

Adoption Planning



We're here to help!



ADOPTION CENTRE
of British Columbia



Who We Are

The **Adoption Centre of British Columbia** is a trusted organization that has been serving families since the beginning of the British Columbia adoption agency system in 1996. We have a team of professional, registered social workers across the province who are caring, compassionate, and are here to listen and help you.

We believe in empowering birth parents to make choices that reflect their needs, values and wishes. Our commitment is to provide you with a personal approach to your unique adoption circumstances.

We work with adoptive families and birth parents all over the province of British Columbia. We are not limited by geography and provide the same personal level of support and services wherever you are located in the province.



For more information about our agency visit adoption-bc.com
or call toll free **1-800-935-4237** or **250-763-8002**.

Birth parents can also call or text us at **250-718-2396**.



**ADOPTION CENTRE
of British Columbia**

What We Do



We offer a wide range of pregnancy counselling services across the province of British Columbia, including:

- Support and guidance in exploring all available options during any stage of pregnancy.
- Education regarding adoption and birth parents' rights.
- Counselling, support and referrals to other resources.
- If an adoption plan is made, adoption-specific services are provided.

If you choose to proceed with an adoption, we have a large network of compassionate birth parent counsellors that will be a great resource and support to you. They will offer emotional and practical support every step of the way, from creating an adoption plan to the delivery and placement.

Our pregnancy counselling services are free of charge and confidential.

Making an Adoption Plan



Once you have considered all of your options and received pregnancy counselling, you can choose to make an adoption plan for your child. Your social worker can help you explore which type of adoption is right for you and your child.

Domestic Adoption – Placing with a Family You Choose

A domestic adoption is when a birth parent places a child with an approved family that they have chosen from waiting families who are prepared, approved, and registered with an agency. The Adoption Centre of British Columbia will provide step-by-step support for you along the way.

Direct Adoption – Placing with Someone You Know

Another possibility is placing your child with someone that you have a pre-existing relationship with. With this adoption plan, birth parents will receive pregnancy counselling and BC law requires that the adoptive family completes a pre-placement assessment through an adoption agency such as the Adoption Centre of BC. The adoptive family is responsible for paying the adoption fees.

Relative Adoption - Placing with a Family Member

Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins or distant relatives may be in a position to take on the responsibility of adopting. At the time of placement, a lawyer will facilitate the process to confirm all legal requirements are met. Adoptive parent(s) are required to cover these legal costs.

Domestic Adoption



What does a birth parent do during a domestic adoption?

About You

You will provide your social worker with information about you and your background such as medical and social information. This information will be shared with the adoptive family that you choose.

Choosing a Family

You will choose an adoptive family for your child. We will show you profiles of waiting families who have been approved to adopt and you may consider the types of things that are important to you in raising a child when choosing a family.

Once you have chosen an adoptive family, you may decide to meet in person or by phone/video call. A social worker will be involved to offer you support during this meeting.

Placement

Most placements occur at the hospital within a few days of birth. We will only proceed with the placement when you are ready to do so. You will receive support from your social worker before, during and after the placement.

Openness

Open adoptions allow adoptive parents and the adopted child to interact directly with birth parents through letters, emails or face-to-face visits. The frequency of contact is negotiated among family members and can change as a child grows or as families' needs change. This arrangement will provide you with the opportunity to follow your child's growth and development over time.

Your Rights and Responsibilities



Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities

It is important to know your legal rights and responsibilities before making any decisions. Once you are ready, we will proceed with the adoption placement. Your social worker will arrange an appointment with a lawyer for you to sign the adoption consent forms. For birth mothers, this will occur no sooner than 10 days after the birth of the baby. You have 30 days from the child's date of birth to change your mind about the adoption and request that the child be returned to your care. This must be done in writing to the Administrator of the Adoption Centre of British Columbia.

