



Guide to Local Adoption in Hong Kong



母親的抉擇
Mother's Choice

Mother's Choice is a local charity serving the many children without families and pregnant teenagers in Hong Kong. Since 1987, we have joined hands with our community to give hope and change the life stories of vulnerable girls and babies.

How To Use This Guide

This guide is for those **living in Hong Kong who are considering adoption** as a way to build their family. You can also use this guide if you are a family member or a friend of someone who is considering adoption in order to learn more about adoption and supporting your friends.

In this guide, you will find details on the process of adoption in Hong Kong, learn why adoption is needed for some children, and find resources to support your family through the adoption process, and into the lifelong journey of adoption.

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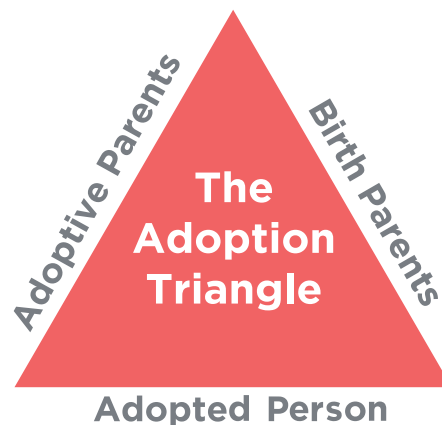
Introduction To Adoption

What is Adoption?

Adoption is the permanent legal transfer of all parental rights from one family unit to another. Adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as biological parents, and adopted children have the same emotional, social, legal and kinship benefits as biological children.

Hong Kong is party to the **Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (1993)**, which aims to prevent the abduction, sale of, or traffic of children. As a result, all adoptions in Hong Kong must meet the requirements of the Convention to establish safeguards to ensure that adoptions take place in the best interests of the child, and with respect to their fundamental rights.

At Mother's Choice, we have the privilege of helping to build families through adoption. Our vision is to see every child in a safe, loving, and permanent family. We believe every family is unique, and that family is defined by love, not just blood. We work hard to ensure that every child can either be reunited with their birth family, or join an adoptive family as soon as possible.



Adoption gives birth parents the assurance that their children will be raised in a safe, loving, and permanent family, gives adoptive parents the opportunity to parent, and allows children to join a permanent family and grow up in a loving home. At Mother's Choice, we support all members of the adoption triangle, including the birth parents, adoptive parents and the child.

Closed Adoption

Hong Kong practices "closed adoption". This means that there is no interaction of any kind between birth parents and prospective adoptive families. With the exception of a child who has been abandoned, adoptive families will receive medical information about their child's birth family. Names and other identifying information are not shared.

However, if an adopted person or their family wishes to learn more about or contact their birth family, they can do so through the Social Welfare Department root tracing services. For more information, please read page 11.

Mother's Choice Adoption Services

Mother's Choice is an Accredited Body to provide adoption services in Hong Kong. Licensed by the Social Welfare Department Family and Child Branch, Mother's Choice provides both Local Adoption Services (since 2010), and Intercountry Adoption Services (since 2006). Our support for adoption began long before this; the first child from Mother's Choice was adopted in 1989 and Mother's Choice has been an advocate for improved adoption practices since its founding in 1987.

Local Adoption Services

We work with prospective and current adoptive families living in Hong Kong. We prepare, assess, equip, and empower families to provide a safe, loving, and permanent family where children can thrive. We also provide support to adoptive families through workshops, activities, and peer groups. Local Adoption Services are available to residents of Hong Kong.

Intercountry Adoption Services

When a family cannot be found for a child within Hong Kong, our Intercountry Adoption Services help children to be adopted abroad. We work with adoption agencies in the U.S. to ensure that children using our Intercountry Adoption Services thrive in a safe, loving, and permanent family. Children awaiting Intercountry Adoption may include those with special needs, older children, or children who belong to sibling groups. For more information, please email adoption@motherschoice.org.

What Services Does Mother's Choice Provide To Adoptive Families?

Pre-Adoption Services

For prospective adoptive families using Mother's Choice, we offer:

- A dedicated social worker to support you throughout the process
- Personal meetings, interviews, and home visit with your social worker
- Pre-adoption trainings to help prepare you to adopt

Post-Adoption Support

Adoption is a lifelong journey, and we are committed to walking alongside adoptive families through:

- Events and activities to connect with other adoptive families
- Workshops on topics related to raising an adopted child

Who Are The Children Waiting For Families?

Every child who is waiting for an adoptive family is special, and deserves a family who can meet their unique needs. All children who are waiting for a family have experienced a separation from their birth parents. Many birth parents have made a difficult decision to place their child for adoption in order to give them the opportunity to grow up in a safe, loving, and permanent family that they would not be able to provide themselves.

Children waiting for a permanent family can be from 0-18 years old. They fall into the following categories, as defined by the Social Welfare Department:

Healthy Infants

This group includes children who are young (usually under one year old), who have uncomplicated parental histories, and no known medical needs. There are very few of these children who are waiting for an adoptive family.

