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*AF 1*

**Welcome to**

#### Heart to Heart Adoptions

Welcome to Heart to Heart Adoptions! We are a non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to building families and a brighter future for birthmothers and children. As a full service adoption agency, we offer services needed by members of the adoption triad; children, birthparents and adoptive families.

* In the process of working with birthparents and adoptive families, we hope to assure the best opportunity for the growth and development of the children.
* We provide birthmothers with housing, counseling, medical care, legal advisors, social workers, and a personable staff.
* We provide adoptive families with home studies, education on the adoption process, support and, most importantly, help them adopt the child they are looking for.

***APPLICATION PROCESS***

1. Review the Eligibility requirements and Fees then complete the **Application on line or print it out then mail or** **scan it us.** ***Application fee is $350, paid by check or on line.***

Heart to Heart Adoptions

9669 So 700 East

Sandy, Utah 84070

[lisab@hearttoheartadopt.com](mailto:lisab@hearttoheartadopt.com)

801-838-8007

1. Complete or send us a **current adoptive home study,** along with the supporting materials.
   * If you have a current home study, please ask the agency or individual who did the home study to e-mail or mail an official copy of it to us.
   * If you don’t have a home study and live in Utah, one of our social workers can do it for you. Please call the Adoptive Family Support line at **866-712-3678** or the office at 801-838-8007. Cost is $750.00 for a complete home study and $250 for an update. Most home studies are good for a year. There is also a cost for post placement visits of $150, so we offer an optional package deal of $1000 that will include all post placements.
   * If you aren’t in Utah, you will need to contact a social worker in your area to help you.

**Along with your home study, we need copies of the following documents:**

* + - Background Criminal Investigation (BCI’s) checks for anyone in the home over 18.
    - Child and Adult Abuse Checks for anyone in the home over 18.
    - Color Copy of Driver’s License Front and Back
    - Copy of Medical Insurance Card
    - Medical Clearances for everyone in the home.
    - Birth Certificates for Adoptive parents (and children if available)
    - Marriage License, and any Divorce Decrees if applicable
    - 3 Letters of Reference- **1 relative** and 2 non relatives.
    - Letter from your agency/social worker saying they will do post placement visits.

1. Create **Your Profile** (the profile is what we use to present you to birthmothers) as both a book and an eBook on the website. We work with ParentFinder to help you create form and your online profile. See Page- Creating a Profile. Which is form *AF 10* .

***APPROVAL PROCESS***

We start the approval process once we receive all your documents. It takes 2-4 weeks to complete.

1. Phone Call - Once we have reviewed your home study and application, we will call to interview you and discuss any of the concerns or questions you have for us or we have for you.
2. Training- There may be training (books, classes, etc) that we may recommend or require. See Adoptive Family Education Requirements.
3. Letter - We will send you a letter to let you know if you are or aren’t approved with our agency.

***MATCHING PROCESS***

Once you are approved we give you the username and password for the Available Situations page. This will allow you to be aware of situations that come through our agency. On occasion we ask for you to contact us if you are interested in a situation but generally we will contact you. We recognize this is a difficult time because you seem to be waiting without a great deal of control. Please be patient.

Some of the following are things we consider when we match:

* Birth mother preferences- This is very important- (Because of these preferences, families that have many children, are comprised of a single mom, or are older may wait longer)
* Characteristics about you that match with the birth mother’s situation.
* Your budget- (Most situations require legal and medical fees in addition to agency fees)
* Your openness to a variety of situations. (For example- if you want a girl it takes longer.)
* What state you live in. There are different state regulations.
* How long you have been active with us. We try to consider longevity when we match.
* If you have a failed adoption with us. These cases take top priority.
* Your expressed interest in the situation. (Please be aware that in many situations, we are not able to show all families that express an interest.)

When you are matched with a birthmother the initial payment of fees (half the agency fee) is due.

***PLACEMENT OF A CHILD***

The placement of your child generally occurs 24 to 72 hours after the child is born depending on your state’s laws. You may be there for the delivery of the child and support the birthparents if that is what those involved want. Final payment of all fees is due at the time of placement.

***FOLLOWING THE PLACEMENT***

* Supervisory Visits: There is a supervisory period of generally six months before you can finalize the adoption. During that time a counselor can visit you on two or three occasions to support and confirm the success of the placement. Additional visits may be scheduled as needed.
* Birthfather: Unless the known birthfather gives consent for the adoption, the adoption is considered a “Legal Risk Adoption.” It will become necessary to determine and then terminate his rights in accordance with the laws of all states involved with the adoption.
* Insurance: Notify your health insurance company of your new addition.

***FINALIZATION OF THE ADOPTION***

This is an exciting time and can take place after a successful supervisory period, generally 6 months. You are responsible for any legal fees associated with finalization. You are free to select independent counsel for all necessary adoption proceedings. In some areas we can make recommendations.

**Heart to Heart Adoptions**

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**Eligibility and Fees**

***ELIGIBILITY FOR ADOPTION***

1. Couples should be married for **at least two year**s and have a stable marriage. **Single parents** are welcome though we limit the number of single parents we accept because opportunities to place with them are fewer.

