



*Adoption  
Network*<sup>SM</sup>  
LAW CENTER

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# *Network News*

ADOPTION NETWORK LAW CENTER'S NEWSLETTER

FOURTH QUARTER 2006



# Should I Adopt? Still considering your options? Making the Decision

The decision to adopt is very much a journey. To people unfamiliar with adoption, even the mere thought can be overwhelming. There are many questions to answer, emotions to explore, and tasks to complete.

## It all begins with the question, should I adopt?

Adoption is the permanent addition of a child to your family. This means that you are a child's parent for evermore, just as if you had given birth. You become responsible emotionally, physically, financially, and legally for this child.

## Are you ready for this responsibility?

- Do you have the emotional capability to handle a child?
- Are you ready to help the child cope with his loss over his birth family? This becomes relevant with infant adoption as the child starts questioning the process of adoption.
- If you already have children in your home, are they ready for a new addition to the family?

## If you are adopting due to infertility issues

- Have you resolved these issues internally?
- Have you grieved your loss?
- Do you understand that adopting may bring these issues to the surface again?



## Do you understand your adoption options? If not, call an Adoption Consultant today to help you decide.

- Older vs. infant adoption
- Open adoption
- International adoption
- Interracial adoption

## Age of the adoptive parent, does it matter? Although your Home Study will cover these questions, you may want to ask yourself:

- Are you in good physical health? (Ask your doctor for his/her opinion on your adopting.)
- Does the adoption program you are interested in have an upper and lower limit on the adoptive parent's age?

## What are the physical limitations of your everyday environment?

- Is your home large enough?
- Is your vehicle right for children?
- Do you need to put a fence around your yard?
- Do you need play equipment?

After much deliberation it may just be time to consider the next step in your adoption journey.



September 6, 2006

Dear Adoption Network Law Center,

**Where there is great love, there are always miracles!**

A year ago we walked into your office filled with lots of doubt due to a long roller coaster ride of fertility treatments and failed pregnancies. After meeting with your staff we felt confident that we had found the right place for us. After a short lunch at the Spectrum, we returned to sign on board; we're so glad we did.

The staff worked quickly to get us up on the website. It took us two days to complete all of the paperwork that ANLC and Hope 4 Kids required. We completed adoption training, had our fingerprints taken, got our medical clearance, gathered our photographs, and completed 10 scrapbooks in one week. Our friends and family returned the letters of recommendation immediately upon receiving them, we met with our social worker and our packet was complete in record time.

It took a day and half of being up on the ANLC website before we were matched with our sensational Birthmother. We will never forget receiving the phone call from ANLC on Friday, August 5, 2005. We almost crashed and got pulled over by the Sheriff's Department on our way to Laguna Beach. We explained to the officer what had happened and he congratulated us, told us to drive safely and let us go with a warning. "Oh my Goodness!!!" Everyone...friends, family and neighbors were thrilled and in shock that it had happened so quickly. This was unheard of, we definitely had angels on our side.

On August 11, 2005 we met our Birthmother. Exactly two months from the date of our meeting, our son was born. What an amazing experience! I was able to be our Birthmother's Lamaze coach and was in the delivery room to witness this joyous event.

In two short months from walking through your front doors, our lives were forever changed! One year and 4 days later, we were in family court with Richard V. Mowery, (what a wonderful attorney) and the finalization of our son took place.

Miracles do happen! Thank you for fulfilling our lifelong dream of becoming parents. There is no greater joy than holding our son in our arms having him call us "Dada" and "Mama". With great pride and confidence we whole-heartedly support your organization and will continue to promote adoption through Adoption Network Law Center.

Sincerely,  
The Rios Family



*We can never express enough how grateful and thankful we are for the staff at Adoption Network Law Center, especially Kathy Howard, our Birthmother Advisor, and Sharron Kenny, our Adoption Counselor. You all have helped our dreams come true in creating our family with the addition of our daughter, Kailynn Marie Ross. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all and your families.*

*From Our Family to Yours,  
The Ross Family in Hawaii*

**Thank You  
From the Entire ANLC Staff**

The holiday season is the greatest time of year for us all at the Center. Each day piles of envelopes with cards from our adoptive families arrive and most importantly photos of the most gorgeous children in the universe...ours!

If only you knew how much we love and enjoy seeing all of our children grow and the happy and fulfilled parents with them. It's when your thoughtfulness arrives that we can bask in the fruits of our hard (and often very stressful) work and know it was worth whatever we went through to complete your family.

Pictures and cards trickle in during the year...please make that trickle a steady flow. We all love seeing photos and reading your words so very, very much.

