Preparing For A Successful Adoption

Chapter 5
Completing the Adoptive Family Profile/
Video Profile/Exposure to Potential Birth Parents

American Adoptions
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Chapter 5.1 Completion of the Print Profile

Completing a quality family profile is just as important as having an open and flexible APQ. Your APQ is a tool that determines how many times your family profile will be shown to potential birth parents. Obviously, the more potential birth parents who view an adoptive family’s profile, the higher the chance an expectant mother chooses them. The family’s profile is the tool that allows the adoptive family a first impression and determines whether they will connect with the potential birth mother making her selection.

These two tools go hand in hand. An adoptive family can have a very open APQ but have a poor-quality profile. In that example, it will not matter that the profile is being shown to a high number of mothers if it is not connecting with them correctly. On the other hand, an adoptive family can have an outstanding family profile but have such a restrictive APQ that they do not get enough opportunities to get their profile shown to very many potential birth parents. Neither of these scenarios is ideal, and both have the potential to lengthen your wait time.

Your goal in completing your adoptive family profile should be to portray yourself in a true light. There is no mold that every family should conform to because every expectant mother is unique, and she is likely going to pick the family that best fits her.

You should spend a good amount of time thinking about the content and photographs to be included in the profile. Remember, this is the first tool to show potential birth parents what type of person you are and what type of parent you’ll make for their child. Therefore, many families take new photos for the profile because most simply do not have enough good quality photos already.

Instead of throwing what you already have together and hoping it will work, we advise you spend the time and really evaluate each photo you send in. In doing so, ask yourselves what kind of impression each photo gives and whether each photo is as good as it can be in depicting yourself or if you can take a better photo for the profile.

When do I complete the print profile?

You will complete your family profile through our online system once you complete two easy steps:

- After you have read this chapter in its entirety.
- After you have completed your APQ and have submitted it to American Adoptions. You may complete your family profile prior to your home study being completed.

Can I design my own profile and submit it for use?

No. We require our adoptive families to have their profile professionally designed by our Media Specialists. This provides a consistent format, which makes it more equal for all families and makes it easier for potential birth parents to review the information provided. Utilizing our design services ensures that the family profile will be completed in the correct format and can be showcased on American Adoptions’ website.
How do I complete the profile?

Once you have read this chapter and have submitted your APQ, you will then be able to log on to your American Adoptions account online and access the Family Profile section in the left-hand bar. You will be directed to an online form to complete, similar to the APQ form you also completed online.

After submitting the text for your profile via our online system, you will then complete and mail the Adoptive Family Profile Photo Submission Form (enclosed in this packet) along with a minimum of 50 current pictures (.jpg or .tif format on a CD or flash drive) and captions (listed as file names, included as a Microsoft Word (.doc) or simple text (.txt) document or print out) to our agency. We do not accept photos via email, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. If you need assistance completing this step, please contact a Media Specialist at 1-800-ADOPTION or by email at media.specialist@americanadoptions.com.

Once we have received your text, photos and captions, your Media Specialist will begin the review of your profile items.

Can I mail actual photos to you to scan and use in my profile?

We do allow families to submit photos to us to scan for use in their profile for an additional fee of $25 per every three photos. This additional fee is necessary to account for the additional time our Media Specialists will need to scan your photos. However, we highly discourage this. The scanning process greatly compromises the quality of your photos and therefore the quality of your profile. Also, please note that the Media Specialist designing your profile may not choose to use the scanned photo in your profile due to quality concerns.

What kinds of photos do I need to submit?

You will be required to submit a minimum of 50 (100 max) recent photos, including:

- 8-10 good, current photos of you and your spouse (if applicable) and children (if applicable)
- 8-10 close-up photos of only you and your spouse together (if applicable) *No more than 3 years old
- 2-5 photos of your home (Be sure to include outside and inside photos)
- 2-5 photos of a neighborhood park, pool, elementary school or other community space
- 2-4 photos of extended family and friends
- 8-10 holiday, vacation, fun photos
- 8-10 photos of you doing activities
- 8-10 photos of your spouse (if applicable) doing activities
- 4-10 hobby photos without people (i.e. if you like to garden, pictures of just your garden; if you like to go hiking, pictures of your favorite hiking spot, etc.)