2. Individuals should **exhibit high moral standards, be emotionally stable, and have good parenting skills.**

3. Applicants should be between the age of **23 and 50** years old, be in **good physical health**.

4. Individuals should have **sufficient income** to care for their family as well as pay the adoption costs.

5. Individuals must **clear a criminal and child abuse** background screening.

6. Individuals must have a **favorable current adoptive home study**.

7. Adoptive families must have **health insurance** that will cover the child they hope to adopt.

8. Adoptive families **with more than four children** are discouraged as they are seldom chosen by birth parents.

9. Adoptive families **must be willing to have their children immunized**.

10. Additional items may be **required by other states** if you are living outside of Utah.

***ADOPTION FEES***

* **Agency Fees**- The total agency fee for a healthy infant ranges from **$28,000 to $40,000**. Unlike most agencies, the agency fee **includes all living expenses and travel costs for the birthparents. An additional expense could be for medical if birthmother is not insured.**  Some of the agency fee is at risk. If the placement fails, the agency fee, and a portion of the costs used to support the birthparents will be rolled over to a new situation. The other additional costs would be medical fees paid to medical providers and legal fees paid on the out of Utah placements and when ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) pertains to the child.
* **Application Fee**- We have an non-refundable application fee of **$350.**
* **Knowledge of Fees**- Before you are presented on any situation, the estimated cost associated with that situation will be shared with you.
* **When Fees Are Due**- Half of the agency fee is due at the time you are matched with a potential birth mother. This portion is called matching fees. The remainder is due either before you travel, if the placement is out of Utah, or when the child is placed with you.
* **Risk Policy**- All but 10 percent of the agency fee will roll over to another situation if the adoption fails. Medical and legal fees may not refundable once they are paid to the provider unless the provider agrees to do so.
* **Post Placement Visits** - After the placement, we require at least two to three post placement visits at $150 per visit, plus mileage. Heart to Heart Adoptions will do all post placement visits unless we are not licensed in your state.

***LEGAL FEES***

* In Utah, the legal paperwork of relinquishment by birth parents and placing with the adoptive family is done by the agency. In cases requiring legal assistance to terminate birthfather rights or possible Native American Tribe rights there will be additional legal fees.
* For non-Utah placements we will contract with an attorney or an agency. Legal fees range from $5,000-10,000.
* You will need to obtain legal counsel to finalize the adoption.

***MEDICAL FEES***

Medical expenses are the responsibility of the adoptive family. With the discount, in Utah, a normal delivery costs $8,000 to $10,000 if not covered by Medicaid or insurance. We have no arrangements with any hospitals outside of Utah so all costs will need to be negotiated with the hospital by the adoptive family if the birth mother and child are not on Medicaid or insurance.

**ADOPTIVE PARENTS**

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**APPLICATION FOR SERVICES**

Please complete the following questionnaire as thoroughly as possible. All information that you give us will be kept completely confidential. If you should require additional space, please attach separate pages as needed. Once completed, please mail it to 9669 South 700 East, Sandy, Utah 84070.

**APPLICATION DATE**

Application Date:

**HOW YOU FOUND US**

How did you learn about Heart to Heart Adoptions: Referred by:

Phone book: Internet: Other:

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

# Please Provide Your Full Names

**Husband:**

**Wife:** Maiden: ­

# Home Address:

Street

City County State Zip Code

Home Telephone: ( )

Cell Phone: Husband: ( ) Wife: ( )

Work Phone: Husband: (\_\_\_\_\_\_) Wife: ( )

Email addresses: **Husband:** **Wife:**  Fax #:

# Emergency Contact & Telephone­

Social Security Numbers: **Husband:** **Wife:** ­

Date of Birth: **Husband:** Place: **Wife:** ­ Place:

**EDUCATION**

###### *Husband: Highest Level Attained: Field of Study:*

###### *Name of School(s):* Year Graduated:

###### *Wife:* *Highest Level Attained: Field of Study:*

###### *Name of School(s):* Year Graduated:

**MARITAL STATUS**

###### *Date & Place of Marriage:*

Please describe your relationship with one another?

**Other Marriages (if applicable):**

Husband’s: Wife’s:

**WORK HISTORY**

**Husband’s Occupation:**

Name of Present Employer: Length of employment:

Address of Present Employer:

Previous Employer: Length of employment:

Military Service: Date of Discharge:

**Wife’s Occupation:**

Name of Present Employer: Length of employment:

Address of Present Employer:

Previous Employer: Length of employment:

Military Service: Date of Discharge:

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### Husband:

Religion: Do you actively participate?

Nationality: Race:

**Wife:**

Religion: Do you actively participate?

Nationality: Race:

**CHILDREN**

Please list all the children in your family.