Children With Unknown or Complicated Family Backgrounds

These children may be healthy but have a complicated family background, including a family history of drug or alcohol addictions, mental health issues, or unknown birth parents.

Older Children (aged 3 or above)

These children are over three years old, some are generally healthy, while others may have mild to moderate health needs, developmental delays, and/or behavioral challenges. Some children who are older may have lived with their birth families, and some may have lived in foster care or in other institutions.

The greatest gift to an older child is to know they are wanted and they can belong in a forever family. Bonding with an older child is a beautiful journey over a lifetime. It requires patience, heart, mind and will – it's a real adventure!

– Adoptive parent

Children with Identified Health Issues or Special Needs

Children with identified health issues and special needs could range from mild to severe illnesses or conditions, including: asthma, visual or hearing impairment, heart conditions, premature birth, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, orthopedic issues, or other conditions requiring therapy or medication. Children may have been diagnosed with learning needs or developmental delays, including: speech delay, physical delay, dyslexia, behavioral needs, or other learning and developmental delays.

A diagnosis is not who my daughter is, nor do limitations define her. None of the medical words that so many use to describe her can give you an accurate picture of my daughter. She is a very special child. She radiates a deep happiness, loving personality, an excitement for life, and courage in all situations. She is loving and sincere, generous and kind, forgiving and resilient. She is the center of our family.

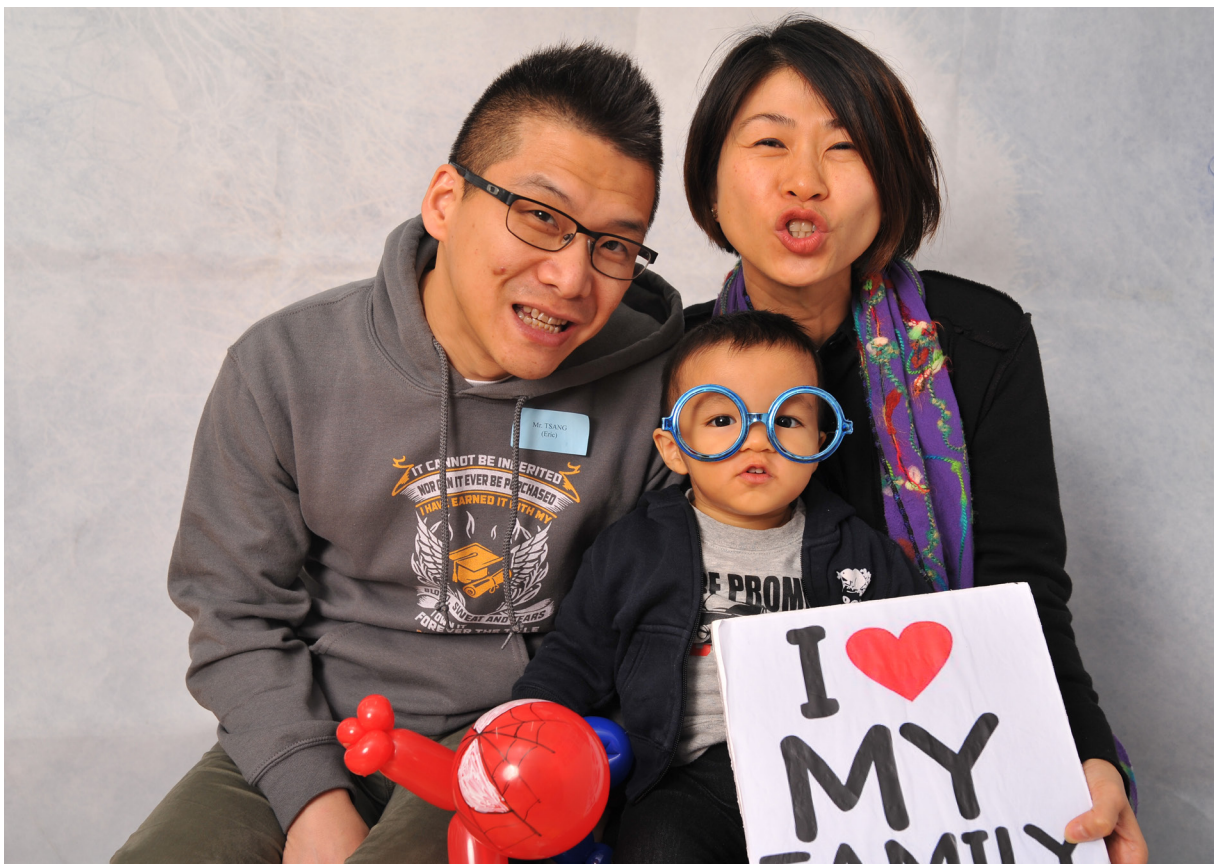
– Adoptive Parent

Siblings

Some children may be waiting for a family along with siblings. These children vary in age and may have a difficult family background that has prevented them from staying in their family of birth. Being adopted with a brother or sister can be very beneficial for children, helping them make sense of their new lives. Siblings placed together often feel more safe and secure and are able to help each other adjust to their new family and community. Preserving the bond between siblings can even strengthen relationships with the whole family.

