

*What if my child's father is unknown or doesn't want to cooperate with adoption planning?*

He has a legal right to notice about the adoption plan and has the right to ask the court to consider him for custody. However, this is more involved than just stating that he wishes to parent. He must show the court that he is stable and financially prepared to assume total responsibility for the care and custody of his child. Your adoption counselor can explain this fully and help with any legal steps.

If the father is unknown, then a report stating this is submitted to the court so that his rights and responsibilities can be legally terminated. Again, your adoption counselor can help with this.



*What happens if I change my mind?*

Prior to placement you probably will. It is absolutely normal to question your decision and change your mind many times as you try to sort out what is best for your child and yourself. You are making a life decision for two people. Prioritizing your child and still meeting your own needs and desires takes much effort and thought.



*Is there any cost for adoption counseling that my family or I will have to pay?*

No, there is no cost for counseling whether you choose to work with a licensed agency or an independent facilitator. The agency or the prospective couple pays the cost.

*Temporary Loving Care*

If you have given birth, but still need time to make a decision, the TLC Program at Infant of Prague Central California Adoption Service may be helpful to you. We can place your baby with a TLC family. You will not lose custody of your child, but you will gain the time you need to make the best decision for your baby and yourself.



**Infant of Prague  
Central California Adoption Service**  
6059 North Palm Avenue - Fresno, CA 93704  
Central Valley (559) 447-3333  
Central Coast (805) 709-5662  
Toll Free (800) 994-2367  
[www.infantofprague.org](http://www.infantofprague.org)

# *The Facts about Adoption*



*Making a Choice*



## *What is adoption?*

It is a process whereby a parent chooses to have her child raised by another family. Legally, all of the rights and responsibilities for the child are transferred to the new adoptive family and the child becomes a permanent member of the adoptive family.



## *Is adoption right for me? Is adoption right for my child?*

Parenthood requires an emotional, physical and financial commitment; not everyone faced with a pregnancy is prepared for full-time parenthood. Adoption lets you have a choice in the kind of life you want for your child.



## *If I choose adoption for my child, can I choose who will adopt my child?*

Yes, you can choose and meet the adoptive parents. In fact, California law allows you to name them on the legal document (a relinquishment or consent form) transferring your rights and responsibilities.



## *How do I know the adoptive family is prepared to adopt?*

One of the best ways to ensure that the adoptive couple is right for your child is to meet and get to know them yourself. If you use a licensed agency, the adoptive couple will have already gone through an extensive screening and educational process (a Home Study) with agency professionals before they are approved for placement of a child into their home.

If you decide to make an adoption plan without using an agency, this is called an independent adoption. The screening process is usually not done until after the child enters the adoptive home and the adoptive couple has filed a petition to adopt with the courts.



## *Will I lose all contact with my child after the adoption is final?*

You may want to enter into what is called an "open adoption" whereby you and the adoptive family maintain contact over the years. There are varying degrees of openness and you will want to be certain to discuss this with your adoption counselor ahead of time. Contact can take place in various forms from letter and picture exchanges, to get-togethers on special occasions. Not all adoptive families are educated to be comfortable with ongoing contact over the lifetime of the child. This is a matter that you will want to take into consideration when choosing the adoptive family for your child.

## *Won't I be sad and depressed if I choose adoption?*

You will most likely experience a myriad of emotions. Making an adoption plan takes love, courage and sacrifice. You are making a decision that affects two lives. It is a tremendous responsibility to decide what is best for you and your child. Having others who believe in you and can support you in whatever decision you make can be extremely helpful.



## *How do I find someone, who can talk with me and explain all of my choices?*

There are various places to turn to for support and referrals such as social service agencies, pregnancy centers, clinics, etc. Do keep in mind that many people (friends, family, religious advisors) are well meaning, but not necessarily knowledgeable about California adoption laws. Licensed agencies and attorneys do know the law and can give you legal advice about your rights and responsibilities in adoption planning. A local service that can meet with you personally is more readily able to offer support and assistance.

