



There are several different types of adoption arrangements. You may have heard stories about women who went away to homes, had their babies and then never saw them ever again. While those types of adoptions did happen many years ago, that's not what adoption looks like today. The most common adoption agreement in today's society is called an "open adoption."

What is Open Adoption?

An open adoption most often involves choosing the family for your baby, sharing information, and agreeing to ongoing contact throughout the life of your child. In an open adoption, your child grows up knowing where he/she came from, his/her medical history, and that your decision to place him/her for adoption was made out of love. You may also have regular contact or visits with your child.

Open Adoption Gives You Choices

In open adoption, the choices are up to you. You have the right to:

- Choose an adoptive family for your baby
- Choose the amount of contact you want with the adoptive family as your baby grows up
- Choose who you want to support you at the hospital

Findings from a research study indicated that benefits of open adoption outweighed challenges of pregnancy, birth, and emotional transitions. Birth children were perceived as thriving with adoptive families who were cherished like extended family. Birth mothers perceived themselves as being better people with better lives than before the unintended pregnancy. ¹

1. Clutter, November 2013, [http://www.jognn.org/article/S0884-2175\(15\)31521-5/pdf](http://www.jognn.org/article/S0884-2175(15)31521-5/pdf).

2. As quoted from Life Issues Today with J.C. Wilke, MD, October 2003.

3. Growing Up Adopted: The Search Institute Study, Dr. Peter L. Benson, Dr. Anu R. Sharma, LP, and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, June 1994.

4. The Chosen Family, Jean Bethke Elshtain, "The New Republic", September 12/21, 1998.

5. Adoption and Mental Health, E. James Lieberman, MD and Katherine Whipple, Ph.D, Friend of the Court, Volume 5, Spring 1997.

How will I do if I place my baby for adoption?

How will my baby do?

Check out these studies regarding birth mothers and adopted children:

- There was a study from Planned Parenthood's Family Planning Perspectives that included 270 unwed mothers. The study compared young mothers who placed their babies for adoption and young mothers who parented their babies. Comparing these two groups, the study showed that those who placed their children for adoption:

“Had considerably more favorable social, economic and educational outcomes than did those who kept their babies and parented as single parents, were more likely to finish vocational training and more likely to have educational aspirations, were more likely to delay marriage, were considerably less likely to have another out-of-wedlock pregnancy, were more likely to be employed six to twelve months after giving birth and, across the board, almost all had higher household incomes.”²

- A study by The Search Institute of over 700 families examined children twelve to eighteen years after they were born and placed for adoption. This same study revealed that:

“Adopted adolescents’ self-esteem was as high or higher than their peers, 75% of adopted adolescents are psychologically healthy, adopted adolescents do extremely well in school, adopted adolescents attend college more often than the general population, adopted adolescents experience lower rates of crime and drug abuse.”³

This study also showed extremely high rates of attachment to adoptive parents, as deep as their non-adopted siblings. Ninety-five percent of parents have a strong attachment to their adopted child and ninety-five percent of adoptive families say that raising an adopted child is no different than raising a non-adopted child. Indeed, the terms adoption and adoptive are not defining factors to these families' existence.

- Research indicating adoptees are uniquely vulnerable psychologically, ignores a mountain of data showing that 95% of them are never referred for therapy.⁴

- Children adopted in infancy do as well as non-adopted children on measures central to mental health. The differences are so slight this study puts to rest the oft-stated view that adoptees have major mental health problems compared with their non-adoptive peers.⁵

Adoption is sacrificial. Adoption is beautiful.

Adoption is a loving choice.