All the cards and photos are still taped up in our front office, we know we're supposed to take the holiday stuff down, but we simply can't. They give us too much pleasure to look at. Look for a collage of these photos in next quarter's Network News!

**Don't forget, this and all past newsletters are available on our website...see what you've been missing!**

**<http://www.adoptionnetwork.com/adoptiveparents/adoption-articles.shtml>**

# Things They Didn't Tell You About Fatherhood

BY ANDY ALTIZER & ROBY HILL



**F**atherhood. It's the Super Bowl, the seventh game of the World Series, the Daytona 500. Preparing for fatherhood is like getting ready for the big game. You have to understand your offense (abilities), your defense (limitations) and your bench (other resources). You also have to know your opponent – in this case, your future new baby. OK, so the baby is not really an opponent, at least not until the

teenage years, but preparation is still key.

Going out to buy baby furniture, clothes and toys, babyproofing your house, sending off for information about college funds that you'll fail to invest in for the next decade: it's just routine game prep, like sharpening your spikes or stealing the other team's playbook.

Now that we've been fathers for a collective four years, we've noted a few **THINGS THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU**. Most people offer three simple pieces of advice to prospective fathers:

1. **You're going to love it;**
2. **It's a lot of work; and**
3. **Your life is going to change.**

Others often throw out a mere "you'll see" with a smirk. That smirk is the proverbial secret handshake of the brotherhood of fathers, in which members are sworn not to reveal all the **THINGS THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU**.

We herewith break that vow. So, for future fathers, here are some of those **THINGS THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU**.

## **Changing diapers is often a near-death experience.**

If the sight of an almost inexplicable quantity doesn't drop you to your knees, then the smell will. Disposing of the diaper can pose an added problem. Those devices designed for odor reduction have been known to take off the hand of an untrained dad. A full-body biomechanical suit is recommended attire for this hazardous duty.

**Small children can hurt you.** Badly. They don't mean to, but they can. The unexpected toy crashing into your shins, the inadvertent sippy cup to the back of the head or the well-placed kick to the crotch has caused many fathers to realize that the little one packs a mean punch.



**Your eating habits will change.** Pizza, burgers and beer will have to wait. You'll learn to eat those things that you've forgotten about – green beans and cantaloupe, for example.

**A child between 18 months and three years has more energy than the average cub scout pack.** From the time their little feet hit the ground in the morning until they reluctantly hit the sack at night, they create a whole new kind of natural disaster. Picture a tornado touching down after a category five hurricane wipes out what little house was left after a tsunami. That's if you only have one child. The average two-year old can ransack a room in less than 20 minutes. Your kitchen floor will never be clean again. Food will show up in the strangest forms in the strangest places you can possibly imagine. Expect to dig food items from between your toes at least once a week. And remember, if the kid finds something on the floor and eats it before you can intervene, it's protein.



**Putting in a car seat requires a master's degree in engineering.** Buckles, bolts and straps that would confound Houdini. Solution? Let your wife handle this one. She has more patience and will at least read the directions.

**Children imitate what fathers do and say, and then repeat them at any given time or place.** Enough said.

**Regardless of some of the things that fathers didn't know before the little tyke arrives,** there is nothing that compares to the joy that children can bring to fatherhood. Looking into your child's eyes as you lay her down for bed at night and feeling the love and affection makes all the dirty diapers in the world tolerable – well, perhaps not the one with corn and collards. We won't be making that mistake again.

*Andy Altizer has a 21 month old daughter named Zoë who was adopted from China. He and his wife Anne live in Atlanta. Roby Hill has a 28-month old daughter named Carly. He and his wife Betsy live in Charleston, S.C.*



## BOOK REVIEW

### **Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution Is Transforming America** by Adam Pertman

Adoption Nation is essential reading for adoptive families, for anyone contemplating adopting a child, and for everyone touched by this extraordinary cultural transformation.

### **The Family of Adoption: Completely Revised and Updated** by Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao

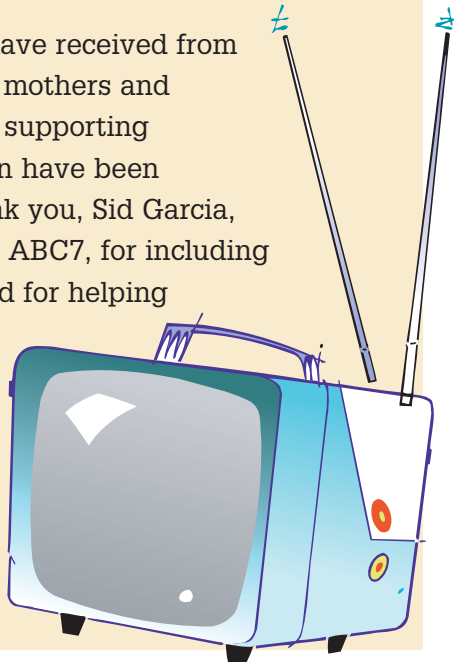
***“It should be required reading for anyone related to and relating to adoption in any way.”***