Photo requirements:

- The preferred method is to submit photos on CD or flash drive, in jpeg (.jpg) format. Please do not submit photos as Word documents, iPhoto libraries or slide shows – we need just the individual .jpg photo files. We do not accept photos via email, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. The preferred method for captions is Microsoft Word (.doc) or simple text (.txt) formats. Printed copies will also be accepted.
• Photos taken or edited with apps such as Instagram or Snapchat often do not reproduce well in print. Please avoid submitting photos taken with or edited by apps.
• Your CD or flash drive will not be returned to you unless requested.
• Photos should be current photos of you, your spouse and your children (if applicable). **Photos should not be more than 3 years old.** You must accurately represent yourselves to potential birth parents. Using outdated photos does not accurately portray your family and therefore should be avoided.
• For privacy reasons, we are unable to use photos of foster children. If you are or have ever been a foster parent, or if there are foster children in your extended family, please do not submit photos of them (even if they are no longer currently in your/your relative’s home).
• No alcohol/cigarettes in photos.
• Be sure photos do not include last names, addresses or other identifying information.
• Please only submit photos that you are OK with appearing in your print or online profile. **Do not send photos that you do not want our Media Specialists to use when designing your profile.**

**Helpful Hints:**
• Begin now! Take your camera with you wherever you go. Ask family/friends to take photos of you when you are out.
• Include horizontal and vertical pictures to add variety to your profile.
• Look at each photo that you plan to submit and ask yourself if you look fun, youthful, caring, nurturing, etc. Also, look at the attire in each photo and ask the same question. Some clothing, such as sweater vests or turtlenecks, for example, can present the family as too conservative, more rigid and overall sometimes too perfect. An expectant mother might feel like her child would have to live up to high standards to be accepted and loved or worry that she’d have nothing in common with the family. It’s not a good idea to have each and every photo depict you in your “Sunday best.” A few photos like this are certainly OK, but it’s also a good idea to have photos that show you in a more casual setting, as this can give the expectant mother the impression that your family is more down-to-earth, fun, youthful, etc.
• Pay attention to focal length – make sure you can clearly see your faces in photos and that the photo wasn’t taken from a distance too far away. Prospective birth parents want to see you.
• Please do not submit more than one photo of the two of you together from your wedding. Your profile should give a glimpse into your daily lives together.
• **Please do not edit your photos** – our Media Specialists will take care of any touch-ups, cropping, red eye removal, lightening, etc.
• Be happy! Make sure everyone in the photo looks happy. Photos are the first things potential birth parents examine, and it is important that your family portrays itself in the best possible way.

**Why do I need to submit so many photos?**

Submitting a wide variety and choice of photos ensures a quality profile for your family. Giving our Media Specialists a variety of photos to choose from when designing your profile will allow them to develop a profile that highlights all of the wonderful characteristics that make you unique. It also provides the Media Specialist more options, so only the highest quality photos can be selected. If only a few photos are submitted, the Media Specialist will be limited in their ability to design you a quality profile. Failure to submit the number or types of photos we request will result in a delay of your profile's completion.
Why do my photos have to be reviewed and approved by a Media Specialist?

Our experience in working with prospective birth parents has shown us that photos are the first thing they look through when considering a family profile. Our Media Specialists will review your photos to ensure that they meet the high standards prospective birth parents look for when considering a family. If our Media Specialists do not feel your photos are of the level needed to ensure a quality profile for your family (i.e., they are too dark, outdated, too small, etc.), you will be contacted to submit additional photos meeting these standards.