Name of Child: Age: Adopted: Y N Race: Currently live with you: Y N Name of Child: Age: Adopted: Y N Race: Currently live with you: Y N Name of Child: Age: Adopted: Y N Race: Currently live with you: Y N Name of Child: Age: Adopted: Y N Race: Currently live with you: Y N Name of Child: Age: Adopted: Y N Race: Currently live with you: Y N

Please list any children who have died:

List any physical or mental disabilities:

**REFERENCES**

Name: Relationship: Known How Long:

Address: City: State: Telephone: ( )

Name: Relationship: Known How Long:

Address: City: State: Telephone: ( )

Name: Relationship: Known How Long:

Address: City: State: Telephone: ( )

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

**Average Annual Net Income (All Sources): Husband: Wife: ­ Total:**

Family Savings and Securities:

Current Home(s) Value: Total:

Currently Owe on Home(s): Total:

Overall Debt not including Home: Total:

Life Insurance: Husband: Wife: Total:

**Health Insurance Provider & Policy #**

**Adoption Budget:**

Amount you have ready for your adoption. (**This is what we use to determine what situations to consider you for**.) $

Do you have the finances to adopt on short notice or will you need time to prepare financially?

**ADOPTION PREFERENCES**

Gender preference (Choose one): Either Male Female

What is your racial preference (Choose one): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Full Caucasian (CC)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Any biracial excluding African American

(i.e. CC/Asian; CC/Hisp; Hisp/Asian; Native American/CC)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ African American- Full AA or biracial with AA

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Open to all races

Would you accept a child who is disabled? Mentally: Mild\_\_\_\_ Moderate \_\_\_\_ Severe\_\_\_\_ It Will Depend \_\_\_\_ Physically: Mild\_\_\_\_ Moderate \_\_\_\_ Severe\_\_\_\_ It Will Depend \_\_\_\_

Would you accept a child who is: Drug Exposed: Mild\_\_\_\_ Moderate \_\_\_\_ Severe\_\_\_\_ It Will Depend \_\_\_\_

Alcohol Exposed: Mild\_\_\_\_ Moderate \_\_\_\_ Severe\_\_\_\_ It Will Depend \_\_\_\_

Birth mom smokes: Mild\_\_\_\_ Moderate \_\_\_\_ Severe\_\_\_\_ It Will Depend \_\_\_\_

What age would you prefer or be open to? Newborn < 1 year 1 year?

2 years 3-5 years > 5 years

Would you accept: Twins? Open to Sibling groups?

Please describe briefly your reasons for wanting to adopt: ­

**Contact with Birthparents**

**Type of Contact Before Delivery: After Placement: Explanation:**

Meet with birth parents? ­ Yes No Yes No

Exchange pictures and letters Yes No Yes No

Phone calls with Birth parents? Yes No Yes No

Set up an email to communicate? Yes No Yes No

Face to face visits? Yes No Yes No

Be in the delivery room? Yes No

**AFFIRMATION**

***We affirm that, to the best of our knowledge and recollection, the above information is complete, true and correct.***

Husband’s Name (Please Print) Signature

Wife’s Name (Please Print) Signature

****Adoptive Family Information

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To be given to Birthparents if Requested

**INFORMATION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Husband** | **Wife** |
| Birth Year |  |  |
| Racial/ethnic background |  |  |
| Education/  Degree |  |  |
| Occupation |  |  |
| Interests/  Hobbies |  |  |
| Personality |  |  |
| Health |  |  |
| Relationship with Extended family |  |  |
| Community Activity |  |  |
| Describe Marital Relationship |  |  |
| Parenting Philosophy/  Values and Goals |  |  |
| Present/Future Child Care | | |
| Lifestyle/Extended Family Involvement | | |
| Openness with Birth Parents after placement  Exchanging pictures and letters \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone calls\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Open to visits \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | |

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**Adoptive Family**

**Release of Information**

**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

We do hereby give permission to the following agency to complete an Adoptive Home Study or obtain our Adoptive Home Study from another source.

**HEART TO HEART ADOPTIONS, INC.**

**9669 South 700 East**

**Sandy, Utah 84070**

**Phone: 801-563-1000**

**Email: lisab@hearttoheartadopt.com**

Our Home Study was done by: Name:

Address:

Phone: Fax:

Contact:

Email:

Date Completed:

* We give our permission to release the findings of this study, including opinions, medical histories, backgrounds, assessments and other data to **other agencies** or individuals that are working directly with Heart to Heart Adoptions in an effort to locate and procure a child or children in our behalf.
* We also agree that Heart to Heart Adoptions may release information relating to our adoption to the Utah Department of Human Services/Division of Family Services or its counterpart in other states in the case of an **interstate compact placement**. They may also give adoption related information to the **courts** of the State of Utah if the adoption is contested and at the time of finalization.
* We understand that Heart to Heart Adoptions must release information concerning us to **potential birthparents** interested in us.
* We understand that Heart to Heart Adoptions must involve witnesses or a **notary public** at the time of placement. We agree that we may be introduced and those individuals may view any legal forms which we sign.
* We also give permission to Heart to Heart Adoptions to share information about us and our adoption with the nursing staff, billing office and others in the **medical community** that have a need to know.
* We release Heart to Heart Adoptions from any **liability**, damages, actions or suits arising from the release or exchange of the information given in the Home Study or related to an adoption done through Heart to Heart Adoptions.