Adopting siblings is a gift - it allows two children to grow up with a biological connection in their adoptive family, and allows them to answer one of the lifelong questions of every adoptee: "who do I look like?" My two biological siblings have grown up with so much physical similarity, whilst having such different personalities and interests.

-Adoptive parent



Preparing To Adopt

Motivation to Adopt

There are many reasons why a family would consider building their family through adoption. They may be motivated by a desire to give a home to a child who does not have a family, or have experienced infertility or difficulty conceiving. Understanding your motivations to adopt is an important step in the adoption process, and we recommend you to consider a number of questions before starting the adoption process, a list of which have been included in page 20 of this guide.

“We had been married for over 10 years, and we always wanted to have children, but there were still just two of us in our family. A friend of ours adopted a child and encouraged us to consider it, but I could not accept the idea of adoption. I felt there was no need to raise a child who was not related to me by blood. Several years later, I read an interview of an adoptive father and I was deeply touched by his words. Something clicked and I realized that if my wife and I enjoyed such a close relationship without being related by blood, why couldn't that apply to a father and son?” Thus, we began the adoption process. Now, there is nothing in the world that can replace our relationship as a father and son. Just like any other parents, there are challenges awaiting me as my son grows up, especially talking to him about his identity. Nevertheless, my wife and I are thankful for the honor to finally become parents!

- Adoptive parent

“Adoption is not second choice, it's the best choice because it's the choice you made. The greatest gift in life is belonging in a family.

- Adoptive parent

Eligibility to Adopt

Applicants may begin the process of adoption if they meet the following criteria, set by the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong.

An adoptive family should have:

- At least 25 years of age and a strong desire to be parents and to make a permanent commitment to the child
- Good physical and mental health to raise a child (confirmed by medical examination)
- Reasonably educated (preferably having completed secondary education)
- Stable employment, sufficient financial resource and accommodation
- Residency in Hong Kong for one year and plans to stay for at least one more year after adoption
- Strong family relationships (if married - a stable marriage for over 3 years)

Q: Can a single person apply to adopt a child?

A: Yes. In accordance with the Adoption Ordinance, a single person can apply for adoption as long as the applicant fulfills the adoption requirements of Hong Kong.

Q: I volunteer in a child care institution in Hong Kong. Can I choose to adopt a specific child I get to know?

A: As Hong Kong operates closed adoption, the system does not support prospective adoptive parents from choosing specific children to adopt. During the adoption process, prospective adoptive parents may indicate their preference of gender, age, family history, and medical needs, and this child preference will be considered through the matching process. However, the priority in the matching process is always to find a family most suitable for each child.

Talking to Your Spouse

Before making the decision to move forwards in the adoption process, it is important to discuss the many aspects of parenting and adoption together as a couple. Refer to page 20 for questions to help you begin this conversation.

Talking to Family and Friends

Support from family and friends is essential when beginning the adoption process! Although you may not feel ready to tell all of your friends and family, it is important to choose a few close friends who can support you and celebrate with you. As a part of the process, you will need to provide the names of three friends who will act as referees and will be interviewed as a part of your adoption process.

Our major concern during the adoption process was that our parents were not happy about our decision to adopt. However, when they met our daughter, they adored her. They couldn't stop hugging and kissing her! I was very happy by their reaction, because they accepted that we are a real family. They love their granddaughter very much.

- Adoptive parent

Child Care Experience

To prepare to have a child, find ways to interact with other children, so that you have an idea of what to expect when becoming a parent. This could include spending time with children of your friends and family, volunteering at a local playgroup, or community group.

Understanding Loss And Attachment

Although I was so full of love for my new son, and excited to welcome him home, my heart was also breaking for him. It was so painful and sad to see him leaving all those who have loved and cared for him so much.

- Adoptive parent

Loss

Every adoption starts with separation and loss. No matter how young a child is when they are adopted, or how much they are loved by their adoptive parents, an adopted child may experience feelings of loss in their life. Understanding your child's loss and grief, as well as your own loss and grief is an extremely important part of the journey of parenting an adopted child.

Loss occurs when someone or something that offered love and/or security is taken away, and grief is a process of withdrawing emotional attachment from that loss. Grief can be expressed in a number of different ways. Even when a child is adopted by a safe, loving, and permanent family, they may still experience feelings of grief and loss throughout their childhood, and as an adult.

Children can experience grief because of the loss of many things, including:

- Places and things: rooms, beds, toys
- People: familiar caregivers, family members, or children they used to live with
- Care differences: the way they were held, fed, bathed, and changed
- Language, culture, and food
- Hopes, dreams, and future plans
- Known family history, medical information, identity

Each individual loss contributes to a loss of a sense of safety, predictability, or justice in the child's world. Each child grieves in their own unique way. Although some children may seem unaffected, they may still feel loss deeply at different times throughout their lives.

