



*Adoption
Network*[®]
LAW CENTER

2008 Calendar Kids

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Network News

ADOPTION NETWORK LAW CENTER'S NEWSLETTER

THIRD QUARTER 2007



Our little lion, Max Tukey

Adoption Network Law Center Announces Winners of Annual Calendar Kids Contest

All of us here at Adoption Network Law Center want to thank everyone who participated in our annual contest by sending in wonderful photos and inspiring testimonials and poems.

Your overwhelming, enthusiastic participation this year exceeded our expectations with over 225 amazing entries! This contest created an almost impossible task for the judges to select the final photographs. Congratulations to the 2008 Calendar Kids:

Cover: Drake Drendel

*January: Malibu May & Gansett Blue
Champagne*

February: Hayden Lulkovitz

March: Kaitlyn D'Alessio

April: Syanna Rose Hoehner

*May: Christian Squadrito, Ryan Van Doren,
Ethan Wiley*

June: Kailynn Ross

July: Brandon Young

August: Emma Johnston

September: Gabrielle Jude

October: Annaka Earles

November: Jay Ramsay

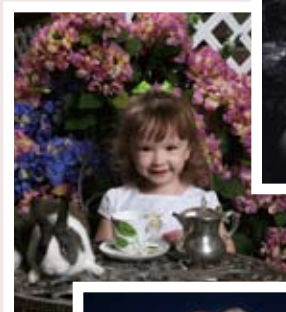
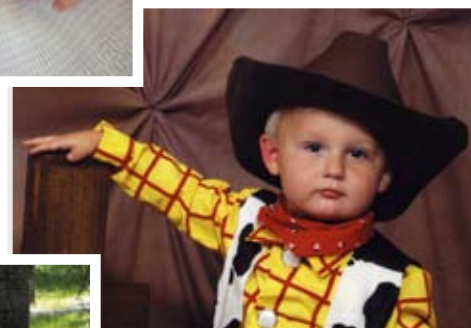
December: Madison Pietruszka

Please continue to send us the wonderful photographs throughout the year. We love to stay in touch with all of you. Remember, next year there is another calendar and it just might be the year your little miracle becomes a "Calendar Kid."

To order your 2008 Calendar, please complete and send the order form to our offices. ~Thank you!



<http://www.adoptionnetwork.com/adoptiveparents/adoption-pdf/calendarkidsorderfrom08.pdf>



What is a Dear Birthmother Letter?

We've surveyed a handful of our recently matched couples to find out the secret to a well crafted Dear Birthmother Letter. Turns out, it isn't a secret at all...it's all about being honest!!! Keep in mind, this isn't just another letter...it is a very important marketing tool! Your letter ultimately presents an accurate and insightful impression of yourselves to that special someone.

Debbie C. tells us that "The best way to increase your chances of meeting that special someone is to present an accurate and insightful impression of yourselves in your Dear Birthmother Letter".

A Dear Birthmother Letter is an introduction of yourselves with the ultimate purpose of meeting that incredible woman who will change the destiny of your lives. James R. told us to "Write to open a window to your life and let a birthmother have a good peek inside. If you can't fully separate yourself from the feeling that you are "selling something" at least sell yourself honestly. Don't pretend you're something you are not. The more authentically you communicate the essence of your personality, lifestyle, parenting philosophy, and heart, the better chance you have of connecting with a birthmother who shares your feelings. Remember, your goal is to appeal not to just any birthmother, but rather to the one with whom you are likely to be able to form a strong connection. Successful adoptions occur when prospective adoptive parents and birthparents make a strong connection".

Although you are adopting a baby, you must realize your goal is to connect with a birthmother not the baby. To find the baby that's meant to be a part of your family, you must first connect with the birthmother and have a comforting relationship with her.

Keep in mind when writing the letter that although it's called a Dear Birthmother Letter, a woman is not a birthmother until after the baby is born and she has relinquished her parental rights. Otherwise she is an expectant woman formulating an adoption plan.

If you have the opportunity, review other letters. This should help you gather some insight on writing an interesting and inspiring letter. Be sure to begin your greeting with an introduction that is original and enthusiastic. Reach out to the Birthmother. Try to appreciate the incredible journey she is undertaking and the sacrifice she is making in the best interest of her baby.

Identify how the baby will enhance your life. Make sure you go into detail about how you intend to raise your child. Be specific; if you love theatre, describe your plan to attend puppet shows to introduce your child to this world. If golf is your interest, make a joke about needing a junior caddie. This will help a birthmother imagine the life her baby will lead.