Date:

Husband’s Name (Please Print) Signature

Wife’s Name (Please Print) Signature



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**ADOPTION PAYMENT AGREEMENT**

**Application or Activation Fee: $350**

There are no additional fees due until you are matched with a birthmother.

**Home Study Fee:** ( Funds are paid at the time of service and are non-refundable)

* Home Study- We do home studies anywhere in Utah for $750. The fee should be paid prior to the initial home visit or given to the Social Worker at the time of the visit. If travel is greater than 50 miles, mileage will be added.
* Home Studies from other Agencies- If your home study is current, and meets all Heart to Heart Adoption standards, we accept it from other agencies. All supporting documents are needed including BCI and references.
* If the home study is out of date but less than 2 years old, we will update it for $250.
* If the home study is more than 2 years old, we will redo it for $450.
* Post placement visits- We do post placement visits for $150 per visit. We require 2-3 post placement visits on all placements done through the agency. We will do post placements visits for all in state placements. Families living more than 50 miles from the agency will be asked to assist in travel expenses.

**Total Agency Fees: $28,000 to $40,000**  This is a flat fee that covers all services provided by Heart to Heart Adoptions including services and costs related to caring for the birthmother. Following is a list of those services. This is not an inclusive list of all services provided. In addition, not all services are provided to in each situation. Agency fees are not at risk.

**Birth Parents Services**:

Covers the services generally provided to Birth Parents. Including but not limited to:

* + - Advertising, attainment of birthparents.
  + Continuously available phone support, adoption planning, and coordination.
  + Education support, grief counseling, and life skills classes.
  + Counseling, adoption related and life counseling, mental health therapy.
  + Assistance with public services when available and appropriate.
  + Housing, utilities, phone services, maintenance, security, furniture, cleaning.
  + Food, clothing, entertainment.
  + Travel and out of state or interstate transportation.
  + Case-manager support, medical coordination, and in state transportation.
  + Support and financial assistance during post placement confinement period.

**Agency Fee and Adoptive Family Services:**

Covers agency overhead and business related costs as well as the services generally provided to adoptive parents.

* + - Adoptive family application and file set-up.
    - Adoptive family education and support.
    - Presentation to and match with birthparents, support of match.
    - Support of adoptive family in hospital and coordination with medical services.
    - Relinquishment of parental rights and placement with adoptive parents.
    - Notification of birth father/husband if needed, paternity search(s).
    - Completion of Interstate Compact for Placement of Children, as needed for interstate placements.
    - Monitoring of post placement supervision.
* Reduction of financial risk.
* Court order of Determination of Parental rights when using Utah law.
  + - Coordination with adoptive family legal advisor.
    - Representation at finalization (Utah) or agency consent for finalization (out of state).
    - Coordination between adoptive parents and birthparents for exchange of information.
    - This includes all overhead and business related costs and those services listed below. It is occasionally necessary to subcontract some of these services to other providers.

**Third Party Expenses**

**Medical Expenses:** (Funds will be at risk)

Medical expenses are the responsibility of the adoptive family. About 60% of our birthparents require help with their medical expenses. When appropriate, the agency will assist birthmothers to enroll in Medicaid or private insurance, but cannot guarantee it will apply.

If the delivery is in Utah, the agency has arranged for discounts from most medical providers if Medicaid or private insurance are not available. All medical expenses must be paid at the time of placement to receive the medical discount. With the discount, in Utah, a normal delivery costs $6,000 to $10,000. We have no arrangements with any hospitals outside of Utah so all cost will need to be negotiated with the hospital by the adoptive family if the birth mother and child are not on Medicaid or private insurance.

**Legal Expenses:** (Funds will be at risk)

In Utah the legal paperwork is done by the agency with, the exception of terminating the birthfather rights. Part of that process may require that an attorney obtain a “Determination of Paternal Rights”. This will be covered by the agency fee.

For out of state placements we will contract with an attorney or an agency that can assist with that process. Legal expenses are the responsibility of the adoptive family. In some states we are licensed or can take relinquishment ourselves. We still we charge a legal fee to cover the cost of travel expenses as legal fees.

You will also need legal counsel to finalize the adoption. Utah laws allow families from other states to finalize in Utah with an FBI clearance if either the child was born here or the adoptive family is a resident of Utah. If you are interested in finalizing here please let us know.

ICWA – Indian Child Welfare Act. In some cases where the birth mother and or father are part Native American or Alaskan Village tribe additional court costs of about $4,500 will be incurred. The birth mother must appear before a judge ten days after the birth.