The same standards are applied to your written text. Our Media Specialists will work to create a family profile that not only highlights all of the unique aspects of your family but also one that will appeal to a large variety of potential birth parents. The key to good profile text is to be as descriptive and specific as possible — do not simply say “Our community has many annual festivals which we enjoy attending.” Rather, say “Our town has an annual Spring Carnival, complete with warm funnel cakes, rides for children of all ages and games for all. Last year, we won a giant pink stuffed elephant in the ring toss. We can’t wait to share moments like this with a child.”

Our Media Specialists will review your written content and contact you if any revisions/additions are needed. Once all of your photos and text are approved by a Media Specialist, you will receive your profile proof within 14 business days. You will be notified once your profile text and photos have been approved and your profile has moved on to the design stage.

I don't have the kinds of photos you request – can't I just send in my favorite photos?

If you find yourself having trouble locating the types of photos we request in your photo albums, then grab a friend or family member and have some fun taking new photos for your profile! It is important to have a wide variety of current photos available to use in your profile.

Do I need to write captions for my photos, too?

Please also submit a list of captions for your photos when completing the Adoptive Family Profile Photo Submission Form. Please do not insert captions as text on the actual photo. Captions are a great way to personalize your profile and showcase your personalities. You may include the captions as file names when submitting your CD or flash drive or include them in a Microsoft Word (.doc) or simple text (.txt) document. We do also accept printed copies of text for captions. If submitting a list, please be sure to include the file name of the photo and the caption associated with that file. Please do not submit a list of captions without the file names. Also, please do not submit captions as “tags” located within the file properties.

What do potential birth parents look for in the adoptive family profile?

Prospective birth parents look for many things in family profiles. Just as every prospective adoptive family looks different and unique, every prospective birth parent will be attracted to different things. It is very similar to dating or choosing a spouse.
The first element of the profile that an adoptive family should be concerned with is photographs. Pictures speak a thousand words and are the first thing the prospective birth parents will see. This is what draws a potential birth mother to a particular profile. If you do not have photos where you are smiling and happy, you should make a point to take some more. Beyond photographs, you should be asking yourself what questions an expectant mother may have while she is trying to decide if adoption is right for her and which adoptive family is right for her and her baby. Often at this point, an expectant mother may have questions about her decision, so you should strive to make sure your profile answers them. It is important that you draw from your hobbies, interests, family life, etc., but also keep the following questions in mind while completing the profile:

- Will the adoptive family love my baby the same as if it were their own? Will the adoptive family love my baby the same as their other children?
- Will my child hate me for choosing adoption? Will my child know about me and how much I love them?
- Will the adoptive family stay in touch with me so I can know how they are all doing?
- What does everyday life look like in the adoptive family’s house? Will they have more time for the baby than I would?

What topics will I be required to write about in my profile?

When completing your adoptive family profile online, you will be required to submit text for the following sections:

**Profile Introduction (50-75 words)**
This is a brief statement to potential birth parents about you and your decision to adopt. It is also often the first item potential birth parents will read about you and should be written in a manner that will make them want to continue reading your profile.

**Profile Introduction Example:** We believe adoption is a gift and one that we treasure dear to our hearts! We want to express our appreciation that you are even reading our profile. We have so much love and laughter to share that we know we will make excellent parents. To choose us to be your child’s parents would mean the world to us. We hope that you consider us and we look forward to the journey that lies ahead.

**Favorites**
In the favorites section, you and your spouse will be asked to complete a list of favorites, such as favorite actor, hobby, food, movie, etc. Please complete as many items as you feel comfortable including; however, you must complete at least five. It is highly recommended that families complete the entire list of favorites — this is one of the most trafficked areas on our website.