This book is an excellent discussion of the ways adoption is experienced by all members of the triad, with particular emphasis on the normal developmental issues adoptees face at different times of their lives. Joyce Maguire Pavao is clear and forthright, sensitive and reassuring. Her wise insight is illustrated with examples and the poetry of adoptees.

## ABC News

**D**id you see us on the News? During the week of October 25, ABC 7 News featured a special story on Madonna’s International Adoption. The ABC reporters asked Adoption Network Law Center for our perspective.

The calls we have received from perspective birth mothers and adoptive families supporting domestic adoption have been sensational. Thank you, Sid Garcia, news reporter for ABC7, for including our comments and for helping to increase awareness of just how successful domestic adoption can be.



## Adopting a Child From a Different Race, Ethnicity or Culture

Most adoption professionals agree that parents who adopt a child from a culture, race or ethnic background that doesn’t match theirs should work to make the child’s birth culture a part of their new family life. This can mean joining multi-cultural support groups, attending religious services, incorporating food and festivals into family life, taking lessons in the child’s birth language, or enrolling the child in a school with children from various backgrounds. You may want to decorate your home with images reflecting your child’s race or culture. This is important for the child’s self-image and the parents’ education as they try to become the best parents they can be. On the other hand, parents must be sensitive not to make the child’s birth culture or race a point of difference in the family. In a sense, when the Italian-American family adopts a Ukrainian boy, the whole family becomes Italian-Ukrainian-American.



### **Conclusion**

Prospective adoptive parents should explore their attitudes toward people of different races, ethnicities and cultures. You should talk with your Adoption Consultant to discover whether adopting a child with such differences is right for you.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT Update on National Adoption Day 2006

National Adoption Day was celebrated November 18, 2006. National Adoption Day focuses on the adoption of those thousands of children waiting in foster care for a permanent and loving home. This year was the biggest success yet with more than 3,300 children in foster care having their adoptions finalized. This was also the first year that National Adoption Day was celebrated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, more than 250 events were held nationwide.

# *From Your Birthmother's Perspective...*

## **The Reciprocal Feelings of Love and Gratitude**

Those involved in the triad of adoption instantly realize the level of gratitude, thankfulness and love that the blessed individuals feel toward their birthmothers, but seldom are the feelings of the birthmother verbalized or understood.

Our Advisors suggest that our individual birthmothers write letters to the adoptive parents and/or child explaining their reasons for placing their son or daughter for adoption. This effort not only helps these young women through the

grieving process but the written task often results in the most ultimate gift – a glimpse into her thought process and love-filled intentions.

Our Birthmother Housing Counselor has the privilege of supporting our selfless Birthmoms through the adoption of her unborn child. The letter one of these women chose to write was directed to other prospective birthmothers and yet holds a clear message for both her adoptive parents and the child. (Letter has been edited for purposes of this printing.)

*Dear Prospective Birthmom:*

*"This can't be happening to me! This doesn't happen to people like me." At least this is what I always thought. I never imagined that I would be someone who would place a child for adoption, or even have to be placed in a position to make a decision of "What do I do?"*

*Should I terminate the pregnancy, have the child and try to raise it, or place the baby for adoption? For a while, I tried to forget about it. I thought that if I didn't acknowledge the problem, it would just go away. One day I woke up and decided I could not parent a child at this present time in my life...I had decided to terminate my pregnancy.*

*I was almost in my third month when I decided on an abortion and began to make appointments – my third month of pregnancy had come and gone with 5 appointments that I never followed through with. I kept finding excuses on what that day was not a good day to go and have it done. Finally, half way through my fourth month and 8 appointments later, I was finally on my way to have the procedure done. I woke up early, boarded a bus and prepared myself for the hour and a half bus ride to my destination. As the time passed, so many questions and worries kept racing through my mind. Finally the clinic was in view and my heart began to race. I looked across the aisle on the bus and saw a mother and her child, laughing and smiling. The bus stopped, the doors swung open. I couldn't move, my body was paralyzed, and questions were still racing through my mind. I stared at the mother and child, for what seemed like hours. I looked at the clinic one more time and it became very clear to me, I could not terminate this pregnancy. This little life I was carrying deserved a chance.*