**FAILED PLACEMENT POLICY: Funds may be at Risk**

1. **Heart to Heart Adoptions, Inc. does not offer refunds.**
2. **If, before the time of relinquishment and placement, either the birthparents or the adoptive family choose not to move forward with the adoption, 10% of the total fee will be used to help cover expenses incurred by the agency. The remaining 90% of the total fee may be applied or rolled over to a new situation with Heart to Heart Adoptions, Inc.**
3. If the child is placed in your home, and later removed, no fees will be refunded or rolled over.

**We have read the above payment agreement and failed placement policy. We understand that we will be required to sign an Adoption Services Financial Contract at the time a family match is completed in consideration for services rendered by Heart to Heart Adoptions.**

**Adoptive Father: Date:**

**Adoptive Mother: Date:**

**Laws Governing**

*AF 7*

**Biological Parents Rights**

Biological (birth) parents and legal parents must be considered when assessing and addressing who has the right to receive notice about a potential adoption and/or give consent to that adoption.

Generally we follow the laws of the state in which birth occurred. However, some states allow the laws of another state to govern the adoption process as long as there is a “Voluntary Jurisdiction Waiver” in place.

**Laws to Consider**

1. Time required prior to allowing the birth mother’s Relinquishment. This can range from no time to 72 hours. Utah law requires a birth mother to wait 24 after birth before she can voluntarily relinquish her rights to a child.
2. Revocation period. This refers to the amount of time that a birth mother can revoke or undo the relinquishment. In most states the relinquishment is irrevocable, (cannot be undone) but a few states allow anywhere from 48 hours to 30 days for the birth mother to revoke her relinquishment.
3. Laws concerning the rights of the Birth Father.
   * + 1. Supportive father - In most states the birth father wishing to support the adoption may relinquish his rights anytime before or after the child is born. With only a very few exceptions, that relinquishment is irrevocable.
       2. Legal father – Married to birthmother at the time of birth or conception – He is presumed to be birth father whether or not he is and must be given notice of the adoption proceeding.
       3. Unmarried father - In many states, unmarried birth fathers are required to make a timely and full commitment to the responsibilities of parenthood in order for them to have the right to receive notice of the adoption or the right to give or withhold their consent.

To show this commitment, the birthfather must do the following in Utah and many other states.

1. File with the Putative Father Registry (Paternity Registry) indicating that he is ready and able to take responsibility for the child.
2. Support the birth mother and child by offering or paying a fair and reasonable amount of expenses.

Utah’s law has these requirements as long as the birthmother has been a resident of Utah for 90 days or the adoptive family is from Utah.

**What We Do**

1. Generally we try to use the law that allows the birthmother to relinquish as soon as she wishes.
2. We try to avoid using laws that allow for a revocation period.
3. Concerning the birthfather
4. We try to contact him whenever possible and involve him in the process.
5. When she is married we must contact her husband whether or not he is the birth father.
6. We appropriate, we honor the birth mother’s right to privacy in cases where she is not married.
7. With unmarried birthfathers who don’t want to be involved, whenever possible, we give legal notice and allow them 30 days to respond.
8. When necessary, we obtain a Determination of Parental Rights (DPR) also considered a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR).

***Every adoption has legal risks! We cannot completely avoid them.***

***We have read the above statement of risks associated with adoption. We agree that it is a risk worth taking and wish to proceed with the process. We agree not to hold Heart to Heart Adoptions liable for the risks of a failed adoption.***

Adoptive Father: Date:

Adoptive Mother: Date:

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**Adoptive Family**

**Education Requirements**

*Research shows that adoptions are much more successful when parents are prepared for the*

*adoption experience and when their expectations and the reality of the situation are consistent.*

*If you have training and education completed through your home study provider or through*

*a consultant please list out what classes or type of training was completed . We require about 10-12 hours of adoption education. This should be completed prior to becoming active with us..*

*We highly recommend any of the following Online Courses we have listed below. If you have questions please give us a call. These are some courses to choose from,* ***pleases print out the certificate once completed.***

**Online Courses and Books- General Adoption Education**

**\* found at** [**www.adoptionlearningpartners.org**](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org)

*Please choose FOUR of the following materials: (Or another resource that is approved by the agency)*

Let’s Talk Adoption**\*** (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Journey of Attachment**\*** (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Find the Missing Pieces**\*** (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Open Adoption Handbook By: Lois Melina & Sharon Kaplan Roszia  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Wounded Children Healing Homes By: Schooler, Smalley, & Callahan  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adoption Parenting Edited by: Jean McLeod  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What did you Learn:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Transracial Adoption**

*If adopting a race other than your own, please read TWO of the following materials:*

Conspicuous Families**\*** (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Beyond Culture Camp Webinar**\*** (Online) Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I’m Chocolate, You’re Vanilla By: Marguerite A. Wright  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In Their Own Voices By: Rita J. Simon & Rhonda M. Roosda  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What did you Learn:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Older Child Adoption**

*If open to adopting a child more than six months old, please read TWO of the following materials:*

With Eyes Wide Open**\*** (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adopting the Older Child\* (Online)  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Toddler Adoption By: Mary Hopkins  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Raising Adopted Children By: Lois Melina  Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

What did you Learn:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Input from Other Adoptive Families**