Attachment

I count my blessings every day to be part of my adoption journey with my children. The thread of loss and pain is intertwined with gifts and joy, and together they create a tapestry of unconditional love which is the best definition of what family means.

- Adoptive parent

One of the most important ways to help a child work through feelings of separation and loss is to focus on building attachment. Attachment is an emotional bond that forms between the child and caregiver. Attachment is built when an adult responds to the child's emotional and physical needs over time. This sets the stage for all future trusting relationships. Safe and healthy attachment is especially important for children who have experienced loss.

Almost all of a child's brain growth occurs in the first three years of life, and interaction with adults has profound influence on brain development, affecting emotions, language, and abstract thought. Infants naturally form strong attachments to their primary caregivers, but if a child's caregivers are unresponsive or threatening, the attachment process is disrupted and a child may find it difficult to form healthy relationships later in life.

When a child's needs are recognized and responded to and they are able to trust, a healthy, secure attachment starts to form. A child who has the opportunity to become securely attached to one or more people can go on to develop more healthy and secure attachments with others. As they get older, they can recognize their own needs and the needs of others, can deal with emotions, accept comfort, and can accept boundaries.

The Mother's Choice **Pre-Adoption Training** will cover this critical topic in more detail, and will include information and advice on bonding and attachment, loss and grief, and how to incorporate your child's culture and past into your family. It is also recommended that you do your own reading from books, websites, and talk with other adoptive families. See page 17 to find more adoption support and resources.



Birth Parents

For a birth parent, choosing adoption for their child often requires great courage. A birth parent will likely feel the loss of their child for the rest of their life. It is important that birth parents are spoken of with respect, especially when talking about them in front of children who have been adopted.

I remember so vividly the first time I saw you on the ultrasound. It was so incredible that you were turning around. When finally you were born, I was so happy that I could see and hold you, but I knew that we would soon be separated forever. Though you are my own flesh and blood, I couldn't raise you myself. I have chosen adoption for you and I have great hope that you will be placed in a loving family. I love you and will remember you forever.

- A birth mother, in a letter written to her son

Q: Can an adopted child find his/her birth family?

A: Root tracing is an adopted person's decision to find out more about their history or birth family. It is natural for adopted persons to be curious about the identity of their birth parents, siblings, or other family members. The Adoption Unit of the Social Welfare Department provides a root tracing service for adopted persons, who can approach the Adoption Unit with parental permission before the age of 18, or independently when over 18 years old. Contact may include exchange of photographs and letters, or face-to-face contact dependent on both parties involved. There is no guarantee that an adopted persons will be able to connect with their birth family.

Q: Can the birth parents of my child take the child back?

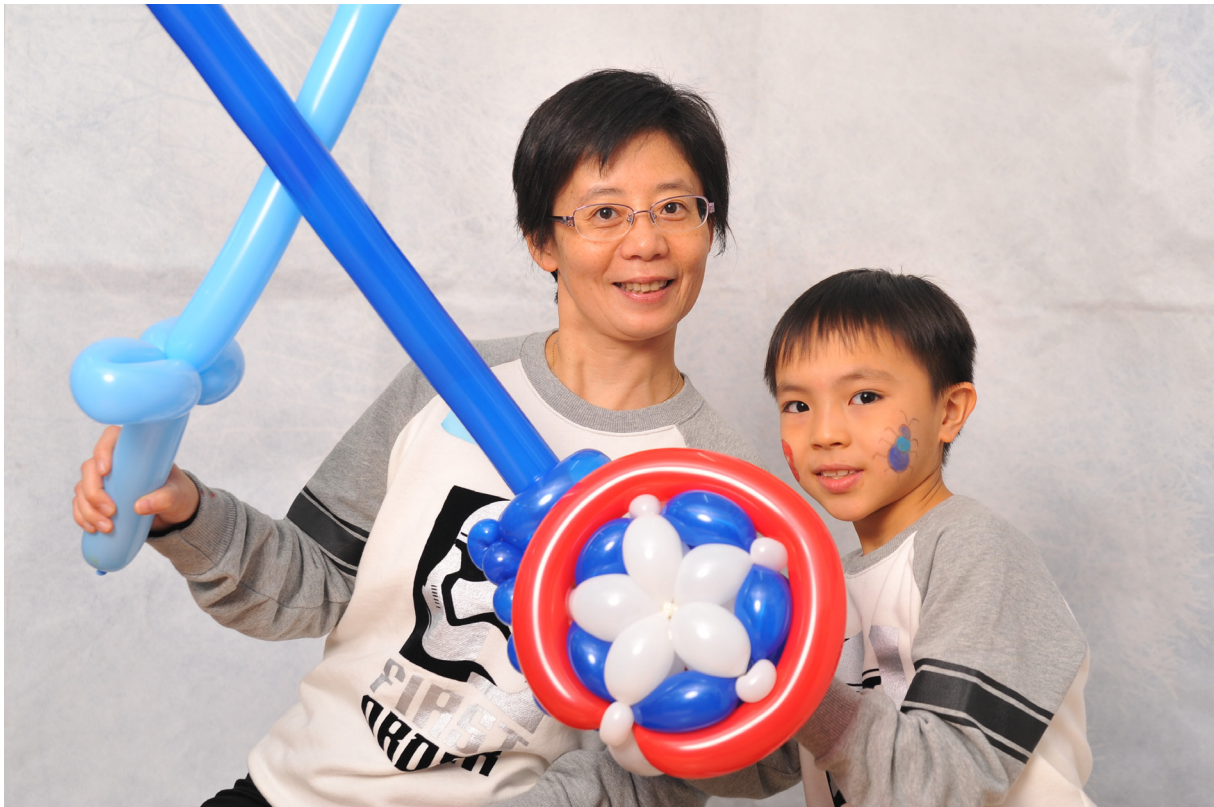
A: After the adoption is finalized by the court, birth parents are not able to apply to have permanent custody of the child. Before the adoption is finalized, they may apply to regain permanent custody through the Social Welfare Department or the court, who will consider very carefully to make a decision in the best interests of the child.