*For several days I pondered whether I should keep this child or place it for adoption. Those several days turned into several months. I kept asking myself, "Is it wrong for me to place my baby for adoption, does this decision make me heartless?" Everyday as I felt the life inside of me grow; I knew this was no longer just about my feelings and me. There was now another life inside of me that deserved the best in life, and as hard as it was for me to come to terms with this, the*

*best life was not with me – I finally decided on adoption!*

*I contacted Adoption Network Law Center but still had my doubts and was wondering, "What is really the right thing to do?" Two days later I received a number of profiles of couples that were looking to adopt. I opened the package and spread them out on the table one day when I was home alone. All of a sudden, there they were...their picture and profile jumped out at me and I felt as though God was leading me to this couple. They were to be the parents of my child and I was no longer scared.*

*I left my hometown and came to ANLC's birthmother housing. I still had not told anyone of my pregnancy. It was as if a weight had been lifted off of my shoulders. I didn't have to hide my pregnant body, I was able to talk about my decision and pregnancy and I had wonderful support from my counselor. I no longer had to deal with this on my own. It got even better – I was able to meet my adoptive couple face to face! When I saw them, I started to cry, but they were tears of joy for I knew in my heart that I had made the decision I was meant to make. In them, I saw years of happiness for my baby and an undying love. And in me, they saw the beginning of a dream come true for their lives!*

*When she was born, I could hardly believe I had created such a beautiful life and that she had come out of my body. Everybody was overwhelmed with love for this 8 pound little baby girl. As I lay recovering, I waited for sadness or depression to come over me but it never did! The feelings of love and joy for my baby girl overcame any hint of sadness I felt. I had created life and completed a family all in one day. WOW!!! What I had thought was the biggest disaster and mistake of my life turned out to be the most blessed and beautiful day I've ever experienced and I would not trade it for the world.*

*You may ask yourself, "How is her life now after all that?" Well, my life will be forever changed but only for the better. I was able to give my little girl two loving parents; a great, stable environment and endless opportunities and I couldn't feel better about my decision.*

*Just know in your heart that God will bless you in your decision. Adoption is a way for you to bless someone, as God blesses you!"*

# CONGRATULATIONS!

## New Matches

Parent(s)	Date Activated
Andrew & Tiziana	9/7/2006
Anthony & Anna	9/20/2006
Barry & Molly	10/5/2006
Benjamin & Heather	11/1/2006
Brandon & Amy	8/22/2006
Brian & Brittny	8/18/2006
Brian & Tricia	5/25/2006
Bruce & Amy	4/27/2006
Christopher & Lisa	12/13/2006
Christopher & Sarah	11/9/2006
Christopher & Sharon	12/14/2006
Corrine	10/19/2005
Dale & Kami	8/28/2006
Dave & Tricia	6/22/2005
David & Amy	10/4/2006
David & Christine	10/27/2006
David & Kelly	10/3/2006
Dennis & Torri	10/26/2006
Diana	10/27/2006
Eddie & Tracie	1/6/2005
Edward & Kathleen	6/12/2006
Eric & Lucy	5/8/2006
Frederick & Anne	6/8/2006
Gary & Noelle	10/3/2006
Glenn & Linda	9/1/2006
Greg & Cindi	9/15/2006
James & Donna	10/11/2005
James & Jodie	11/15/2006
Jay & Anne Marie	11/7/2006
Jeff & Melanie	9/18/2006
Jerry & Denise	10/20/2006
John & Lori	3/30/2006
Jordan & Samantha	10/17/2006
Kenneth & Brenda	8/22/2006
Kenneth & Tammy	10/21/2005
Kirk & Lori	8/17/2006
Leland & Jennifer	12/27/2006
Mark & Laurie	8/16/2006
Matthew & Kerry	11/15/2006
Michael & Catherine	8/4/2006
Michael & Donna	8/29/2006
Michael & Julie	8/3/2006
Michael & Melissa	10/13/2006
Nathaniel & Shannon	11/16/2006
Patrick & Maureen	11/2/2006
Paul & Lisa	3/10/2006
Raymond & Elaine	9/6/2006
Robert & Joanie	10/4/2006
Roger & Susan	1/29/2004
Sean & Tammy	12/26/2006
Shawn & Carole	11/3/2006
Steven & Janna	11/22/2006
Timothy & Shelley	4/11/2006
Todd & Lori	8/2/2006
Todd & Nicole	10/19/2006
William & Mel-Jean	9/5/2006
Wilmer & Joan	6/2/2006