**We find the best education comes from talking with other adoptive families. Please list at least 3 adoptive families you have talked with.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **First Name** | **Why did you talk with this AP** | **What you learned from talking to this adoptive parent** |
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**Additional Education**

If you have completed other education, please list the books, online course, workshop or agency training below, or fill out on a separate piece of paper.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Material** | **What you learned from this material** |
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*The completed form and attached documents will serve to show that you have completed the education requirements for adoptive parent raining. Your signature below verifies that you completed the education thoroughly and to the best of your ability.*

Adoptive Father: Date:

Adoptive Mother: Date:

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**Adoptive Family**

**Agreement**

**1.** **Introduction**. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. is a 501c(3) adoption agency, duly licensed in Utah, Florida, Illinois and New York to provide domestic adoption services.

**2. Adoption Services and Requirements.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide or make available to you (the Adoptive Family) the following adoption services along with requirements described.

1. **Orientation.**  Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide orientation via phone or in person to provide information and address your needs and concerns.
2. **Application Process.** You will be provided with the necessary forms as well as the verbal instructions to complete the application process by Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. A file on you will be opened wherein all records pertaining to this and future transactions will be recorded. These records include the contents of the Application packet, the Home Study, the Background Check and a Profile that describes your family. Once these documents are received they will be reviewed by the Approval Committee and your application will be approved or disapproved. This could take 2-4 weeks. You will be notified by letter after the approval process is completed. If you are not approved for any reason you will receive a Denial letter. You can appeal the denial by writing a letter to the Executive Director and to the Board of Directors explaining your reasons to be reconsidered.
3. **Education.** Heart to Heart Adoptions will provide information and support through your Adoptive Family Case Managers. The adoption process is, by its very nature, emotionally challenging time. The toll-free line, 1-866-68ADOPT (866-682-3678), will be available for any questions and to help provide support. It is also required that you obtain additional information about adoption on your own. See Education Requirements.
4. **Home Study.** A home study is a required part of the adoption process and must have been completed and certified as current no more than 12 months prior to placement of the child for most states.

* Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide Adoptive Families residing in Utah, Florida and New York with a comprehensive pre-placement evaluation (home study) pursuant to the regulations and guidelines established by each State and Heart to Heart Adoptions. Said evaluation shall be performed by a licensed and qualified Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. social worker. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will assist you to obtain a copy of a background investigation (BCI) as part of this process. The fee charged for this is additional to the adoption fee and will be explained in the fee schedule.
* Adoptive families not in one of those states need to have a comprehensive pre-placement evaluation (home study) performed by a licensed and qualified adoption agency or social worker in their home state. The adoption evaluation must have been certified as current within the last 12 months unless otherwise specified by your state, and must include a criminal clearance that has also been certified as current within the last 12 months or time required by your state. Fees for this service will be determined by the agency located in your home state and are not included in the Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. fee.
* You may provide a home study from another agency but that home study must meet the qualifications of the Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. Social Work Department and be approved by the approval committee.
* If the pre-placement evaluation expires or does not meet the standards of the Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. Social Work Department, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide an update of that home study for an additional charge as is outlined in the fee agreement or request that you get that update through an qualified agency in your area.
* If you choose to have Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. send a copy of the home study completed by Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. to another agency, we will do so in a timely manner.

**E. Background Check.** You must consent to a background screening for any individual over the age of 18 in Utah, living in the home during any point of the year (i.e. students living at the home during the summer). If Utah residents have lived outside the state of Utah at any point in the last five (5) years, or if you are from outside of Utah and want to finalize in Utah, fingerprints must be submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for clearance through the FBI criminal check. Adoptive Family members who have the pre-placement evaluation done by another agency shall comply with the provisions of Utah or the state in which they reside. Background checks are portable between agencies and may be given directly to the person who is the subject of the report. The background check must be reviewed yearly. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will notify you when you must reapply.

1. **Outreach (Advertising)** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will activate your file and watch for an appropriate birth mother on your behalf. The agency will conduct a nationwide outreach program looking for birth mothers wanting to place their children. A portion of the agency fee is set apart for this purpose.

**G. Profile Presentation** As part of the matching process, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will present to birth parents your profile based upon your meeting previously identified criteria. You will be notified if before your profile is shown to a birth mother, provided with as much information as possible, and be given the option as to whether the profile is shown. In the case where the birth mother has determined no specific criteria or prefers the agency to choose the adoptive family, you must understand and agree that Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. has sole discretion as to which Adoptive Family is shown and chosen. Not showing the profile to a particular birth mother shall not be considered a lack of services.

**H**. **Staff Conflict of Interest**  Some Heart to Heart employees, volunteers, agents, consultants, or independent contractors may provide services to both the birth parents and the adoptive families. There is a potential conflict of interest that may be inherent pursuant to such situations. You have the right to request the opportunity to work with separate employees, volunteers, agents, consultants, or independent contractors than those working with your birth parent if you feel a conflict may arise.