When my daughter was six, she asked for a photo of her birthmother. We were fortunate enough to receive one, and when she saw it for the first time, my little girl said to me, "This fills a hole in my heart, now I know who I look like, and why I was adopted." This was such a gift for my daughter to receive.

-Adoptive parent

Q: Should I be worried if my child wants to find their birth family?

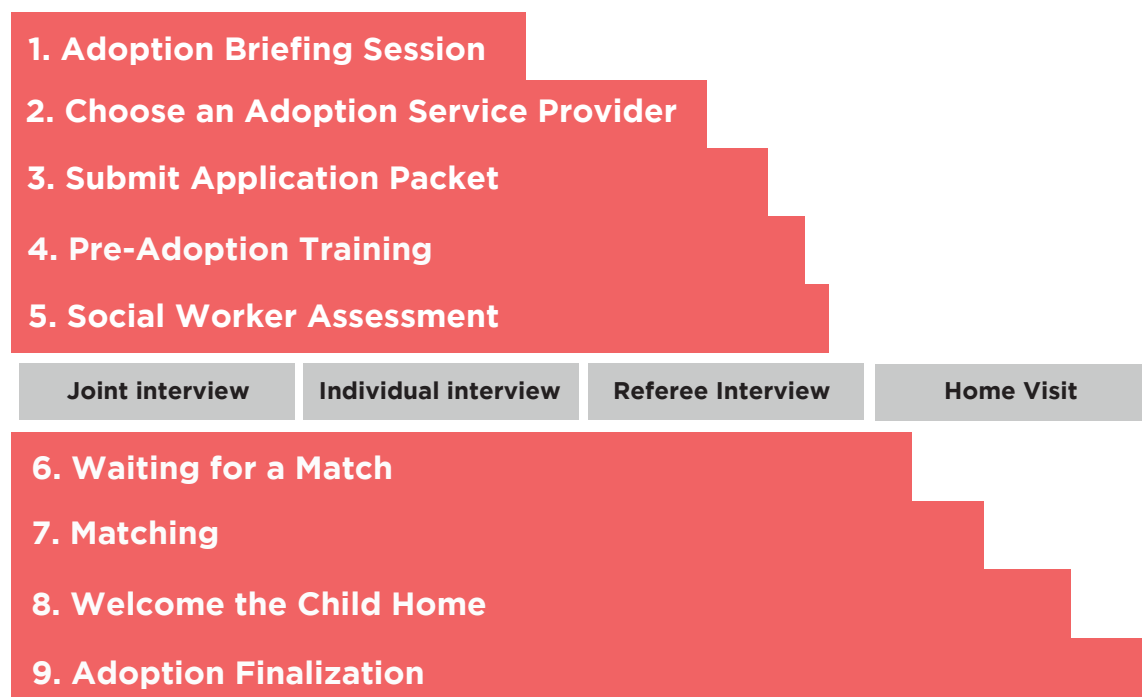
A: It is natural for an adopted person to show curiosity about their history, and the identity of their birth family. Seeking information does not necessarily mean that they want to reunite with their birth family, but they may be expressing a sense of curiosity or loss, or looking to find answers to their questions. Understanding their identity is important for an adopted person, and the support of adoptive parents is essential



The Adoption Process

The Social Welfare Department of the Hong Kong Government is the Central Authority that oversees adoption in Hong Kong. The adoption process is designed to ensure that every child who is waiting for a family is placed with a safe, loving, and permanent family.

Assessment Timeline



1. Adoption Briefing Session

Attend the mandatory briefing session organized by the Adoption Unit of the Social Welfare Department. This will give you more information about adopting a child in Hong Kong. You will be given an Adoption Questionnaire to fill out and send to the Adoption Services Provider of your choice.