## Recent Additions to our Family

Baby Name	Weight	Length
Caryssa Josephine	7 lbs., 1 oz.	20"
Dalton James	7 lbs., 9 oz.	20"
Sydney Mae	8 lbs., 7 oz.	20.5"
Katherine Joy	6 lbs., 6 oz.	18.25"
Jessica Rachal	9 lbs., 6 oz.	20"
Trista Mikaela	7 lbs., 6 oz.	20.5"
Joseph Douglas	8 lbs., 1 oz.	20"
Kennedy Anne	7 lbs., 1 oz.	19.5"
Emily Elizabeth	7 lbs., 8 oz.	20"
Emma Allison	6 lbs., 6 oz.	19.5"
Christian Carmine	8 lbs., 6 oz.	19.5"
Aidan Connor	7 lbs., 10 oz.	19"
Eva Beyleu	3 lbs., 12 oz.	17"
Troy Lucas	7 lbs., 9 oz.	19"
Pierce Elan	6 lbs., 7 oz.	21"
Carter Christopher Tucker	7 lbs., 3 oz.	20"
Isaac Challen	7 lbs., 4.5 oz.	21.5"
Elyse Lorena	9 lbs., 5 oz.	21"
Logan Maryel	7 lbs., 1 oz.	19.3"
Jonathan Jaymes	6 lbs., 8 oz.	13"
Elizabeth Suzanne	7.5 lbs., 5 oz.	19.5"
Mitchell Kenneth	7 lbs., 11 oz.	20"
Alexander James	3 lbs., 14 oz.	15"
Alex David	6 lbs., 7 oz.	20"
Sarah Reese	7 lbs., 0 oz.	20"
Kalea Rae	7 lbs., 7 oz.	19.5"
Meera Shivani	6 lbs., 5 oz.	19"
Kenzie Tru	6 lbs., 10 oz.	19.5"
Ella ElizAnn	8 lbs., 14 oz.	21"
Samantha Giana	8 lbs., 3 oz.	20"
Jameson Keet	6 lbs., 15 oz.	20"
Allie Grace	11 lb., 15 oz.	Unknown
Emily Eileen	6 lbs., 4 oz.	20"
Alexander Kalaiponi	7 lbs., 5 oz.	20"
Raelyn Nicole	6 lbs., 11 oz.	18"
Logan Michael	6 lbs., 7 oz.	19.5"
Elijah Dillon	7 lbs., 2 oz.	Unknown
Kathleen Sage	3 lbs., 12 oz.	Unknown
Nathan Samuel	6 lbs., 1 oz.	18"
Samuel Logan	6 lbs., 12 oz.	Unknown
Declan Clarke	9 lbs., 7 oz.	20"
Ian Mac Isaac	5 lbs., 15 oz.	Unknown
Breanna Katrina	8 lbs., 12 oz.	22"
Augustine Arthur	6 lbs., 0 oz.	19"
Christopher James	7 lbs., 11 oz.	20.5"
Lexie Rose	7 lbs., 5 oz.	19.5"
Olivia Noelle	8 lbs., 10 oz.	20"
Brett Slater	7 lbs., 10 oz.	20"
Payton Mae	7 lbs., 6 oz.	21.25"
Maxwell James	7 lbs., 14 oz.	Unknown
Rachel Ella	7 lbs., 14 oz.	20"
Hunter	8 lbs., 9 oz.	21"
Aiden Michael	7 lbs., 6 oz.	18.5"
Virginia Belle	7 lbs., 4 oz.	20.5"
Noella Carmen	8 lbs., 5 oz.	20"

## Monthly Reminders

- ♥ **Don't delay** – Our stats show that profiles appearing on more than one website get matched much quicker. Our relationships with Courageous Choice and Christian Adoption Center allow 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**
  - Holiday Photos
  - More baby stats
- ♥ **Don't forget**, an electronic copy of this and all past newsletters are available on our website.

## Remember...

**Our annual Calendar Contest begins in April.**  
Start getting your pictures together!  
Wait for the official announcement to send in your submission!



## 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>

## F.Y.I.

With hundreds of adoption professionals promising to help complete your family, most people find it difficult to decide on the one that most closely matches their personal needs. Among other things, ANLC's strengths include our qualified, caring staff, 24/7 birthmother assistance, the shorter-than-industry-standard waiting period for adoptive families, and the personalized, individual attention given to each adoptive family and birthparent.

ANLC has strong relationships with our birthmothers and adoptive parents and we realize that personal and professional referrals are the best way to find out if someone is pleased with our level of service and commitment. If you would like to ask some of our previous customers about us, please feel free to contact us for further information.

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



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