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Please* Initial: ***For now we waive that right to have separate Heart to Heart employees, volunteers, agents, consultants, or independent contractors, knowing that we can request a change if we feel that it is necessary.***

**I. Match.**  Part of the agency fee is due. This portion is called the matching fees. Matching fees include counseling, case management support, living and travel expenses, etc. needed for the birth mother. Once you are matched with a birth mother, you may call and establish a relationship with birth mother. The agency will assist with conference calls between you and the birth mother to help facilitate that relationship. The birth mother may look to you for stability and support. Do not discuss financial matters with her. If your birth mother asks you for money, either before or after the placement, notify the agency, and we will guide you in how to respond.

**J. Paternity Notification.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. agrees to conduct a paternity search for any and all birth fathers or identified potential birth fathers. It shall not be considered a lack of services if Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. is unable to locate a birth father or identified birth father for the purpose of providing paternity notification. Further, in the case of an unnamed birth father, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. holds no responsibility if a birth father later attempts to assert his parental rights. Further, you must understand and agree that any legal action taken by a birth parent to contest or otherwise interfere in the completion of an adoption shall be the sole legal and financial responsibility of Adoptive Family and not Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. You need to acknowledge and understand that each state has different requirements for terminating birth father parental rights. These requirements need to be met in order to finalize the adoption in your home state. You must agree to accept responsibility for following through with any additional steps that are necessary regarding the birth father including but not limited to seeking legal counsel in the matter and in order to satisfy the requirements of your state on birth father rights.

**K. Relinquishment.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. agrees to obtain the relinquishment of the parental rights of the birth parents of the child both in Utah and outside of the state unless precluded by state law. In certain out-of-state placements, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will contract with a fully licensed agency, social worker or attorney in these states to provide relinquishment services. You understand the relinquishment will take place at the discretion of the birth mother and not Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. A putative father in Utah may provide a relinquishment at any time prior to the birth mother’s relinquishment. A birth mother located in Utah may not relinquish prior to 24 hours following delivery of the child. It shall not be considered a breach of services if Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. is unable to obtain a relinquishment from a birth parent or unable to locate a birth father for the purpose of obtaining a relinquishment.

**L. Information.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. agrees to provide you with authorized information concerning: (a) non-identifying personal information of the birth parents of a child placed with you that may include physical descriptions, special abilities, and ethnic background; (b) information including any special needs or problems of a child placed with you; and (c) characteristics of hereditary conditions of the birth parents and extended birth family of a child placed with you. You must acknowledge that Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. staff’s knowledge comes from third party sources and that Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. cannot verify or guarantee the accuracy of that information. You release Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. from any damages or injuries it, or a child in its custody or control, or otherwise adopted by you, may incur as a result of inaccurate or incomplete information provided to you by Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. concerning the child, birth parents, or the extended family.

**M. Custody.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. maintains custody of the child during the period following relinquishment and up to finalization. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will oversee the well being of the child during post-placement supervisory visits or will accept this supervision by a fully licensed adoption agency or social worker in the your home state. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. staff has the right and responsibility to address any concerns or questions that may arise from said visits or any other putative information that may come to the attention of Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. You understand that at any point before finalization, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. has the right to remove the child from your place of residence if the continued placement is not in the best interest of the child. You understand that you may not move the residence of the child without written notification to and permission from Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc.

**N.** **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).** ICPC work will be provided for all Adoptive Families who live out of Utah or who have adopted a child whose birth mother lives outside the state of Utah. Adoptive Family should be aware that they will be unable to transport said child across state lines until this work is complete and further, that it may take up to 14 days to complete.

**O. Post-placement Evaluation.**

* Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. agrees to provide a minimum of one to three comprehensive supervisory visits for Utah families pursuant to the regulations and guidelines established by the State of Utah. These evaluations shall be conducted by a licensed and qualified Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. social worker and are made to assess the child’s development and progress in bonding with the family. The fee charged for this is additional to the adoption fee and will be explained in the fee schedule.
* Out-of-Utah Adoptive Families must provide Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. with 2- 3, comprehensive post-placement evaluations pursuant to the regulations and guidelines established by the state of Utah within six months of placement. These must be performed by a licensed adoption agency or social worker in your state of residence. In this case you will be responsible for all costs associated with these post placement evaluations. Upon receipt of the required number of positive post placement evaluations, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide consent for adoption to the court in that state.

**P.** **Finalization.**

* A Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. representative will attend the adoption finalization hearing in court to provide necessary agency documentation as well as family support for those adoptions finalized in the State of Utah
* Out of state adoptive families may finalize the adoption in the court district where the child was born, or in their state of residence. If the finalization is performed in a state other than Utah, Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide a Consent of Adoption to the attorney of your choice following the receipt of three favorable post placement visits.

**Q. Post Placement Communication with the Birth Parents.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will facilitate negotiations between the birth parents and you, as the Adoptive Family, concerning contact and communication prior to and following placement. Both parties will sign the Openness Agreement Form at or before the time of relinquishment and placement. Adoptive Family agrees to keep Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. informed of a change of address or phone number to enable letters and pictures to be sent promptly and accurately. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will assist in handling the transfer of letters, pictures, and gifts between parties. Adoptive Family understands that they are responsible for all postage charges required to send packages or letters through the agency. All packages will be brought or sent to the agency ready to ship with appropriate postage. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will keep copies on file of all letters sent to birth parents if the adoptive family supplies a photocopy of the letter.

