

DOMESTIC ADOPTION PROGRAM

The Gift of Life

I didn't give you the gift of life,
But in my heart I know,
The love I feel is deep and real,
As if it had been so.
For us to have each other
Is like a dream come true!
No, I didn't give you
The gift of life,
Life gave me the gift of you.
~ Unknown ~



Building Arizona Families



Building Arizona Families

About Us

Building Arizona Families is a non-profit, licensed, Hague accredited adoption agency. We provide adoptive and birth families with professional adoption services and place children through our domestic infant, interstate, and international adoption programs. We also provide adoption services including home studies, post-placement/adoption reports, severance studies, and stepparent/relative adoptions. Building Arizona Families is dedicated to breaking down the barriers and obstacles of adoption and helping every child to find their forever family.

About the Domestic Adoption Program

Domestic adoptions usually have several different parties involved in the adoptive process: the birthmother (and sometimes the birthfather), the unborn child (sometimes the baby is already born), and the adoptive parents. Domestic adoption has changed a great deal in the past 20 years. The adoptions are rarely closed. Now, the birthparent(s) chooses the adoptive family for the baby. Open adoptions give the birthparent(s) the opportunity to meet and get to know the adopting parents, many times continuing the relationship after the baby's birth, either with direct contact or through letters and photos with the adopting parents.



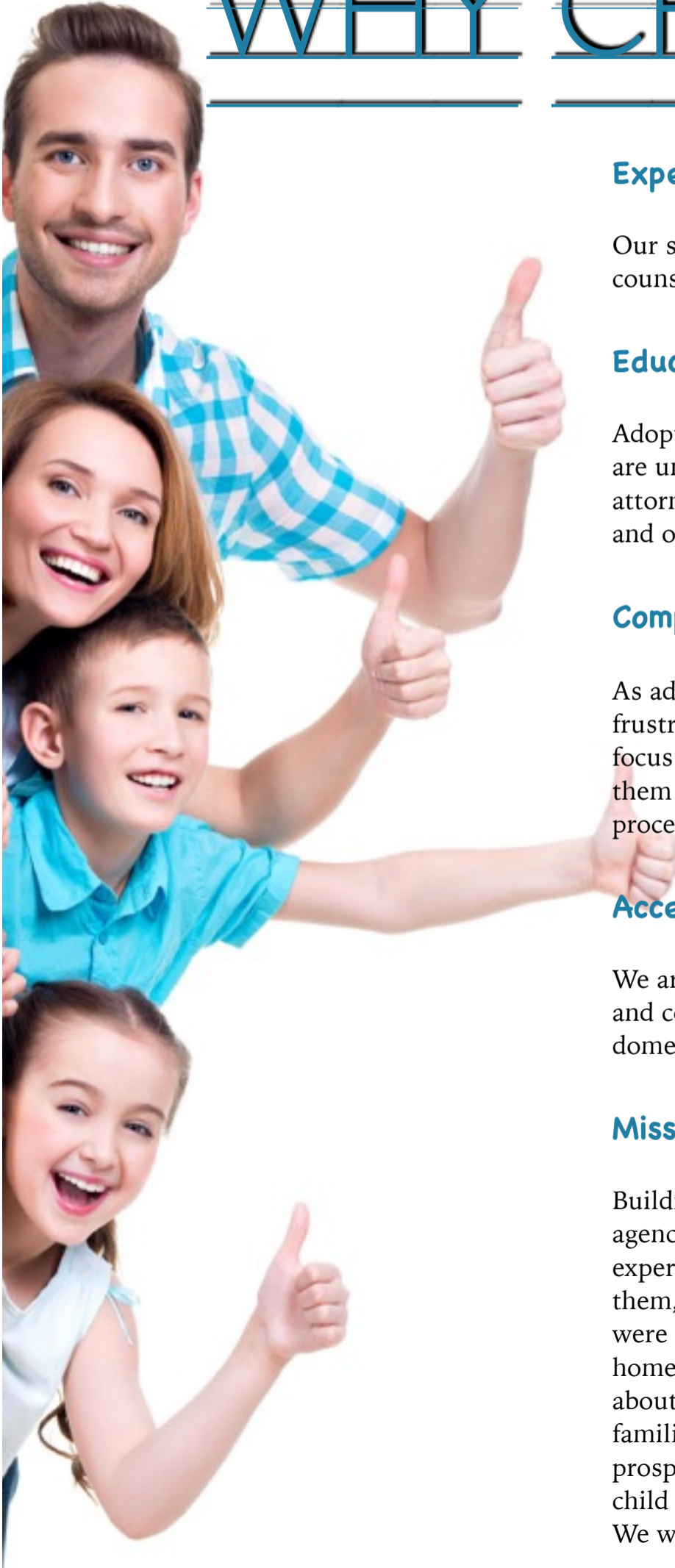
About Open Adoption

An open adoption can be beneficial to everyone involved in the adoption. It gives the birthparent(s) a sense of peace, knowing where and how the child will grow up and knowing that the family truly loves and cares for the child. Open adoption is easier for the child because many of their questions are easily answered. Open adoption is also helpful for the adoptive parents because they know more of the medical background of their child.



