



# Network News

ADOPTION NETWORK LAW CENTER'S NEWSLETTER

FOURTH QUARTER 2007

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...at considering  
...telling like  
...and our reason  
...in destiny and  
...and we're hope*

# From the Desk of Kristin A.F. Yellin

As we start the new year, it seems only natural to reflect on our accomplishments of 2007. This year, aside from the hundreds of babies born into our loving adoptive family's homes, ANLC had the highest attendance level at our annual family picnic, initiated community sponsorships of little league teams as well as corporate sponsorships of local outreach events. We've extended our partnership with Courageous Choice and expanded our advertising efforts to include social networking sites and outdoor bus shelter posters to reach even more birthmothers.

This year, continuing our commitment to help as many families as possible attain their dream of parenting, we presented a low interest financing program designed for ANLC adoptions. In November, we watched one of our Adoption Advisors accept an award from the nationally recognized fertility organization RESOLVE for her tireless dedication to the families with which she works.

This year, we are committed to further building our outreach programs and better serving the needs of the adoption community. We look forward to introducing more programs and services to help make adoption easier, faster and available to more hopeful couples.

Along with the entire ANLC staff, I would like to wish you and yours a wonderful 2008!

*Kris*



Kristin and Ellen at RESOLVE

# New Parent Letter

December 10, 2007

It will be impossible for us to fully express our appreciation for the services provided by your amazing staff of professionals. No mere letter can convey the profound feelings of love we feel every time we hold our baby daughter, Emily Rose. It's hard to believe that she just turned four months old a few days ago!

Everyone at ANLC has made us feel wonderfully special. Our Adoption Consultant walked us through the process and answered every question until we felt comfortable enough to proceed. Your web-marketing team was extremely patient with us as we submitted over 80 photos to meet the technical and aesthetic recommendations of the various birthmother websites made available to us.

As you probably know, Kerry and I were originally selected by a birthmother who was working with Ellen. But only 9 days after we were matched, Ellen had to make the most difficult call of her career and let us know that the birthmother miscarried. We appreciate Ellen's compassion and understanding as we dealt with the devastating news. Anyone who is fortunate enough to have Ellen as their counselor is blessed.



But our highest praise is reserved for the true angel in your midst- Kathy. Wow, not a week goes by that we don't thank God for her entering our lives. Just three days after getting the news about the miscarriage, we got a call from Kathy. There was another birthmother who was interested in selecting us to adopt her baby girl. The big catch was the baby was to be born in Tucson, Arizona in six days!

Kathy was not worried at all. In the next six days and the days that followed, Kathy fully prepared us for everything we could possibly expect to happen.

She also worked around the clock to get us the best possible results. Our second call from Kathy lasted until after Midnight. She quickly arranged a match call between us and the birthmother. Kathy answered literally hundreds of questions from us and the birthmother, keeping everyone incredibly calm throughout the stressful week.

Over those six days, we talked with Kathy night and day, as we prepared to depart for Arizona. We were stunned to learn that Kathy was handling several other cases during the same time period. Clearly, Kathy doesn't need sleep at all to function at an incredibly professional level. However, we were exhausted by the time we left for Arizona. But because Kathy had worked out hundreds of logistically pieces of the adoption puzzle for us, we simply needed to just press forward and continue to have faith in the adoption process. As events unfolded in Arizona, our faith in Kathy was very well placed indeed. She was in constant contact with all of the various individuals and organizations that were handling our case in Arizona and California.

The entire process was stressful, but because of Kathy's preparations behind the scenes, we got through the days with our sanity intact.

We understand that many aspects of the adoption process are outside of the control of agents for the ANLC. Sometimes even Kathy could only speed up procedures so fast. Then we simply had to be patient and pray. But today, when we hold our daughter in our arms, we forget every moment of impatience, frustration, or anxiety. In short, Kathy should be nominated for sainthood. Barring that, she should be appreciated every day for the tireless efforts that she makes on behalf of all of her birthmothers and adoptive parents.

The entire ANLC staff should begin every day with a smile, because they have among the most important jobs on the planet—they help build families and make people's dreams come true. God bless all of you!

Sincerely,

James & Kerry



# Adoption-Friendly Employers

A growing trend: The number of employers of every size and industry offering adoption benefits grows each year as companies recognize that they are a competitive, low-cost addition to any work-life package. Of *Working Mother* magazine's 2007 top 100 companies, 91 offer financial assistance and 75 offer paid leave. In an annual survey of 1,000 major United States employers conducted by human resources outsourcing and consulting firm Hewitt Associates, companies offering financial adoption benefits rose from 12% in 1990 to 45% in 2006.

