

# George J. & Mary S. Mitchell Adoption Unit

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[MaineChildrensHome.org](http://MaineChildrensHome.org)



# OUR PROGRAM

The George J. & Mary S. Mitchell Adoption Unit is a comprehensive adoption agency, offering professional services and support to all members of the adoption triad, which includes adoptive parents, birth parents, and adoptees.

Adoption is a life-long commitment so we firmly believe in an educational process that allows you to make informed decisions. Our caring staff members are here to guide you through the entire process and to support you long after the adoption has taken place.

## Services:

- Domestic Adoption
- International Adoption
- Home Study Process
- Pregnancy & Birth Parent Support
- Post-Adoption
- Search & Reunion



# INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

International adoption offers couples and individuals the opportunity to add to their family by adoption a child from another country. As part of the process, The Maine Children's Home works toward adoptive placement in collaboration with licensed, Hague-accredited international adoption services to our Maine families looking to adopt.



The Maine Children's Home has formed relationships with several reputable international agencies that can assist you in adopting from abroad, or families can choose to work with a licensed, Hague-accredited agency of their choosing with our guidance.

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## HAGUE ACCREDITATION

The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers' Adoption Program is the only Maine-based organization which has achieved compliance with the Hague Convention Accreditation Standards. The Hague Convention is an international treaty created to ensure that intercountry adoptions are in the best interests of children and to prevent abduction, exploitation, sale or trafficking of children.

# DOMESTIC ADOPTION

## In-State

Our In-State Infant Adoption Program is a full service program.

As part of the program, The Maine Children's Home provides you with an experienced case worker to guide you through the entire process and to help you determine which type of adoption will be best for you. Our professional staff also manages the adoption home study process as well as birth parent counseling, placement services, and post-adoption services, including search services.

## Inter-State

The Inter-State Adoption Program provides all of the same services as the In-State Adoption Program but with another licensed out-of-state agency serving as the child-placing agency.

We assist Maine-based adoptive applicants with the Interstate Compact guidelines necessary for adoption between two states. Following placement, The Maine Children's Home also provides post placement supervision, finalization services, and post adoption services in Maine.

\*The majority of the babies and young children adopted through the inter-state program are of mixed cultural and racial heritage. Applicants are required to participate in education sessions on trans-racial parenting and are encouraged to communicate with other trans-racial families.

# HOME STUDY PROCESS

The term "home study" means two things:

1. A written document describing in detail who the prospective adoptive parents are
2. A process all adoptive applicants go through in order to adopt

The **written home study** is comprised of information gathered from autobiographies the applicants are asked to write, as well as from interviews with the applicants conducted by a licensed adoption case worker. At least one of the interviews takes place in the applicants' home.

This document is a tool that is used to assess applicants to be an adoptive parent(s) and depending on the type of adoption may be reviewed by another agency, country, and the presiding court.

The **home study process** begins with the first consultation visit at the agency and, in most cases, follows all the way through finalization. It involves the written document but also entails educating applicants about unique adoption issues, parenting styles and skills, the birth parent perspective, and identifying sources of support.

Private home studies are available for couples or individuals who are choosing to adopt through another source. The home study is written according to the same guidelines and standards as other home studies, but The Maine Children's Home does not provide any other services related to the adoption process (unless contracted to do otherwise).



# POST-ADOPTION SERVICES

Adoption is a life-long process. Each member of the adoption triad - birth parents, adoptive parents and adoptees - needs access to supportive services beyond finalization because they are truly just beginning their journey in adoption.

Our post-adoption services, including counseling and search services, help address people's needs throughout their lives. We also have a small library of literature available for lending to those who want to read about the different aspects of adoption.

Confidentiality is very important to us and to those we serve. We are sensitive to each member of the adoption triad's right to confidentiality and do our best to protect that right at all times.



# SEARCH & REUNION SERVICES

We provide assistance to birth parents, adoptive parents, adoptees and birth siblings (with permission) to complete searches for adoptions that were completed through The Maine Children's Home.

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## Services we offer:

Records  
search and  
review

Access to medical  
information  
contained in the  
adoptive file

Search and  
Reunion  
Services

Non-identifying  
information  
contained in the  
adoptive file

Updated  
medical  
information  
search

Consultation  
services

# PREGNANCY SUPPORT SERVICES

Warm, caring, supportive pregnancy counselors will assist you, the mother and/or father, in exploring all of your options so you can make the informed decision that is best for you and your baby. We offer confidential counseling services free of charge and without obligation to you, the birth parent(s). If you find yourself unprepared or unable to parent, we can help you make an adoption plan for your child.

To those who may be considering an adoption plan, these are commonly asked questions about adoption:

*Can I be involved in selecting an adoptive family for my child?*

YES. You can decide what level of involvement you want to have in the selection process.

*Can I meet the adoptive parents?*

YES. If you are interested in meeting the adoptive couple that you selected, you may do so prior to the birth and/or just after the birth.

*Will I be able to know how my child is doing throughout the years?*

YES. The Maine Children's Home requests that all adoptive parents provide us with annual progress updates on the child until he or she reaches the age of 18.

*If I am unsure about the plan I chose, can I change my mind?*

YES. Most of the people we talk to about adoption haven't made up their minds when they first contact us. You are entitled to change your mind at any time throughout the adoption process until the Surrender and Release has been signed and the three-day waiting period has passed.

*Does the birth father need to consent to the adoption plan or be notified?*

YES. If the birth father would like to be involved in the plan, he is more than welcome. If you have not told the birth father about the pregnancy, we can help you contact the father and talk with him about your plan, or we can talk to him for you.

*Are counseling services available to me after my baby is adopted?*

YES. Birth parent counselors will continue to provide counseling services to you and/or the birth father following the adoption if you so desire.

# CONTACT:

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