**Extended Family (150-250 words)**
You will be asked to describe your extended family and the things you enjoy doing together. Be sure to include nicknames and share recent stories about fun times you have had together. Other items to include in this section would be an explanation of what types of activities your extended family enjoys, holiday traditions, if your family lives nearby and what makes your extended family unique. Do not, however, get caught up in including everyone’s names and ages— potential birth parents want to know about you and the life you can give their child. Providing all of these details may lose their interest.
House and Neighborhood (150-250 words)
You will be asked to briefly describe your house and neighborhood. Share all of the things you love about your home. Whether you live in the country or the city, be sure to highlight all of the opportunities your community offers to children, such as neighborhood parks, pools, Fourth of July parades or annual family events.

In Your Own Words (100-250 words each)
In this section, you will be asked to complete at least six individual topics from the list below. The Media Specialist will then choose two or three items (depending on length) to include in your print profile. We ask that you complete at least six of the options to ensure that your Media Specialist has adequate material to provide your family a quality profile.

Topics for this section include:
- What does it mean to be a parent and what do you like most or expect to like most about being a parent?
- How did you and your spouse/partner meet?
- What is your most memorable moment?
- What is your cultural heritage? (Highly recommended for families who are open to adopting a child of a different race.)
- How will you address cultural diversity? (Highly recommended for families who are open to adopting a child of a different race.)
- What qualities do you love, admire and respect in your spouse/partner?
- What takes priority in your life?
- What do you do in your leisure time? (Hobbies, charities you volunteer for, activities you do for fun, games and events you look forward to sharing with a child.)
- What makes you unique?
- What are your family traditions?
- What type of education will you provide for the child?
- What are your strengths as individuals?
- What made you who you are today?
- Do you have other children?
- What are your religious beliefs?
- What are some of your childhood memories?
- Describe your favorite vacation spot.
- Describe your lifestyle.
- Describe why your pets are important in your lives.
- Describe your professional life/careers.
- Our/My Promise to You
- Number List (Top 10 list, fun facts about each parent, etc.)
- Describe your family dreams/dreams for this child.
- Describe your adventures.
- Our/My Hopes for an Open Adoption

It is highly recommended that families choose at least one of the following topics:
- Has adoption affected you personally? (Do you have any family who has adopted, placed a child for adoption or adopted a child? Have you been adopted, placed a child for adoption or been adopted?)
- What will you tell the child about his/her adoption?
What led you to choose adoption to build your family?

Letter to Prospective Birth Parents (500-700 words)
This section is your opportunity to speak directly to potential birth parents from your heart and share your thoughts and feelings with them.

Important points to remember when composing your prospective birth parent letter:

- It is important for you to explain in detail the contact you are open to/hope to have with the prospective birth parents (if they desire it as well). Even though American Adoptions requires certain forms of contact, prospective birth parents won’t assume this and may believe that no mention of contact means you are not open to it. Therefore, American Adoptions requires that you mention the different types of contact you are open to having.
- Don’t assume every potential birth parent viewing your profile has made up their mind to choose adoption. Don’t use phrases such as “We are so happy you have chosen adoption.” Many of the potential birth parents browsing family profiles are still deciding whether or not adoption is the choice for them. Instead, use phrases such as “We appreciate you considering adoption for your child.”
- Explain how you will tell the child about his/her adoption. How will you share the child’s adoption story with them? How will you honor the child’s birth parents?
- Explain what the future holds for the child: give details of how the child will fit into your lives; what will make you great parents; what goals, dreams and hopes you have for a child; how you will spend quality time together; and the kinds of experiences you plan to offer to a child.
- Share why your relationship is unique, what details make your relationship special, what you enjoy doing together, your daily life, etc.
- It is **required** that you include a sentence or two about the specific forms of post-adoption contact you are open to (i.e., visits, phone calls, texts, email, etc.)

*Gender-Specific Families: Please do not include gender-specific wording in your text. It is the policy of American Adoptions that all profiles should read gender-neutral, regardless of whether or not a family is gender-specific. Please contact your Adoptive Family Specialist or a Media Specialist for questions concerning this policy.