Social Welfare Department Adoption Unit
Phone: 3595 1935

Website: http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_family/sub_listofserv/id_adoptionse/

2. Choose an Adoption Services Provider

A prospective adoptive family may choose to work directly with the Adoption Unit of the Social Welfare Department, or with one of the three other non-governmental providers, including Mother's Choice, Po Leung Kuk, and International Social Services. You should submit your Adoption Questionnaire to your chosen Adoption Services Provider. You are only permitted to submit one completed questionnaire to one Adoption Services Provider at a time. All applicants, no matter which Adoption Services Provider you choose will have equal opportunities to be matched with a child as there is one centralized pool of applicants, and one centralized pool of children.

If you are interested in choosing Mother's Choice as your Adoption Services Provider, please contact us by email adoption@motherschoice.org or phone on **2313 5620**. Details of the other Adoption Services Providers may be found on their respective websites.

Prospective adoptive families who choose to work with Mother's Choice will receive personal support at each step of the adoption process. After submitting your questionnaire to Mother's Choice, you will be invited to attend a group engagement session to learn more about the services we provide. After the engagement session, you will be asked to complete a reflection form, which will prepare you for your first meeting with your Mother's Choice social worker, who will help to prepare you for the process.

Q: What is the difference between choosing between the Social Welfare Department and the three Adoption Services Providers?

A: Services provided by different agencies vary. Mother's Choice provides support for families at different stages of their adoption journey through extensive pre- and post-adoption training, activities to connect families, and talks and workshops held on adoption-related topics.

3. Submit Application Packet

Submit a completed application packet (sent to you after your first meeting), together with supplementary documents to demonstrate your marital status, financial standing, education and employment records, and a recent health check.

4. Pre-Adoption Training

Applicants with Mother's Choice are expected to attend two mandatory pre-adoption training sessions. These sessions will provide valuable information, advice, and tools to prepare you for the journey of parenting an adopted child.

The first workshop will cover topics such as grief and loss, bonding and attachment, core issues of adoption, and how to incorporate your child's culture and past into your family. The second workshop will focus on how to talk to your child about adoption, responding to questions from other people, and root tracing. These workshops should build on your own independent research about adoption. For more information about the contents of these topics, please refer to page 17.

5. Social Worker Assessment

The purpose of the Social Worker Assessment Process is to assess and strengthen a family's capacity to parent a child who has unique needs with regards to adoption. This may feel invasive, but it is essential that every aspect of family life be covered in order to thoroughly assess that a family can provide a safe, loving, and permanent family for a child. Your dedicated social worker will lead the process, which will include:

- **Interview with Referees** - Your social worker will meet with your referees during the assessment. When choosing your referees, choose friends who are close to both of you, who are supportive of your adoption process, and understand your family dynamics. Talking to your referees about the adoption process will also help them to understand your motivation to adopt, how you are looking forward to becoming a parent, and how they can best support you.
- **Home Visit** - One of your interviews will take place in your home for your social worker to assess whether your home environment is suitable to raise a child in.
- **Child Preference Form** - This is a form with over 100 characteristics of a waiting child, and this is designed for you to give your preference on age, gender, family background, and health of the child based on your family's capacity. For each condition, you may choose Yes, No, or Maybe. The matching of a child to a family will partially be based on the openness of a family to accept a child, based on information given in the Child Preference Form.

Mother's Choice will compile all of this information to complete your Home Study report, in order to assess your application, and will identify any areas that need clarification, and/or any potential reasons that may prevent your application from being approved.

6. Waiting for a Match

Following approval of the application, applicants will be placed in the "pool" for matching. We recommend that you speak to your social worker and decide together how long you are willing to wait for a match. This is an important decision that should be made before starting the adoption process.

Q: How long will I wait for a match?

A: The waiting period can be emotionally difficult as there is no guarantee that families will be matched with a child. There is no waiting list for families, and the wait time varies depending on your preferences, the number and characteristics of children waiting, and the other approved families waiting at the time of the matching. Matching is always based on the best interests of the child, and is not dependent on how long a family has been waiting to be matched.

7. Matching

The Adoption Unit of the Social Welfare Department will conduct the matching, with the support of the three Adoption Services Providers, who meet once every three weeks to match children waiting for families to prospective adoptive parents. A match is based on a variety of factors, first looking at the child's needs and background, then reviewing the parents' openness to meet those needs (expressed in the Child Preference Form), previous child care experiences, and the child care plan they have made and shared with their social worker.

When I heard the news that we had a match, I was so excited. When I called my wife to tell her the news, she didn't understand what I was saying because I was so emotional. We couldn't wait to meet her!

- Adoptive parent

When a child is matched to your family, your social worker will propose a meeting to share the profile of the child with you. They will introduce the child's age, gender, medical history, family background, and any other characteristics of the child. You have some time to decide whether to accept the match, but you will not be able to meet the child or receive photographs until you have accepted the match.