Building Arizona Families

WHY CHOOSE US?



Experience

Our staff has over 50 years of combined experience in adoption counseling, social work, and adoption services.

Education

Adopting a child domestically presents challenges and joys, which are unique to domestic adoption. Our agency is comprised of attorneys, a licensed MSW, a licensed counselor, social workers, and other vital staff members.

Compassion

As adoptive parents and adoptees, we understand the anxiety and frustrations and joys in working with the adoptive process. We focus on high level support to our adoptive families and helping them to access all necessary resources for a smooth adoptive process.

Accessible

We are available toll-free in our offices during operating hours and continually by email. We can be available 24 hours if a domestic adoption is pending.

Mission Statement

Building Arizona Families is an Arizona non-profit adoption agency founded by two mothers with twenty years combined experience with children. They have seven children between them, three of which were adopted from Russia. Both of them were concerned about the number of orphaned children and homeless children throughout the world, the need for honesty about the adoption process and the difficulties the adoptive families may face, and the outrageous fees charged to help the prospective adoptive family find a child. It is our belief that every child is entitled to have a safe, stable, loving and nurturing family. We would be honored to help you build your family.

BASICS OF DOMESTIC ADOPTION

ADOPTIVE PARENT REQUIREMENTS

Adoptive parents need to have a finished home study completed by a licensed adoption agency or social worker prior to being put on the waiting list. Birthparents are actively involved in the process of selecting an adoptive family. Profiles of adoptive parents are presented to the birthparents, generally based upon specific requests made by the birthparents.

WAITING TIME

The waiting period for a referral through Building Arizona Families is not predictable because families are matched according to birthparent preferences.



Children Available

Infants of all racial, ethnic backgrounds as well as Caucasian infants are adopted through the Domestic Program. Adoptive parents may specify the age or racial/ethnic background of the child they hope to adopt, but those who are able to be more flexible are likely to have a match made more quickly. Similarly, if one can be open to a child who may have a health risk or concern, there may be more opportunities for a possible placement.

Questions and Answers

The best way to have all of your questions answered is to attend one of the agency's informational seminars. You may check the Events and Services – Adoption Education pages of our website to learn when the next seminar will be held. If it is not convenient for you to attend a seminar, you may call or email Building Arizona Families for an information packet or to schedule a meeting with one of our staff.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Becky Merryman, Domestic Adoption Program Coordinator
(623) 224-1815
becky@buildingarizonafamilies.com



Building Arizona Families



LEGACY OF AN ADOPTED CHILD

~ Author Unknown ~

Once there were two women who did not know each other...
One you may not remember, the other you call mother.
Two different lives, shaped to make your one...
One became your guiding star; the other became your sun.
The first gave you life, and the second taught you to live it.
The first gave you a need for love, and the second was there to give it.
One gave you a nationality; the other gave you a name.
One gave you talent; the other gave you aim.
One gave you emotions; the other calmed your fears.
One saw your first sweet smile; the other dried your tears.
One sought for you a home that she could not provide.
The other prayed for a child, and her hope was not denied.
And now you ask me, through your tears,
the age old question unanswered throughout the years...
Heredity or environment... Which are you the product of...
Neither, my darling... neither...
just two different kinds of love.



Domestic Adoption Program Services

Building Arizona Families' success depends on our ability to educate birthmothers and adoptive parents on the adoption process. Building Arizona Families provides assistance and representation for domestic adoptions. We match expectant mothers who are interested in placing their child into a loving family environment with adoptive parents. Building Arizona Families assists expectant mothers with obtaining appropriate counseling services and prepares both parties for the hospital experience.

Adoption Advertising

Building Arizona Families uses many methods of advertising to reach potential birthparents. Advertising methods include, but are not limited to telephone book advertising, internet, high school donation advertising, community meetings and referral sources including an adoption attorney.

Adoptive Parents Intake

Building Arizona Families assesses the desires and the objectives of each adoption. Preferences may include ethnic background of birthparents, religious preferences, birthmother's support, openness of relationship with birthparent(s), etc.

Birthmother Screening Process

Handling the initial call from a birthmother is a very emotional and sensitive moment. Building Arizona Families strives to build trust in the birthmother, assuring that her sensitive needs will be met. Building Arizona Families will then set up comprehensive meetings with each birthmother to determine her commitment level and explain the adoption process. We also recommend to the birthmother that she receive a minimum of four counseling sessions from our licensed counselor.