Be positive. After infertility, it's difficult to discuss forming

a family without a dose of sorrow. These feelings are natural and need to be dealt with, but your Dear Birthmother Letter is not the place to do it. Don't dwell on your loss. Put your best foot forward and express the good your life has to offer. You can mention your infertility, or any other sorrow, but do so within the context of the positive lessons that you've learned. Articulate the positive things you have to offer.

Some good advice came from a new adoptive parent, Lisa, who suggests that you write to "...become the solution. We all wish our home were larger, our incomes bigger, our relationship with our parents better. So, don't waste space pointing out faults. Communicate the aspects of your life that will help a birthmother imagine you as the solution she seeks".

Perhaps one of the best pieces of advice came from David & Nancy who advise us to "Make sure that you write the letter as a couple." Maybe you don't think that your spouse could find the words to express what you are feeling so you write everything by yourself. Do not sell your spouse short! Sit down and do this together!

Try to be very specific when you can. If you love going to museums, what kind do you like? Name your favorite team rather than stating that you like sports? If your faith is an important factor in your life discuss this in detail. A Birthmother whose religion is very important to her will consider your profile over others. Specifics are what a birthmother connects with. For example, one of our adoptive mothers included the fact that she loves to bake oatmeal cookies. It just so happened that oatmeal cookies were the expectant women's favorite cookies and that fact had something to do with their birthmother picking the couple. The more intimate the details, the more vivid the picture.

Put your best foot forward. Speak of adoption as an exciting process that will lead to happiness for all involved. Communicate the same positive messages to your birthmother that you hope one day to communicate to your child.



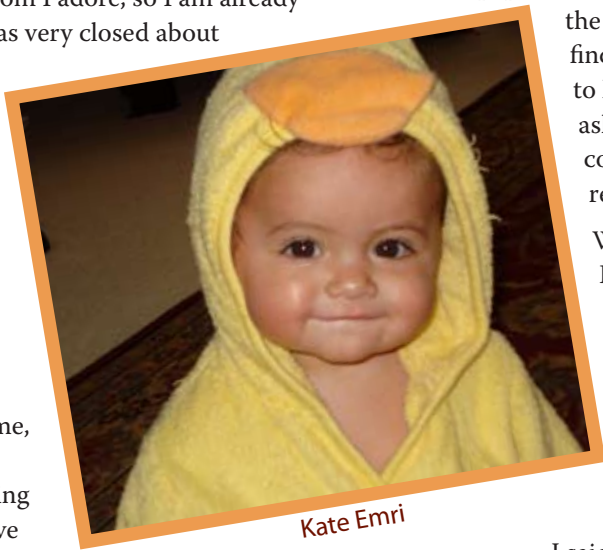
The thing that most of the surveys suggested was "write from your heart and be honest. **Do not copy someone else's letter.** When you finally write your letter, put away the sample letters, books, shut down the computer, and just write." Good Luck!

...best endorsements of adoption in the world are Moses and Jesus

In September of 2005, a wonderful Christian co-worker was in my office and we were talking when all of a sudden, out of the blue, she said, "You know you are going to adopt a baby don't you?" I kind of laughed, and said, "I don't think so." She laughed and said, "Yeah, well you are, and you will be a wonderful mommy."

Todd and I had tried to have children from 1998 until his stroke in 2002. I had a miscarriage, we did the infertility treatments, but I really was OK with it not happening for me, plus I have a BEAUTIFUL step-daughter, Lexie, whom I adore, so I am already a parent, and feel very blessed. So, I was very closed about the idea of having a baby, or looking into adoption. I'm the career gal, and that's the way it is.

In early 2006, I realized that it was going to be my 43rd birthday and my mom had really been heavy in my heart. She passed away when I was 16, and she does appear to me in my dreams, and I feel her love all around me. You see, I am adopted, and my mom, Kay, was 43 when she adopted me, and I started thinking about what she must have felt like, being 43, just starting out, and back then, 43 was OLD to have a baby. I certainly didn't feel that old! I had been getting so many messages over the first few months of the year, people adopting babies, dogs, the signs "adopt a highway." It was actually starting to be a little bizarre and I asked God out right, "Am I supposed to be paying attention to this?" I could literally feel my heart heat up, and a peaceful feeling come across me, that's usually when I know that God is involved, when I get that feeling of peace. On May 5, I was talking to my roommate from college on the phone on my way to work and she told me about someone from college who just adopted, and at that moment, I said, OK, I surrender! I walked into my office and the first person I saw was the woman I mentioned before. It was odd to see her, because she usually did not work in the office on that particular day. I said to her, "I'm going to adopt a baby!" And she said, "I know!" And we both started crying. She knew God had used her to get me to start thinking about it. I then called Todd and told him we are going to adopt. Todd has wanted this for many years, but I had all kinds of excuses with the pressures of the career and Todd's stroke. It became quite clear we are supposed to find our own little Baby Kay. God really spoke to my heart, and although I wasn't 100% sure, I had 100% faith that God was going to make this process quite easy. You can ask my small group and my friends, even back in the summer I was saying, "I think God is going to give us our girl, and I think it will be soon. It took me so long to realize I am supposed to be a mom, He is not going to have us wait too long." I just needed the time to get the paperwork