- **Seeking medical advice** - While considering a match, if you are unsure about the child's medical report, you are permitted to bring the report to a doctor to ask for a second opinion. With the approval of the Social Welfare Department, a doctor or other specialist may also be permitted to examine the child in person, and can share their clinical opinion with you.
- **Declining a match** - If you are unable to accept a match, you will need to explain the reasons behind your decision to your social worker. The child will be placed back into the adoption pool to wait for another family, and you will be placed back into the adoption pool to wait to be matched with another child.
- **Accepting the match** - After accepting the match, you will be invited by your social worker, and an Adoption Unit social worker to meet the child at the place where they currently live, and start the process of welcoming the child into your home.

8. Welcome the Child Home

Over a period of around two weeks, you will be invited to visit the child regularly so that you can get to know one another, start building attachment, and prepare for the child to come to your home. Once your child is home, your social worker will continue to provide support to you and your family through home visits and phone contact until the adoption is finalized.

9. Adoption Finalization

After a placement period of at least six months, the Court will examine each application to ensure that the adoption is in the best welfare interests of the child before an Adoption Order is granted. This marks the permanent legal transfer of parental rights.

This is the end of the formal adoption process, but just the beginning of your lifelong journey as a family! Mother's Choice is here to support you every step of the way.

Fees

Subject to revision, applicants are required to pay the following fees as of January 2025:

- Mother's Choice suitability assessment service fee (HK\$3,000)*
- Social Welfare Department guardian ad litem fee (HK\$4,400)
- Hong Kong Police Force criminal record check fee (HK\$283)

* The Mother's Choice suitability assessment service fee contributes to the cost of your application, assessment, interviews with a social worker, review of your application, pre-service trainings, and ongoing support.

Adoption Support And Resources

Every family's adoption journey is unique, it brings much joy and at the same time is more complex than people realize. A child that has gone through the trauma of losing one family and gaining another through adoption may respond to and process love and discipline in unexpected and baffling ways. Some of the child's needs may be so different from our expectations formed from our own experience of being part of a family that they will require skills and responses that we don't have and will need to actively learn. The best that we can do for our family and our children is to focus on continually improving our parenting skills so that we are able to respond and guide them with intention, understanding, love and patience.

- Louise Garnaut, Chair, Adoptive Families of Hong Kong.

Mother's Choice

Mother's Choice supports families at each stage of their adoption journey. This includes training before, during, and after the adoption process, and also includes activities to connect families through talks and workshops held on topics related to parenting and adoption.

Adoptive Families of Hong Kong

Adoptive Families of Hong Kong (AFHK) is a non-profit volunteer-run charitable organisation made up of people connected by the common experience of adoption. AFHK organizes educational events, including professional speaker evenings, film showings and discussions about adoption issues, infant and toddler play groups and social gatherings bringing adoptive families together, and support groups for parents, waiting families, and single parents. For more information, please visit www.afhk.org.hk or email contact@afhk.org.hk

Happy Parents Association (Cantonese speaking)

Established in 1993, Happy Parents Association (HPA) is also a non-profit, all volunteer, parent-run organization, which aims at promoting support among adoptive families, as well as the awareness and understanding of adoption in the society. HPA organizes education and recreational events for adoptive families. For more information, please contact hpa_2014@yahoo.com.hk.

Blogs and Resources

An Adoptive Mom's Diary (Chinese)

<http://pccw1221.blogspot.hk>

Connie is a local mother of three children, two of whom were adopted and biological siblings. She writes on her blog about her family's journey with infertility, adoption, and how to build a loving and strong family with both adopted and biological children.

Creating a Family (English)

Creatingafamily.org is a great resource for families who are considering adoption, and/or who are experiencing fertility issues. With articles, interviews, and a podcast, this website is full of supportive and comprehensive information.

Talking About Adoption

Positive Adoption Language

The way we talk and the words we choose say a lot about what we think and value. When we use positive adoption language, we encourage and respect everyone involved in adoption, from the birth parents, to the adoptive parents, and most importantly, the child.

Instead of...	Say...
Real parent	Birth parent/ biological parent/ parents
Own child	Birth child/ biological child
Orphan	Child waiting for a family
Orphanage	Child care home/ first home
Unwanted child/abandoned child	Unplanned child/ unexpected child
Give up/ abandon/ leave/ didn't want	Choose adoption for a child/ made an adoption plan
Keep a child	Parent a child

Ask questions in a way that helps to support and respect adoptive families!

Instead of...	Say...
Where are your child's real parents?	Congratulations on welcoming a new child into your family!
Why was your child given up by his birth parents?	You have a lovely family!
Does your child know he/she is adopted?	How can I support you as a parent?
Couldn't you have your own children?	I am interested to learn about your adoption journey. Would you mind sharing it with me?