Birthmother Background Information

After the birthmother's selection, Building Arizona Families will then provide the selected family with the background information on the birthparents. This information will include: age of birthmother, ethnicity, complexion, hair color, weight, height, education, birthfather situation, religion, support requirements (if any), gestational period, etc.

Meeting Your Birthmother

Building Arizona Families will guide all adoptive parents through the match meeting (or phone conference) with the birthmother.

Birthmother Requirements

Building Arizona Families will coordinate all meetings between the birthmother and adoptive parents and communicate all status developments as they arise.

Birthmother's Grief



Building an Adoptive Parent Profile....

Adoptive parent profiles are what is used when a birthmother is ready to choose the adoptive parents for her baby. After your home study is completed, then you are ready to begin your parent profile.

In order to keep all of the adoptive parent profiles in the same format, the following is what we request to present you to our birthmothers:

- 1 page (maximum) Dear Birthmother Letter
- 7-9 pages about you and your family. You should include pictures of you and your family, your house, vacations that you have taken, etc. These may be done in scrapbook form.
- A 5x7 recent picture of the adoptive parent/parents.



*Not flesh of my flesh,
Nor bone of my bone,
But still,
miraculously
my own.*

*Never forget
for a single minute,
You didn't grow
under my heart,
But in it.*



~Fleur Conkling Heylinger

DOMESTIC ADOPTION BENEFITS



In most cases, Domestic Adoption offers the following benefits:

From Day One: Domestic adoption allows parents to adopt a newborn or infant. Usually, adoptive parent(s) want to form a loving bond with their child from the start and know everything about their baby from day one.

Affordable & Predictable: Domestic adoption is an affordable adoption plan with predictable costs.

Accurate Medical Information: Domestic adoption offers dependable and correct medical information about the birthmother and the child being adopted.



Thorough Background Information:

Domestic adoption offers thorough medical, cultural and biological background information that adoptive parent(s) may need for medical purposes or to reply to questions a child may later pose.

Relatively Uncomplicated:

Domestic adoption offers a comparatively uncomplicated adoption process with a reputable entity.

Building Arizona Families is a firm believer in adoption and we strongly support all forms of adoption.

Adoption is when a child grew in its mommy's heart instead of her tummy. ~Author Unknown~



Building Arizona Families

KISSES IN THE WIND

I hold you in my heart and touch you in my dreams.
You are here each day with me, at least that's how it seems.

I know you wonder where we are... what's taking us so long.
But remember child, I love you so and God will keep you strong.

Now go outside and feel the breeze and let it touch your skin...
Because tonight, just as always, I blow you kisses in the wind.

May God hold you in His hand until I can be with you.
I promise you, my darling, I'm doing all that I can do.

Very soon, you'll have a family for real, not just pretend.
But for tonight, just as always, I blow you kisses in the wind.

May God wrap you in His arms and hold you very tight.
And let the angels bring the kisses that I send to you each night.

~ Author Unknown ~

motivation

Building Arizona Families is a unique agency, founded by two very loving mothers. These two mothers come to spread the word of adoption, from two very different experiences.

One mother has adopted three beautiful and loving children and one mother was adopted.

This agency has the desire to promote adoption of every kind and to fill the arms of every aching woman and man who so strongly desire to become a parent.



Q. I do not live in Arizona; can I still work with your agency?

A. Yes. Building Arizona Families can work with adoptive families across the United States. We have a convenient toll-free number for you to call us with questions and information.

Q. Can I work with more than one agency to locate a birthmother?

A. Yes. Building Arizona Families allows you to register with our domestic program and work with another agency as well to maximize your chances of finding your child.

Q. What type of services do you provide to your adoptive families?

A. We provide home studies, dossier preparation, adoption counseling, adoption facilitation in the United States and abroad, post-placement reports and referral sources.

Q. How long does it take to adopt domestically?

A. There is no concrete answer. We have received telephone calls from birthmothers that are in their 7th week of pregnancy to birthmothers that are due in three days. We facilitate domestic adoptions by presenting prospective adoptive parents to birthmothers and then letting the birthmother choose (if she wishes to do so) the adoptive parents for her baby. The more open you leave the description of the baby you wish to adopt, the quicker the adoption may occur, whereas the more restrictions you place, the longer you may wait.

Q. What is a home study?

A. The home study is a document that is produced following a process conducted by a licensed placement provider. It consists of several interviews, submission of state required clearances, and other information with the purpose of educating the adoptive family on adoption issues and assuring that the family meets the adoption requirements of the state where they are residing. An approved home study is required from your state of residence. You can begin the home study process before you have selected the agency you wish to use for your adoption.