1. **Documentation**  You, as the Adoptive Family, agree to provide Heart to Heart Adoptions with all necessary information and documentation as may be required by the State of Utah, ICPC, or Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. in processing the adoption application and facilitating the adoption of a child. This documentation includes but is not limited to the following:
   * Letters of Reference. You agree to supply no less than three references, with at least two coming from non-relatives. You understand and acknowledge that these letters of reference are confidential and will not be shown at any point to the applicant.
   * Verification of Medical Insurance. You agree to secure a letter verifying benefits for the adopted child. This letter must state that you maintain current health coverage. It must also specifically state when the child would be added to the policy. The letter should also outline the procedure for initiating coverage for a child who has been placed in the home.
   * Medical Reports. You agree to provide documentation of the current health status of all individuals living in the home. Your physician must complete this documentation.
   * Change of Status. You agree to notify Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. of any changes in your family such as pregnancy, adoption through another agency, disability or death. You also agree to notify Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. of any move or change of housing. If you move to a new location, change employment, or experience any other change in financial status or living conditions, an update must be added to your home study.

**4. Birth Family Services.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. agrees to provide pre- and post-adoption counseling to birth family members, plus birth family services that may include, but are not limited to rent, utilities, limited phone services, clothing allowance, food, transportation, and other living expenses incurred during pregnancy and for the period of a birth mother’s confinement following delivery. The amount of services provided for a birth family will be dependent upon the individual circumstances.

**5. Support of Your Birth Mother**. Adoptive Family has or will read the instructions included in the Hospital Guidelines and Grief Fact Sheet. They understand that the birth mom will be experiencing grief over the placement of her child and will help support her through it.

**6. Medical Services.** You, as the Adoptive Family, agree to pay all medical expenses associated with the birth mother’s pregnancy and delivery and for the child’s medical expenses beginning at birth if they are not covered by Medicaid or private insurance. In cases where the birth mother is on personal medical insurance, you agree to pay all costs not covered under the birth mother’s insurance plan. Once a child is placed with you, you must agree to immediately have the child covered by your medical insurance.

**7.** **Fees.** You, as the Adoptive Family, agree to pay Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. the fees attached to your particular adoption according to the schedule stipulated per the fee agreement. You agree that when matching funds apply, you will pay the specified funds in the form of a wire transfer and pay the remaining balance either prior to travel, if placement is out of state, or at placement if in Utah.

**8. Legal Services.** Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide for the relinquishment of birth parent rights but is not responsible to provide any additional legal services for the Adoptive Family. If at any point the adoption is contested, it shall be your responsibility to obtain legal counsel. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. will provide you with a list of adoption attorneys, if so requested. You understand and agree to secure your own attorney for finalization.

**9. Liability.** You, as the Adoptive Family, agree to release and hold Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. as well as all employees, staff members, Board of Directors members, and contract employees of Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. and the birth mother, harmless for any and all damages, losses or injuries which you incur from any of the following:

(1) As a result of Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. placing a child in your care and custody. Or which are otherwise sustained by you, in connection with the parties’ performance of these services or by conditions created thereby;

(2) As a result of any child placed with you who is born with or who contracted subsequent to birth any genetic disorder, psychological disorder, illness ailment, or disease and

(3) As a result of Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc., its employees, staff members, contract employees, or medical doctors retained or utilized by Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. who fail to diagnose or treat any genetic disorder, psychological disorder, illness, ailment, or disease in any child prior to that child being placed with you.

**10. Risk Acknowledgement.** You understand and acknowledge the inherent risks in adoption. You understand that the birth parents are under no obligation to place the child for adoption and have the option to change their minds until the relinquishment papers are signed and any revocation period has passed. This is true even if the birth parents have received support, including financial support, from the agency or adoptive family. You also understand that, if at any point, the adoption is contested by the birth parents or any other party; you are solely responsible for any necessary legal action at your own expense. Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. is not responsible to provide any legal services to you. You understand that Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. may remove a child placed with you at any time prior to finalization if continued placement is not in the best interest of the child. You understand and accept all risks related to pursuing adoption in conjunction with Heart to Heart Adoptions Inc. You enter into this relationship and accept these services through your own free will and choice.

**11. Grievance and Complaint Procedure**

(1) You have the right to submit a written grievance or complaint to the Executive Director of Heart to Heart Adoptions, Inc.

(2) You will be given an opportunity to meet in person with the adoptive family program director and the executive director to express your grievance or complaint within five working days of receiving the written grievance or complaint.

(3) If you do not think a satisfactory understanding of the situation has been reached you may contact the Board of Directors of Heart to Heart Adoptions and file a formal complaint.

**Adoptive Father: Date:**

**Adoptive Mother: Date:**