**Helpful Hint:** A word counter is provided in each section to alert you if your text is too short, too long or the right length.

Why does my state of residency have to be listed on the adoptive family profile?

The state you reside in is included on every profile because most potential birth parents want to know. American Adoptions will not disclose any additional information to the potential birth parents about where in the state you reside. We have found that most potential birth parents want to know what state the family comes from because it helps them picture their child’s life in the Midwest or near an ocean. They do not typically desire to have this information so they can locate you or intervene in your life; it is more a way for them to feel comfortable with your family and lessen their fears. This is not something that you can have omitted from your profile.
How is my print profile different from my online profile?

The online profile becomes "live" on the American Adoptions website immediately upon activation. The online profile contains all of the information that appears in the print profile, as well as the full list of favorites and additional photos. This additional information is selected by the Media Specialist. Because the online profile does not become viewable until after your activation, you cannot have prior review of it before it is online. If you wish to make changes to it after seeing it online, please contact your Media Specialist.

Can I ever make changes to my adoptive family profile once it is finalized?

Yes, you can make changes to your profile at any time during the adoption process. Please note that changes made to a profile after it has been finalized may be subject to a Change Fee. Your Adoptive Family Specialist can provide you feedback concerning what items you may want to change on your profile. Necessary updates, such as updating children's ages or in the case of a move, will not be assessed an additional fee; however, it is the family's responsibility to notify the Media Specialists that an update is necessary. Please contact a Media Specialist at 1-800-ADOPTION or at media.specialist@americanadoptions.com for more information.

I need help completing the profile. Who can I contact?

Contact a Media Specialist at 1-800-ADOPTION or at media.specialist@americanadoptions.com.

Chapter 5.2 Completion of the Video Profile

Your print profile is the first chance for potential birth parents to learn about you by reading information about your home, neighborhood, family members, motivations to adopt, hobbies and much more. Using a video profile alongside your print profile will better paint a picture of the type of family and environment a child may grow up in.

In today's connected world, we feel strongly that video profiles greatly improve our adoptive families' ability to connect with potential birth parents on a more personal level. American Adoptions recommends Show Pro Media for video profile production so our families are able to create unique, professional-quality videos.

Is the video profile required?

Yes, American Adoptions requires every adoptive family to create a video profile.

When do I complete my video profile?

Filming and editing your video may take more time than expected, so we suggest you begin the process as soon as possible. The process through Show Pro Media can take an average of two months.
What is the advantage of having Show Pro Media put my video profile together?

Show Pro Media offers a unique advantage in completing your video. Their team has specific experience in the adoption field and meets with adoption social workers regularly to continuously improve upon video profiles’ appeal to potential birth families. Show Pro Media is committed to editing your family’s video profile with a high level of creativity, sensitivity and professionalism. Using interviews, b-roll, and original music, experienced Show Pro video editors will cut your footage into an emotive story for prospective birth mothers to watch.

I am worried that I will not represent myself well in a video profile. How can I be sure that I will be represented well?

Many adoptive families are anxious about the video profile because they fear they will not be able to accurately portray themselves. To help ease this fear, we again recommend you use a service like Show Pro Media, because:

• The Show Pro video editors have created over 1,500 video profiles and understand the family qualities and characteristics that prospective birth mothers want to see.
• The footage used for the video profile is shot by you, therefore bringing a sense of authenticity to your story. You will receive a camcorder and detailed yet easy-to-use instructions and how-to videos that will help you film your video profile.
• Your video won’t be finalized and posted until you approve it. You will have opportunities to review your profile, provide your video editor with feedback and request changes to ensure the video represents your family accurately.

What are the benefits of doing a video profile?

