

# 8 Myths and Realities About Adoption

## FACTS:

- ▶ As of the 2000 Census, there were 1.5 million children under age 18 in America who joined their family through adoption, 2% of all children in the U.S.
- ▶ In the U.S., there are 5 million people today who were adopted. More than 100,000 children are adopted each year.
- ▶ 94% of all Americans view adoption favorably.

**MYTH** There are very few babies being placed for adoption.

**REALITY** 20,000 or more U.S.-born infants are placed for adoption each year—as many or more than the number of international adoptions yearly.

**MYTH** Adoption is outrageously expensive, out of reach for most families.

**REALITY** Adoption is often no more expensive than giving birth. Costs to adopt domestically average \$15,000, before the \$10,000 Adoption Tax Credit and benefits that many employers offer.

**MYTH** It takes years to complete an adoption.

**REALITY** The average time span of adoption is one to two years. The

majority of domestic and international adopters who responded to a recent poll by *Adoptive Families* Magazine completed their adoptions in less than a year.

**MYTH** Birthparents can show up at any time to reclaim their child.

**REALITY** Once an adoption is finalized, the adoptive family is recognized as the child's family by law. Despite the publicity surrounding a few high-profile cases, post-adoption revocations are extremely rare.

**MYTH** Birthparents are all troubled teens.

**REALITY** Most birthparents today are over 18, but lack the resources to care for a child. It is generally with courage and

love for their child that they terminate their parental rights.

**MYTH** Adopted children are more likely to be troubled than birth children.

**REALITY** Research shows that adoptees are as well-adjusted as their non-adopted peers. There is virtually no difference in psychological functioning between them.

**MYTH** Open adoption causes problems for children.

**REALITY** Adoptees are not confused by contact with their birthparents. They benefit from the increased understanding that their birthparents gave them life but their forever families take care of and nurture them.

**MYTH** Parents can't love an adopted child as much as they would a biological child.

**REALITY** Love and attachment are not the result of nor guaranteed by biology. The intensity of bonding and depth of emotion are the same, regardless of how the child joined the family.

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### How Domestic and International Adoptions Compare: Cost and Wait

	Domestic Adopters	International Adopters
Waited one year or less.....	76%.....	61%
Waited two years or less.....	95%.....	96%
Total cost less than \$15,000*.....	50%.....	14%
Total cost less than \$20,000*.....	70%.....	46%

\*Including travel, legal, agency, and all other expenses, before tax credit or any employee adoption benefits.

Source: *Adoptive Families Reader Poll, 2001, 2003*