Birth Father's Rights and Responsibilities

Although a birth mother is not legally required to name the birth father before making an adoption plan, it is in the best interest of the child to know as much as possible about both birth parents. If a birth father wants to be involved in the adoption process, he needs to be informed about his legal and parental rights and will have access to the same range of services, including birth parent counselling and signing consent to the adoption with a lawyer.

Birth fathers can claim paternity of a child through the Parent Registry-Ministry of Children and Family Development. A birth father can do this up to 150 days after an adoption placement. Adoption Centre of British Columbia will search this registry before placement and before the adoption is finalized in court, regardless of whether the birth father is named. If a birth father has registered and claimed paternity, he will be notified of the adoption plan. A birth father can sign consent to the adoption as soon as the baby is born. Once he signs consent, he cannot revoke his consent.

When the adoption is approved by a judge, the adoptive parents become the child's legal parents.

Myth or Fact?

Myth: As a birth mother, I have no say in the adoption process.

Fact: You can have a lot of a say in the process – you can choose the family for your child, you can meet with them ahead of time and you can keep in touch with them and your child after the adoption.

Myth: Once I place my baby for adoption I will never see him or her again.

Fact: Most adoptions today are open. Adoption has changed over the years. In the past most adoptions were closed, meaning there was no contact with the child or adoptive family after the adoption. Today, about 90% of adoptions have some level of openness, meaning on-going contact between the birth parent and adoptive family and child. Most open adoptions include exchanging letters and photos, and may even include phone calls and personal visits.

Myth: Once I decide to place my baby for adoption, I can't change my mind.

Fact: Before placing your baby for adoption, you have the right to change your mind at any time. After you place the baby there is a period of 30 days (from date of birth), where you can change your mind.

Myth: Adoptive parents aren't interested in me. All they care about is the baby.

Fact: Although your baby is what brings you together, adoptive parents are hoping to connect with you and are almost always open to developing a relationship with you over time. Remember, like you, they are going through a difficult time. If they seem distant or reserved, it may be that they want to protect themselves emotionally just in case you decide to change your mind.

Myth: Adoptive parents have all kinds of experts working for them and I don't have any.

Fact: As part of the adoption process, you will be assigned a birth parent counsellor. They will explain the adoption process and answer any questions you have regarding your rights and responsibilities. You will receive emotional support and help with your grief and loss as you work through the adoption process. Your counsellor will help you with meeting the family you have chosen, help you come up with a hospital plan, and help you with the lawyers' appointment when you sign consent to the adoption. All of these things are free to you.

Myth or
Fact?



Myth: Adoptive parents won't love my baby as much as I will.

Fact: Prospective adoptive parents are ready to open their hearts and their homes to any child that needs love and affection. It makes no difference to them whether the child is theirs biologically or not. Although raising an adopted child is different than raising a biological child, the same qualities – empathy, encouragement, patience and unconditional love – are required!

Myth: After the placement, adoptive parents will avoid talking to me for fear that the child will want to go back to me.

Fact: In fact, the opposite is true. The more open your child's adoptive parents are about you, the better off the child is. All children have questions about their origins and the more their adoptive parents can tell them, the more secure they'll feel about who they are and the circumstances surrounding their placement.

Myth: Adoptive children grow up believing they were abandoned by their mothers and consequently don't want anything to do with them.

Fact: With the help of their adoptive parents, your child will soon come to understand that you did not abandon them and you placed them for adoption because of your love and selflessness.

Hear from a Birth Mom ... watch Davis' Story of Love on our website.

Contact Us



CALL

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

250-763-8002 or Toll free: 1-800-935-4237

After hours/text: 250-718-2396

EMAIL

info@adoption-bc.com

Emails are answered during office hours
(Monday to Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm)

FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/adoptionbc

Send us a private Facebook message
(answered during office hours)

WEBSITE

www.adoption-bc.com

For more information about Adoption Centre of BC
or to view some of our approved adoptive families

The Adoption Centre of British Columbia is a program of



Enhancing Lives - Connecting Communities