

**What is adoption?** Adoption is the legal process by which permanent custody of a child is transferred from the birth parents to the adoptive parents. It is a legally binding, permanent decision.

**Is it selfish to place your child for adoption?** Absolutely NOT! Putting your child's welfare ahead of your own is an act of tremendous love and courage. Women who choose adoption give the miracle of life to a new human being, and also give the gift of parenthood to families who want nothing more in the world.

**Can I choose the family who will adopt my baby?** Yes. You can look at letters and pictures prepared by waiting families. Then, you may have the chance to meet or speak with the one or ones you are considering and, if you like, to develop a relationship with them during your pregnancy. After you place your child, you and the adoptive family can arrange to exchange letters and pictures or even to meet or speak directly on occasion.

**How can I be sure my baby is placed with a good family?** By choosing a family that has been carefully screened and prepared for parenting. At Forever Families Through Adoption, we get to know the families very well before we approve them to be adoptive parents. We discuss their reasons for wanting to adopt, and we get to know their interests, their lifestyle, and their medical history. We even get a fingerprint check and verify that they have no record of criminal activity or child abuse. All FFTA families attend workshops on adoption and parenting. The final decision is ultimately yours. You will be able to build a

relationship with the prospective adoptive parents if you choose, so that you can feel secure in your choice of parents for your baby.

**What is an "open adoption"?** In an "open adoption," birth families and adoptive families maintain on-going direct contact after placement. But adoptions can have all different degrees of "openness" — the families can share non-identifying or identifying information, depending upon the wishes of both parties.

**What if my family and friends don't agree with my adoption plan?** People will have their opinions. This is your decision that you make for your child, and the best decisions are made by getting all the information possible. It is easy for others to pass judgment when they don't understand all the facts and feelings. Adoption is a loving choice.

**What if I can't pay my expenses and medical bills?** If you need financial assistance, FFTA has adoptive families who will help with your medical care, living expenses or other legally approved costs related to the pregnancy. We can also help you apply for any public assistance or insurance benefits to which you are entitled. Help with a safe, confidential living situation can also be made for you, if necessary.

**What if I haven't been to see a doctor or do not have one yet?** We will help you locate an OBGYN or mid wife, if you prefer, in your area with whom you are comfortable. If you do not have insurance, the costs will be paid for by the

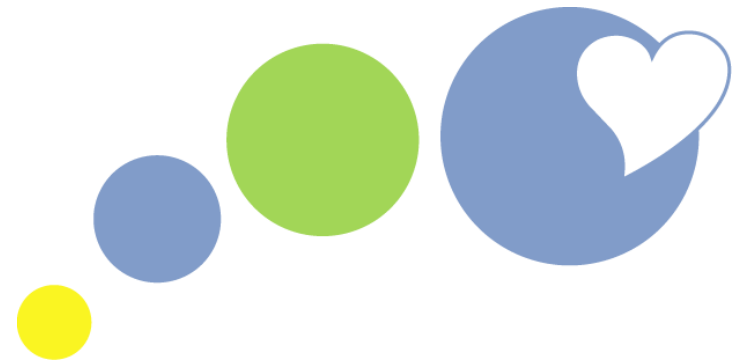
adopting family. Also, a counselor from FFTA or even the potential adoptive mother, if you like, can accompany you on your visits.

**What if I don't know who the birth father is?** In some circumstances, you may not know with certainty who the father is. This will not stop you from being able to find the best family for your baby. FFTA has loving families open to adopting babies under any circumstances. You can discuss this with a counselor at FFTA.

**If I have used drugs or drink, will there still be someone to adopt my child?** Yes. FFTA is well known within the adoption community for having an expertise in placing children that others may consider harder to place: children who have been drug or alcohol exposed, are the result of rape or incest, the offspring of incarcerated mothers, or who are black or bi-racial. Still, adoptive parents want to provide the best for your child, and that means knowing everything about his or her health and birth history — honesty is always the best policy.

**When will my baby be placed?** Typically, the adoptive family will come to the hospital where you deliver and take the baby home with them when he or she is discharged. In this way, there is no state foster care involved.

**Do you have other birth mothers I can talk to?** Yes. Over the past twenty-five years, we have helped many other women who have been in the same situation that you are facing today. A number of them will gladly speak with you about their adoption experiences — and yours. Just let us know the best way for them to contact you.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS for Expectant Parents



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