Q. Can Building Arizona Families complete my home study?

A. Yes. Building Arizona Families can complete your home study if you live in the state of Arizona. If you do not live in the state of Arizona, we will be happy to refer you to a local provider who can perform your home study requirements.





Q. Who can adopt?

A. Single men and women as well as married couples can adopt.

Q. Is there an age limit for adopting parents?

A. No. We look at each adoptive home individually and work with you in conjunction with your home study provider in order to make the decision on whether or not adoption is right for you.

Q. How will I meet the birthmothers?

A. Building Arizona Families will facilitate the meeting between prospective adoptive parents and birthmothers. After a birthmother has reviewed your file and she wishes to meet with you, you will be notified by Building Arizona Families and a meeting will be arranged.

Q. How much contact will I have with the birthmother, after I have been selected?

A. That depends entirely on the comfort level of the birthmother. The interactions between you and her will be at her discretion.

Q. Can I be in the delivery room?

A. That will be at the discretion of the birthmother.

Q. Do I have to agree to an open adoption?

A. No. However, the more open you are to different types of adoption, the less time you may have to wait.

Q. What if the birthmother changes her mind?

A. Unfortunately, that does happen sometimes. We do have our birthmothers work with a licensed counselor, however, for a minimum of four sessions to ensure that she is making the correct choice for her and her child. Building Arizona Families will assist the adoptive family in any disrupted adoption and work to insure a completed adoption as quickly as possible.

Q. Do I need to work with an adoption attorney as well as an adoption agency?

A. We require that an adoption attorney finalize the adoption.

Q. When are the adoption fees due and how are they paid?

A. Fees paid to Building Arizona Families are made in partial payments. We accept wire transfers and Visa/MasterCard via PayPal.



NEED HELP WITH ADOPTION EXPENSES?



The decision on whether to take out a loan to help pay for adoption expenses can be difficult. Building Arizona Families reminds you that it is important as adoptive parents to maintain financial stability for the good of your child. There are several different options for covering your adoption expenses.

Mortgage and Credit Based Adoption Loans:

Check with your bank's loan officer.

Adoption Tax Credit:

Adoptive parent(s) may be able to claim a tax credit for each adopted child for qualifying adoption expenses. Please check with your tax accountant for details. Additional information available at <http://www.irs.gov>

Dependent Exemption:

Adoptive parent(s) may take the same dependency exemption on their income taxes for their adopted children.

Employee Benefits Program:

Roughly a quarter of the nation's employers offer some form of adoption benefits to their employees. Ask your employer about this benefit. Additional information available at: http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_benefi.cfm and <http://www.adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org>

Federal Medical and Family Leave Act:

Unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act is also available to adoptive parents. Additional information available at: <http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla>

Military Family Subsidies: For information about adoption for military families please call the Adoption Exchange Association at (303) 755-4756 or visit <http://www.nmfa.org>

Adoptive Families Magazine: Information about where to look for help, what subsidies are available, and where loans and grants may be found. More information available <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/>

Gift Money: Often family members and friends will give loved ones who are adopting personal loans or a monetary gift to assist with adoption costs.

CONTINUED...NEED HELP WITH ADOPTION EXPENSES?



Abba Fund: Provides financial assistance to Christian couples who are adopting. Call (888) 775-3422 or visit <http://www.abbafund.org/>

Freddie Mac Foundation: Dedicated to opening doors to hope and opportunity for children, youth, and their families. Call (703) 918-8888 or visit <http://www.freddiemacfoundation.org/>

Gift of Adoption: Offers grants amounting to \$2,000 or more to families adopting based on financial need. Call (877) 905-2367 or visit <http://www.giftofadoption.org>

Hebrew Free Loan Association: Loans are available to Jewish adults who wish to adopt children internationally or domestically. Call (415) 546-9902 or visit <http://www.hflasf.org>

Help US Adopt: Grants for any U.S. citizen pursuing any kind of adoption. Call (917) 684-5484 or visit <http://www.helpusadopt.org>

Lifesong for Orphans: Provides loans and grants to Christian couples who are adopting. Call (309) 747-3556 or visit <http://www.lifesongfororphans.org>

National Adoption Foundation: Private grants, special loan programs, and adoption credit cards available. Call (866) 218-5657 or visit <http://www.nafadopt.org>

Oxford Adoption Foundation: Provides low interest loans to parents adopting internationally. Call (239) 430-6240 or visit <http://www.oxfordadoption.com>

Parenthood for Me: Grants for parents pursuing parenthood via adoption. For more information visit <http://www.parenthoodforme.org>

Sea of Faces Foundation: Provides grants to Christian couples who are adopting. For more information visit <http://www.seaoffaces.org>

Show Hope: A Christian organization with available grants to families using a licensed and accredited agency. Call (615) 550-5600 or visit <http://www.showhope.org>



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