Kate Emri

and process completed. God made that easy too. The company I was working for was starting to not do well financially, and I was not being challenged at all. God helped me draft a proposal to the President that would eliminate my position, save many of the jobs of my team, give me some severance so I could take the time to focus on getting ready for the baby. They accepted it! I even got my computer and some great office furniture in the deal! We found Adoption Network Law Center with our very first internet search. We were very comfortable with them, and by August 2,

we had our paperwork in and a website up and we were ready for the choosing! I had a new job, and God made finding that one VERY easy, I didn't even have to look. An old boss of mine called me and asked if I was looking....Our home study was complete at the end of September. We were ready to go!

We went down to visit Todd's brother on December 29th in Virginia. For many years we'd go to their home on Christmas Day, but for some reason -and no coincidences here, we decided to wait until 12/29. We were on our way to dinner when I got a phone call from Adoption Network Law Center telling us that they have a baby girl for us and that she is in Virginia.

I said, "Oh that's funny, we're in Virginia visiting family." Our advisor asked "Where in VA?" We told her Woodbridge...then the ANLC advisor says, "You are not going to believe this, the baby is in Woodbridge, VA"...we were 1/2 mile from the hospital!!!! The same hospital both my nephews were born in, and we had been there several times in the past. We drove right over to see if we could pick her out from the window. And a little itty bitty girl was all the way at the end.

The birthmom named her Noella, and said the only thing she wants for her baby is a family that loves the Lord and will go to church together and pray together. And this is our little gift from God. We have named her Kathryn Noella. Kathryn is after my mom. We picked her up from the hospital on New Year's Eve. She brought in the New Year bright-eyed and alert! She thrives. She is the sweetest little girl in the world. God MORE than answered our prayers! She is a really good baby and CUTE! Despite her little size, she is a strong one. God orchestrated this whole thing. Even the social worker that placed her with our agency was the one we used for our home study, they already had all our paperwork, so it was a piece of cake. This same social worker will complete our post-placement visits and is very familiar with our family. In fact he said the best endorsements of adoption in the world are Moses and Jesus. You can't beat that!

*Blessings to you all -
Todd, Lori, Lexie and Kate Emri*

Guess Who's Adopted?

A Book Honoring Adopted Celebrities and Your Special Super Star!

By Laura Kowalczyk Richards and Miss Jolie Richards

"Mommy...am I the only kid in the world who is adopted?" Such an innocent yet complicated question, right? A question all adoptive parents can relate to. Although our adopted children may not always verbalize their curiosities, we can be certain, at one time or another, they have pondered their adoption. They have wondered about their beginnings or their birth family. Sometimes they talk about it...and sometimes they don't.

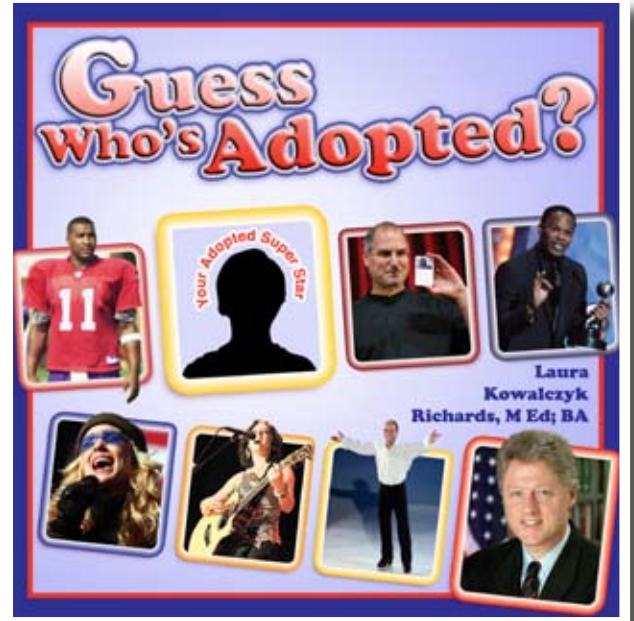
I know firsthand because my ten year old adopted daughter, Jolie, has "wondered" things about her past on different occasions over the past decade. As she was growing up, I helped her during those "curious" times by playing a game with her. We called it "Guess Who Else Is Adopted". I would point out other adoptees we knew and she would find comfort in knowing that she is, indeed, not the "only kid in the world" who is adopted!