American Adoptions endorses the video profiles because of the benefits they provide adoptive families and prospective birth parents:

• **Video Profiles Show Your Family** – The video profile allows potential birth parents to learn about you in a more visually engaging way. Imagine picking your spouse with only photographs and four pages of written information. A difficult decision is made easier for potential birth parents when they feel deeply connected to the adoptive family they choose. Video profiles allow an expectant mother to learn more about you so that she can feel more secure about the family she has chosen.
• **Video Profiles Help Lower Chances of a Disruption** – Many expectant mothers watch a family’s video multiple times throughout the adoption process, which helps her stay committed to the family and remind her why she has chosen adoption for her child. While the video profile doesn’t eliminate disruptions altogether, it gives potential birth parents a stronger sense of the family upfront and makes them even more dedicated to their adoption plans.
• **Video Profiles Showcase Personality** – Print profiles are a great way to connect with potential birth parents, but they are only able to present so much. They cannot express how compassionate, funny or outgoing you are in person. We want potential birth parents to be able to connect with you on a deeper level, and in video, your personality and life can be easily seen.
• **Video Profiles Reach More Prospective Birth Parents** – Each month, we are contacted by hundreds of women considering adoption. Thousands more look at our online adoptive family
print profiles but decide not to contact our agency or request information. Is it because they are not able to connect with a family, or are they unsure if adoption is the right choice? We believe video profiles help them better connect with the adoptive family and trust the adoption process more than viewing photos and written information.

Will potential birth parents see both the printed profile and the video profile?

Yes. The print and video profile will be showcased together online. Using both profiles, potential birth parents will get a more in-depth understanding and knowledge about your family. This will help them feel more comfortable and confident with the family that they choose. If an expectant mother views your print profile in a packet she receives in the mail, she will be able to go online and view your video profile.

Will last names be mentioned in our profiles?

While adoptive parents are required to share last names with prospective birth parents, it is not required until an adoption opportunity has been created. Thus, the last names of the adoptive parents will not be included in their print or video profile.

Where will my video be found online? What if I'm not comfortable with my video being online?

American Adoptions requires that all adoptive families film a video profile and have it posted online. Upon completion, video profiles are located on americanadoptions.com and our public YouTube channel. American Adoptions has also partnered with adoption information websites, like ConsideringAdoption.com and Adoption-for-My-Baby.com, to display our waiting adoptive families’ profiles on additional platforms. This provides our adoptive families with additional exposure at no extra charge.

Prospective birth parents will then be able to locate video profiles on these websites, so that adoptive families receive maximum exposure.

Identifying information, including your last name and location, will not be included in your video profile. Additionally, American Adoptions restricts comments on any video profiles on all sites. We manage all initial inquiries from prospective birth parents to ensure your emotional and financial protection. Once a family receives a successful adoption placement, their video profile will be removed from public viewing on both websites, just like the rest of their online profile.

What if these videos are shared on other websites?

Once you post anything online, it can be posted somewhere else. However, you can protect yourself by not disclosing identifying information in the video profile. Show Pro Media will work with you to make sure that information is concealed.
What if I receive an adoption opportunity before my video profile is complete?

In the event that you receive an adoption opportunity prior to completion of the video profile, we require you to still complete the video profile. Prospective birth mothers use them throughout the match and after to help reassure them of their decision. As such, it is still very important to complete the video. The prospective mother could still gain a unique and lasting impression of who you are, and she will be able to keep this video as a keepsake. The video will also be able to serve as a neat family keepsake for the child.

To get started on your video profile with Show Pro Media, go to showpromedia.com/begin-the-video-profile-process/

Chapter 5.3 Exposure to Potential Birth Parents

How many adoptive family profiles does an expectant mother view at one time?

On average, our adoption specialists will send an expectant mother 20 adoptive family profiles at any one time. This allows her to see a large enough variety of prospective adoptive families but is not too overwhelming, either. Potential birth parents can view all profiles on the website on their own, but they may find themselves viewing profiles that do not fit their situation (i.e., race of baby, etc.).

It should be noted that we may not be able to send as many profiles to some expectant mothers as others because of their adoption situation. For example, all other variables aside, a woman who is having a Hispanic baby will not have as many family profiles to view as a woman who is having a Caucasian baby. This is why we encourage you to be open to as many variables on the APQ as possible.