## What are adoption benefits?

- Financial reimbursement for adoption expenses ranging from \$500 to \$20,000; often more for special needs adoption
- Paid leave ranging from 1-16 weeks
- Unpaid leave in addition to FMLA (Family Leave and Medical Act) guarantees unpaid leave for adoption for larger employers —visit [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

## Why should organizations offer adoption benefits?

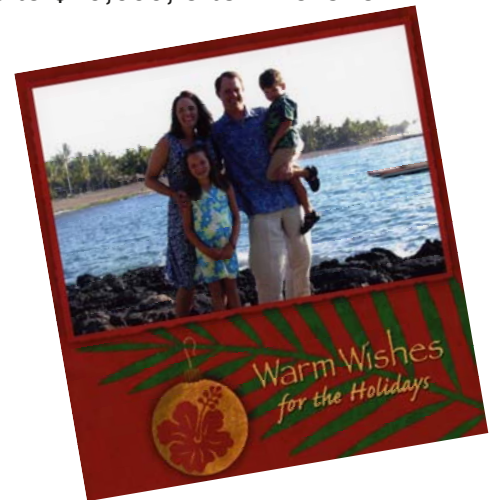
- To support employees building families through adoption
- To increase employee loyalty and retention
- For a competitive edge in recruiting new employees
- To add a low cost benefit (generally used by less than 1% of eligible employees)
- To give the adoptive employee time to bond with their child
- To make adoption more affordable
- To help move children from foster care to loving, permanent adoptive homes
- It's the right thing to do

## What expenses are covered by financial reimbursement?

The employer may specify. Usually cost of home studies, attorneys, court proceedings, foster care placement, parental counseling, medical expenses not covered under group insurance, transportation, lodging and immigration.

## Are there tax benefits for adoption?

- For the adoptive parent, yes. Visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for details.
- For the employer, adoption benefits paid to employees would be treated as any other business expense with regard to taxes.



# Before I was a Mom

## Before I was a Mom

I never tripped over toys or forgot words to a lullaby.  
I didn't worry whether or not my plants were poisonous.  
I never thought about immunizations.

## Before I was a Mom

I had never been puked on.  
Pooped on.  
Chewed on.  
Peed on.  
I had complete control of my mind and my thoughts.  
I slept all night.

## Before I was a Mom

I never held down a screaming child so doctors could do tests.  
Or give shots.  
I never looked into teary eyes and cried.  
I never got gloriously happy over a simple grin.  
I never sat up late hours at night watching a baby sleep.

## Before I was a Mom

I never held a sleeping baby just because I didn't want to put him down.  
I never felt my heart break into a million pieces when I couldn't stop the hurt.  
I never knew that something so small could affect my life so much.  
I never knew that I could love someone so much.  
I never knew I would love being a Mom.

## Before I was a Mom

I didn't know the feeling of having my heart outside my body.  
I didn't know how special it could feel to feed a hungry baby.  
I didn't know that bond between a mother and her child.  
I didn't know that something so small could make me feel so important and happy.

## Before I was a Mom

I had never gotten up in the middle of the night every 10 minutes to make sure all was okay.  
I had never known the warmth, joy, love, heartache, wonderment or satisfaction of being a Mom.



## Profile Picture Tips

A bit of advice about profile pictures for your online and printed resumes – while it is nice to put your best foot forward with formal, professional photographs we have found that the more important thing is to make sure that your personality shines through.

When a birthmother looks at your resume she wants to be able to relate to you in some way, be it the activities you are partaking in or the favorite sports team jersey you are wearing. She is seeking to find something that she feels is important for her baby to be a part of.

Make sure to include pictures that show each of your personalities and the activities that you enjoy doing. It is far more important to a birthmother to make sure that her child will be with a genuine family that is proud of who they are and what they represent; let these characteristics show through in your pictures. The birthmothers are looking for the perfect family for their child; however this does not mean portrait-picture perfect.

# Children First: Making the Paradigm Shift from Infertility to Adoption

Moving from infertility to adoptive parenting is a complicated emotional process. In transferring from the process and the culture of infertility and its treatment to the process and culture of adoption, consumers are expected to make a huge shift. The Barrier? Medical treatment is centered on the needs and wishes of the paying-client—the adult who wanted a baby (that’s you!). Adoption’s culture is centered on the needs and best interest of the one client who has no say in the process and who bears no financial responsibility—the child (not you!). Adoption is child-centered rather than adult-centered. But you, one of three clients in the picture, will carry all of the financial risk and burden.

Not fair, you say? I understand. Been there. Felt that. But as my children by adoption have grown up, as our relationships with them and some of their birthparents have developed, I’ve changed my thinking a lot.

Here’s something you probably don’t understand if you are not yet a parent. Parenting itself changes everything. From the moment you become a parent forward, your child’s needs will always come before yours and before anyone else’s in your life. For those who conceive their children, that shift comes automatically as part of the pregnancy experience. Indeed, it’s that shift in thinking that makes it possible for birthparents to plan an adoption.

For those who adopt, however, making that shift is not automatic. Unless one makes a deliberate choice to shift thinking, to participate in an adoption expectancy period, the shift won’t likely happen until after the child arrives. And by then, many infertile couples can have made some pretty bad choices already—choices rooted in their frustration, in their reactions to many losses that infertility has brought to them, in the desperation they have begun to feel about ever being able to parent.

Written by: Patricia Irwin Johnston, MS



# Monthly Reminders

- **NEW FEATURE**—Couples Corner—Please send us anything you'd like to share with other couples — tips, book reviews, stories and pictures...we'll include interesting items in an upcoming addition of Network News...  
marketing@adoptionnetwork.com
- **Birthday announcements**—If you would like to announce an upcoming birthday, please send the child's name, DOB and photo (preferably a birthday theme) at least 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 birthmoms.
- **Moving? Change of address?** Don't forget to call us to update your personal information so that you will continue to get updates, newsletter, information and invitations...
- **For your convenience**—an electronic copy of this and all past newsletters is available on our website.

*Testimonials and endorsements contained herein do not constitute a guarantee, warranty or prediction regarding the outcome of your legal matter.*



## 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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