Over time, Jolie expected more examples of adoptees and I ran out of people we knew, so I began pointing out famous celebrity adoptees! Wow! She loved it! "Listen to this girl on the radio, Faith Hill. Did you know she is adopted?" "Did you know Steve Jobs, the creator of the iPod is adopted?"

As an adoptive mother and former elementary school teacher, I realize that the biggest job of parents, adoptive and biological, is to love, support, and facilitate understanding for our children. We need to teach our children that the world is diverse and we all should celebrate the differences that make us unique in our own special way.

Not only will children enjoy reading about famous adoptees, they will be wowed with fun facts and trivia about them! They will appreciate their accomplishments and dream of their very own futures! And the most exciting part of this book is the opportunity to personalize your copy with a page, custom-designed, for your own child!

You can purchase your own copy of Guess Who's Adopted? By visiting www.guesswhosadopted.com or by calling 1-888-280-7715.



An explanation to our ANLC Family:

As discussed during your original client presentation, our normal "matching" process is for a birthmother to choose a clients' profile and then the Adoption Advisor contacts you directly by telephone to present the case. However, occasionally we send out an email specifically due to a unique set of circumstances that require us to preview the clients before presenting their profile to the birthmother. On August 30, 2007, an email was sent to our clients regarding a birthmother who was searching for adoptive parents for her baby. The email blast is sent usually to clients whose criteria for a birthmother is similar to the birthmother's background. The birthmother is then sent profiles based on the clients that have responded to the email.

We would like to thank everyone for the incredible response to this birthmother's request. As always, the birthmother has the final decision and chooses parents based on the desire and dreams she has for the child. This birthmother has selected a couple and they have been contacted and their adoption journey is moving forward.

We understand that everyone is anxiously waiting to receive a call from an Adoption Advisor telling you that "you have been selected". The birthmother's decision process may take several days. Please be patient! When the birthmother has advised ANLC of her decision the Adoption Advisor will contact the client. ANLC will then send out a second email advising everyone the birthmother has chosen a couple. This process could take several days.

Hopefully you will be receiving a call soon from an Advisor to disclose a birthmother has selected you. However, if another "email blast" is sent out before you receive a call, please recognize unique circumstances have occurred again.

Contact us according to the instructions specifically stated in the email only if the information is appropriate for your family and if you would like your profile to be presented to the birthmother.

Thank you again for your faith and endurance in this journey we are taking together.

Sincerely,

Adoption Network Law Center

Monthly Reminders

- ♥ **NEW FEATURE** – Birthday announcements – if you would like to announce an upcoming birthday, please send the child's name, DOB and photo (preferably a birthday theme) to Network News 2-5 months in advance of the special day and we'll try to get it listed in the corresponding edition!
marketing@adoptionnetwork.com
- ♥ **Don't delay** – Our stats show that profiles appearing on more than one website get matched much quicker. Our relationship with Courageous Choice allows you to have your profile seen by even more prospective birth moms.
- ♥ **Moving? Change of address?** Don't forget to call us to update your personal information so that you will continue to get updates, information and invitations...
- ♥ **In the Next issue of Network News...**
 - ♥ Great Holiday and Family Photos
 - ♥ More baby stats
- ♥ **For Your Convenience** – an electronic copy of this and all past newsletters are available on our website...



Free Booklet

The National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) has developed a booklet titled "How to Make Adoption an Affordable Option." This booklet provides information for all prospective adoptive parents regarding financial assistance, benefits, and tax breaks for all types of adoptions. It also provides a breakdown of what fees may be involved in the adoption process. The booklet is available on the NEFE Web site at <http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/nefe/uploadfiles/AdoptionOption.pdf>

Don't Forget!

If you have a testimonial to send us, you can mail it or submit it via our website at:
<http://adoptionnetwork.com/adoption-testimonials/adoption-testimonials-submit.shtml>

See what our clients are saying about us:
<http://adoptionnetwork.com/adoption-testimonials>



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