If an expectant mother does not find an adoptive family in the first 20 profiles that she views, more profiles will be provided.

How does American Adoptions choose which adoptive family profiles are shown to each expectant mother?

American Adoptions does not have to choose which profiles are sent because variables from the adoptive family’s APQ and variables from the expectant mother’s situation, such as race and financial needs, automatically determine which prospective adoptive families fit with each potential birth mother. The adoptive family profiles that fit with the expectant mother’s characteristics most closely will be shown to her. Sometimes the expectant mother may also have certain characteristics (stay-at-home mom, no children, etc.) that she wants in a family, so that will also determine which adoptive family profiles she views.

This tracking is all done with our computer database, so it guarantees the best potential adoption opportunities based on what variables are involved and is accurate and fair for every adoptive family.

*Note: Sometimes an expectant mother will view profiles that do not fit her situation exactly. She may have looked on the website or viewed profiles initially upon contacting American Adoptions, before we determined her substance use and medical history. American Adoptions chooses to show adoptive
family profiles right away if the expectant mother asks because it helps her feel more comfortable with adoption; however, American Adoptions will not ask an expectant mother during our first interaction if she smokes, uses drugs, etc., because it may scare her away or make her uncomfortable. If this occurs and an adoption opportunity is presented to you that does not match your APQ, you may choose not to accept the opportunity.

**What kind of exposure will my profile get to potential birth parents?**

Once you become active, your profile will be submitted to potential birth parents that have made contact with American Adoptions. A profile receives two kinds of exposure.

The first type of exposure is via expectant mothers viewing profiles they have been provided. On average, the majority of potential birth parents select families from the profiles, which are provided through email, overnight mail or face-to-face visits with our staff. Most women considering adoption will make contact with American Adoptions by emailing a request for information or by calling 1-800-ADOPTION and speaking with a Birth Parent Specialist. After this initial contact, most potential birth parents prefer to have a packet of information, including family profiles, mailed and/or emailed to them because it gives them time to consider their options and allows for more privacy.

In addition, American Adoptions is often contacted by other adoption professionals who are seeking an adoptive family for one of their expectant mothers. American Adoptions may provide adoptive family profiles in those situations, allowing for increased exposure.

The second type of exposure an adoptive family's profile will receive is online. Every adoptive family will have their profile placed on American Adoptions' website for no extra charge. In addition, American Adoptions has partnered with adoption information websites, such as ConsideringAdoption.com and Adoption-For-My-Baby.com, to display adoptive families' profiles on additional platforms. This provides our adoptive families with even more exposure, at no additional cost to them. The appearance of your profile and the text and photos included remain the same on each site. Regardless of where a prospective birth mother finds your profile, she can complete a contact form inquiring about you that puts her in touch with American Adoptions.

This online exposure is not monitored because there is no way of knowing who is opening your profile online; it may be other prospective adoptive parents, our staff or even your family and friends.

Although this exposure cannot be tracked, we know that many potential birth parents locate our agency via these websites. Potential birth parents can and do select adoptive families from their profiles online.

**How do I know how often my adoptive family profile is being viewed by potential birth parents? Can I check in with American Adoptions to find out?**

Your Adoptive Family Specialist will be able to monitor your family profile exposure for you while you are waiting for an adoption opportunity. Specific exposure of your online profile cannot be tracked, but the number of times your profile is emailed or printed and sent to potential birth parents is tracked. Your Adoptive Family Specialist will monitor this while you are active and will notify you if your exposure is low or if there are any questions.
If time goes by and you do not hear anything, this means your family profile is getting average exposure for your APQ preferences. The only way to increase exposure is to open your APQ to other variables.

