to have such amazing support from American Adoptions. We couldn't believe how fortunate we were to make the choices of who would adopt Cassius, what sort of contact we might have, and how regularly we might have contact. To have that kind of control over the situation made all the difference for us."

- Birth father Josh

But, what if the baby's father is unsupportive, uninterested or unknown? It doesn't mean adoption is impossible. Know that many birth mothers have chosen adoption without the birth father's involvement — and you may be able to, as well.

Your adoption specialist can always provide answers to your questions at 1-800-ADOPTION. Don't be worried about sharing your story; we've navigated many different circumstances over the years, and we can help with yours, too.

What Are The Next Steps?

Choosing adoption is a big decision — but American Adoptions will be with you every step of the way.

1 Complete the paperwork included in this packet.

Filling this paperwork out does not obligate you to choose adoption, but it does give us the information we need to best help you and meet your personal needs. If you prefer, you can also complete this paperwork through your online account (scan QR code).



2 Get more information about adoption.

If you want, there are plenty of resources to help you learn more. You can:

- Speak to Michelle, our adoption specialist who is also a birth mom.
- · Request to speak with other birth mothers for additional peer support.
- Read stories from birth parents who have worked with our agency.
- Contact your adoption specialist 24/7 with any questions you may have.
- · Visit www.americanadoptions.com to read articles, watch videos and find additional information.
- · Create and log into your online account to access even more personalized resources and support.

3 Let American Adoptions take care of the rest.

American Adoptions will be here during and after your adoption is complete — offering 24/7 emotional support and counseling and helpful resources, like our birth parent scholarship program. We will walk you through every step, including:

- Living expense payments
- Hospital planning
- · Coordination with attorneys and medical professionals
- · Matching with adoptive parents
- · And more

Whatever you decide, we will support your choice. And, if that happens to be adoption, American Adoptions will be here to make sure it's everything you want it to be. Call us anytime at our 24/7 hotline: 1-800-ADOPTION.



American Adoptions America's Adoption Agency

1.800.ADOPTION

www.american adoptions.com

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