Talking to Your Child

We believe adoption is a wonderful way to build a family and it should be celebrated! Speaking openly and honestly with your child will build trust, which is a vital component of a stable and long-term parent-child relationship. The Mother's Choice team will help you prepare to talk to your children about adoption, starting from an early age and giving the child age-appropriate information as they grow older.

Even though our baby is still young, we have already told her she is adopted. As she gets older, we will tell her all the facts slowly. I want her to grow up knowing that we both love her very much, and her birth mother also loves her.

- Adoptive parent

Talking to Family and Friends

It can be hard to talk to your family and friends about your adoption, particularly if they have misconceptions that families can only be built by blood. Some friends and family members will accept your adoption quickly, but others may need more time to understand the idea. Be patient with your family members, and offer to answer any questions that they may have.

Our daughter has actually strengthened the relationship between us and her grandparents. We used to meet once a month, but now because of her, we meet every week. We have also attended an adoptive parent support group where we learned how to talk to our daughter about adoption. We are so thankful for the support we have received from our families and friends.

- Adoptive parent

Q: After adoption, can I visit the home where my child used to live?

A: It is very beneficial for an adopted child to know more about their history and to meet some of the people that cared for them while they were a baby. We recommend that you have a number of conversations with your child about visiting this place, so that they feel ready and prepared for the visit. If you are interested in visiting the place where they lived, please ask your social worker or the Adoption Unit of the Social Welfare Department.

If your child lived in the Mother's Choice Child Care Home and you are interested in a visit, please contact Mother's Choice Adoption Services at adoption@motherschoice.org or **2313 5620**.



Am I Ready To Adopt A Child?

Building a family through adoption is a lifelong commitment. Before making the decision to move forwards in the adoption process, these are some important and useful questions to consider and talk through with your spouse (or with a friend, if single). Reviewing these questions with a qualified counselor can also be helpful.

Motivation to Adopt

- Why do I want to adopt a child?
- Is this the same reason as why my spouse wants to adopt?
- Are we ready to start our adoption journey together?

Educating Myself Before Adoption

- Am I willing to learn about childhood trauma, bonding and attachment, and the unique ways to parent an adopted child through books, online research, seminars, etc.?
- Am I willing to meet with families who have already adopted a child to learn about their experiences?
- Am I open to consider adopting an older child or a child with health needs?

The Adoption Process

- What fears or concerns do I have about the adoption process?
- Am I ready to accept the entire adoption process, including working with different people and systems, answering personal questions, the assessment process, and the unknown timeline?
- Do I accept that the adoption process prioritizes the best interests of the child, rather than the family?
- Do I accept the possibility that the wait will be long, and that there is no guarantee of a match?

Family and Friends

- Am I willing to talk to my family about our adoption journey?
- If there are other children in the family, are they ready for a sibling through adoption and their unique needs?
- Does my family support our decision to adopt?
- Who are my friends who will support me through this process?
- How do I feel about other people knowing that our child is adopted?

Past Disappointment - *for these questions, you may prefer to seek the support of a qualified counselor.*

- If we have experienced infertility or miscarriage, have we grieved and appropriately dealt with this loss?
- Has this experience affected our marriage and our other relationships?
- Do I see adoption as a last resort, or a second best option to build our family?

Parenting

- What does our current lifestyle look like? How do I see it changing with the addition of a child?
- How is my health? Am I physically and mentally ready to take care of a child?
- Have we planned who will be taking care of the child day-to-day?

My Child

- Can I fully accept a child who is not my biological child?
- Can I accept the unknowns involved in adoption, including the health and family background of my child?
- Can I embrace my child completely, committing to them forever?

Expectations of My Child

- Am I prepared that it will take time for my child to love, trust and feel safe with me, even if they are a baby?
- Do I have a 'dream child' in mind? Does that change if the child is adopted?
- What expectations do I have about my child, including their academic performance, moral, and other values? What if my child does not meet my expectations?

Talking to My Child

- Am I prepared to talk about adoption with my child, knowing that this is an important part of their identity?
- How will I reassure my child that they will always be a part of our family?
- Am I prepared to talk about my child's birth family with love and respect?
- How will I react if my child expresses an interest in meeting their birth family in the future?

The Adoptive Families of Hong Kong also have a helpful resource on their website entitled "Is Adoption For Me", with valuable information and answers to some pressing and important questions in adoption.

I'm Not Ready To Adopt. How Else Can I Support Mother's Choice?

If after researching more about adoption, you decide not to pursue this way to build your family, but you still want to support children without families in Hong Kong, there are a number of ways that you can get involved! At Mother's Choice, we believe it takes a village to raise a child, and everyone has a role to play.

Visit www.motherschoice.org to learn about the many ways that you can play a role in caring for children without families and pregnant youth in our city.

For more information about Project Bridge, please visit <http://www.motherschoice.org/en/what-we-do/for-families/foster-a-child/>. Please note that families who are in the adoption process are unable to foster a child at the same time as they are waiting for a match.

Contact Us

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