



## KNOX AREA FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION MINISTRIES

### **TYPES OF ADOPTION:**

**Domestic, Foster Care, International, Embryo**

### **DOMESTIC ADOPTION**

In domestic adoption, the birth parent(s) has chosen to place the child in an adoptive home and has, in most cases, selected adoptive parents. Domestic adoption is done through a licensed adoption agency or privately through an attorney that specializes in local or U.S. adoptions.

#### **Advantages**

- Pre-adoptive and post-adoptive services are usually provided both for birth parents and adoptive parents.
- Greater chance of adopting a newborn

#### **Cautions**

- Unpredictable and often extended waiting period
- Potential of last-minute change of mind by birth mother
- High costs due to agency fees and medical bills for birth of child

#### **Other Considerations**

- “*Open vs. closed*” adoption continuum.

## **FOSTER CARE ADOPTION**

There are an estimated 400,000 children in foster care in the United States and over 100,000 are considered available for adoption. These children vary in age and have been placed in the system for a number of reasons including neglect, abuse, and abandonment. The fact is that many of these children have endured tremendous pain and need someone to love them with the unconditional love of our Savior. Generally, the adoption of a child from the U.S. foster care system would take place through a state's human services department or a private agency.

### **Advantages**

- Cost is free or minimal. Many of these children qualify for monthly subsidies & Medicaid that may continue until 18 years old
- Little to no chance of custody issues after placement

### **Cautions**

- Limited availability of infants
- Higher incidences of long-term emotional and medical issues. Sometimes these issues are unknown at placement.

## **INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION**

These adoptions involve children in foreign countries who live in an orphanage or in some cases, foster care within that country. International adoption is generally done through an agency with expertise in a few particular countries. It is governed both by U.S. law and by the laws of a given child's birth country. The laws on international adoption vary widely from country to country and can often change. It is therefore especially important to work with an experienced agency with a track record of successful adoptions from a given country. Many countries have specific qualifications for birth parents and families.

### **Advantages**

- Little to no chance of custody issues after placement

### **Cautions**

- Can be a complicated process in which laws and procedures change.
- Medical conditions can be hard to predict.
- Unanticipated costs
- Wait time is often very long

### **Other Considerations**

- Travel to a child's birth country is required in most cases. Some countries require two trips. This can be a wonderful opportunity to educate yourself culturally so that you can pass important cultural elements on to your adopted child. However, travel to certain countries is not for everyone.

## **EMBRYO ADOPTION**

Embryo adoption offers a mother the opportunity to become pregnant with and carry her adopted child. Embryo donation and adoption (ED/EA) has come about as a life-affirming response to in-vitro fertilization (IVF). Many couples who have undergone IVF have finished building their families but still have embryos remaining in frozen storage. Some of these couples decide to donate their remaining embryos to be used by others who are hopeful of becoming parents. Once an embryo is adopted, that embryo is transferred into the prospective mother's uterus in the hopes of implantation. Technically, frozen embryo transfers are considered property transactions rather than adoptions under U.S. law, though embryo adoption is a widely used and commonly accepted term that many believe better communicates what the process is all about. Many organizations that facilitate ED/EA also include elements of the traditional adoption process such as home studies and a discussion of open vs. closed arrangements with the embryo's genetic family.

### **Advantages**

- Cost-effective, with a first transfer usually costing \$8,000 total.
- Chance to adopt while also bonding with your child through experiencing pregnancy
- No custody issues to work through; once an embryo has been transferred, the recipient is legally considered the biological parent

### **Cautions**

- Success of procedure is not guaranteed; national birth rate for frozen embryo transfers is about 35-40%
- Some embryos may not survive the thawing process
- Chance of multiple births is higher than with a naturally occurring pregnancy

### **Other considerations**

- Levels of communication between embryo donor and recipient families vary; you may choose to have either a totally "closed" relationship or an "open" or "semi-open" adoption
- There are an estimated 625,000 to 1,000,000 embryos in frozen preservation in the U.S. right now