



A special **Focus on Adoption** pull-out supplement to give to your family and friends. Download more copies at [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com)

# > Adoption: for family & friends

> We are pleased to share with you some information on adoption. We hope it will help us all to celebrate the adoption in our family and to welcome our new arrival.

## adoption ABCs

- Adoption is a legal and social process whereby an adult person becomes the parent of a child. Once a child is adopted, he or she is the same as any birth children in terms of the law and parental responsibility.
- The lack of blood ties is no barrier to love — that fact is proven again and again by adoptive parents and their kids.
- Adoption isn't a second-best parenting option — some adoptive parents choose adoption over having biological children. Other parents have biological children and children by adoption.



- Of course, not all adoptees know or have information on their birth family. That doesn't mean that they don't have feelings for them or that their birth parents didn't love them; it means that, for various reasons, they couldn't parent them.
- Contrary to most stereotypes, birth parents are usually in their twenties and are often already parenting other children. Many birth parents are involved in choosing the adoptive parents for their child.

## fostering the facts

- Children who are adopted from foster care were not in care because of anything that they did wrong. For many different reasons, their birth parents were not able to take care of them. No matter what we think of our children's birth parents, it is important not to be negative about them in front of the children.

- The sometimes complex details of a child's life before joining a family don't need to be shared with just anybody. Adoptive parents appreciate it when their child's privacy is protected.

## transracial adoption

- Most parents who have adopted a child of another race or culture have stories about hurtful and racist remarks. This can range from "Who is his real mother?" to generalizations about people of his or her race such as, "She's Asian, she must be good at math," etc. We want our children to be proud of their origins and thoughtless remarks and racist comments can be extremely isolating and upsetting to a child.

## adoption & rescue

- When parents adopt a child from an orphanage, they rarely do it to rescue the child, or as an act of charity. They adopt because they want to become parents or to add more children to their family. In such cases it's the parents who are the "lucky:" ones, not the kids!

## more about adoption >

## Opening up adoption

- Many adoptive parents have an open relationship with the birth family of their children. This can range from exchanging cards and letters to frequent, in-person contact. Contact, or even just knowledge about their birth parents, is of tremendous value for adoptive children, birth parents and adoptive parents.
- Open adoption isn't "shared parenting." It just means that there are far fewer unanswered questions for adopted kids and more people in their lives who love them.

## respectful adoption language

Out of Date:	Respectful:
My own child, my natural child	Birth child
Real parents, natural parents	Birth parents
Gave up, gave away	Made an adoption plan
Keeping her baby	Parenting her child
My adopted son/grandson/nephew	My son/grandson/nephew
My adopted daughter/granddaughter/nephew	My daughter/granddaughter/niece
Foreign adoption	International adoption





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## Roads to adoption

■ Around 50 children a year are adopted as infants through one of BC's licensed adoption agencies. Children from babies to teens need families. There are 1300 children in the BC foster care system who are waiting to be adopted.

■ Each year, around 300 children join families from BC's foster care system.

■ Each year around 200 children from other countries are adopted by BC families.

■ Children are also adopted by step-parents; and, in many same-sex couples where one parent is the biological parent, the other parent adopts the child.

## Who can adopt in BC?

To adopt a child, you must be over 19 and a resident of the province. You can be single, married, or in a same-sex relationship. You don't need a particular income, education or religion. You do have to have the ability to commit to and love a child.

## Adoption has changed

Not only has the type of people that can legally adopt a child widened over the last 30 years, but the secrecy surrounding adoption has considerably lessened. These days, few adoptive parents fail to tell their children that they were adopted. Many adoptive parents now have contact with their child's birth parents and birth families—this is called openness.

## The need to know

If an adoptee has not had contact with birth parents during childhood, once he or she turns 19, that child can register on the Post Adoption Openness Registry, run by the BC government, where their birth parent may have left contact details.

An adoptee can also request that the BC government contact his or her birth family to let them know that the adoptee would like contact. In many cases, birth family are delighted to hear from the adoptee; in other cases, they may refuse contact.

Adoptees rarely make contact with their birth family as a way to reject their adoptive family. They usually do it because they need medical information, or they simply have a deep desire to know more about their origins, to understand where they may have gotten certain looks, talents and other traits, and whether or not they have birth siblings.

## AFABC can help

If you would like to know more about welcoming an adoptive child or children into your family, think about attending one of AFABC's relaxed, informative workshops. You can learn more about these learning opportunities at [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com). On this website you can also find contact details of AFABC's friendly adoption support coordinators, who are happy to answer your adoption questions.



## Famous adoptees

There are thousands of famous adoptees. Here's just a sample!

Edward Albee, Playwright  
Steve Jobs, Founder, Apple Computer  
Sarah McLachlan, Singer  
James Michener, Author  
George Scott, Olympian (boxing)  
Dave Thomas, Founder, Wendy's  
Curtis Joseph, NHL goalie  
Stompin' Tom Connors, Folk singer

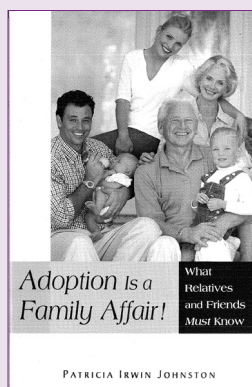
## adoption online

Check out these adoption websites

[www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com)  
[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/adoption](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/adoption)  
[www.adoptivefamilies.com](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com)  
[www.adoption.ca](http://www.adoption.ca)  
[www.davethomasfoundation.ca](http://www.davethomasfoundation.ca)

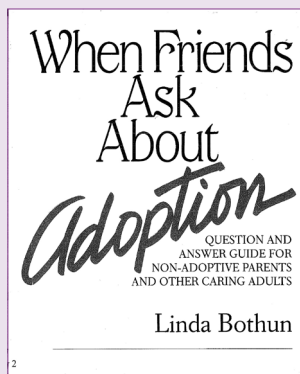
> Download other **Focus on Adoption** supplements on **School 101** (for adoptive parents) and **Adoption 101 for Teachers** at [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com).

## Adoption books for family and friends - more at [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com)



### ADOPTION IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

**What Relatives and Friends Must Know.** by Patricia Irwin Johnston. If one of your family members is adopting a child, this is an excellent book to help you understand adoption. It will answer your questions and better prepare you to welcome a new member into your family. Highly recommended. Available at the AFABC library, visit [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com)



### WHEN FRIENDS ASK ABOUT ADOPTION

**Questions and Answer Guide for Non-Adoptive Parents and Other Caring Adults.** by Linda Bothun. Even the least enthusiastic reader will find this bite-sized book easy going. Packed with short answers to the questions most people have about adoption, this book is a keeper. Highly recommended. Available at the AFABC library, visit [www.bcadopt.com](http://www.bcadopt.com)