An adoptive family may check in on their exposure by contacting their Adoptive Family Specialist. If you want to check your exposure during your wait, we ask that you do the following:

- **Check your exposure no more than once every few months.** That is how long it takes to get an accurate number of showings and see a pattern.
- **Email your Adoptive Family Specialist to check exposure.** If you have more detailed questions, then you can schedule a call to talk more in depth.
- **Try not to focus on the profile exposure.** Remember that your Adoptive Family Specialist will be tracking this on your behalf and will contact you immediately if there are any problems with your exposure. In this stage, no news is normal until an adoption opportunity is determined.

**How many prospective birth parents will be viewing my adoptive family profile at one time?**

American Adoptions will show your profile to many different potential birth parents at any given time. This is done because not all potential birth parents who view profiles will follow through with an adoption plan. Therefore, it is important to have as many women who are considering adoption viewing your profile as possible.

If a potential birth mother selects your family profile, her Birth Parent Specialist will make note of this. Before presenting you with the opportunity, the Birth Parent Specialist will continue to assess the situation to ensure that the mother is truly serious about creating an adoption plan and that her situation is within or close to your APQ preferences. During this assessment period, your family profile will continue being distributed to other potential birth parents considering adoption.

There is no certainty that the first expectant mother will end up following through with adoption or fit your APQ closely. In this situation, if the expectant mother ends up losing contact with American Adoptions, the adoptive family will never know that a woman had been interested in their profile and they will not have lost any time or other possible opportunities.

Your family profile will continue being shown to potential birth parents until you have been notified and have accepted an adoption opportunity. Once you have accepted an adoption opportunity, your family profile will no longer be emailed or printed out and shown to other potential birth parents. The online profile will remain on our website until a placement occurs.

**Will I receive detailed feedback about potential birth parents who are viewing my adoptive family profile and/or what they have thought of our profile?**

American Adoptions will not share feedback every time a potential birth parent has been shown your family profile. There’s a large number of potential birth parents who view profiles on a daily basis, and it can create a roller coaster of emotions for waiting families. Likewise, your Adoptive Family Specialist will probably not be able to provide specific feedback about any interest in your family profile, because most women will not share feedback about families other than the family she would like to accept. On the other hand, a potential birth mother who receives adoptive family profiles initially may not stay in contact with American Adoptions, because she may decide not to choose adoption.
Therefore, American Adoptions typically has no feedback other than to share how often the profile was shown to women interested in adoption.

Adoption can be a very private process for women, so they may not keep in close contact with the agency while they are sorting through their options and making their decision. Adoption is also something that many women will consider for months before committing and selecting a family. It is very possible for a potential birth mother to view a profile when she first makes contact with American Adoptions and lose communication with the agency for several months. She may then regain contact and verbalize that she wants to select a certain adoptive family she viewed several months ago.

**Do prospective birth parents choose adoptive family profiles off the website?**

Yes, prospective birth parents do look through profiles on our website and may actually select a family from there.

Every family has their profile placed on our website for additional advertising. There is no additional cost for this service. This has become an increasingly popular way for expectant mothers to choose adoptive families. However, we cannot guarantee that, if an expectant mother selects you off the website, her situation will fit within your APQ. Although she may feel a connection to you, the Adoption Specialist and the expectant mother are still assessing her adoption plan.

Because of this variable, you may be contacted regarding an expectant mother who viewed your profile on the website who may not match your APQ preferences. You do not have to accept a potential adoption opportunity if it does not fit within the parameters of your APQ.

**Do potential birth parents ever decide not to view family profiles and have a closed adoption? What happens in this situation?**

Yes, it is possible for an expectant mother to decide not to choose the adoptive family for her baby. However, this scenario is very rare. Close to 98 percent of potential birth parents view adoptive family profiles and are directly involved in the selection of the adoptive family.

In rare instances that an expectant mother does not want to select the adoptive family, American Adoptions will select the adoptive family who has been waiting the longest amount of time who matches with the particular woman’s situation (i.e., race of baby, cost of adoption, etc.).