

Journeys of the Heart Domestic Adoption Program

Update: It is a great time to join our Domestic Program

Although families from all states are needed,
**Oregon and Washington residents are very
sought after by expectant parents.**

JOH staff is working with **many expectant parents
and need more adoptive parents** to show them at
this time.



2010 Statistics are in!

Oregon Families

***100% of families had a child home within six months of being home study ready**

***80% of families had a child home within one month of being home study ready**

All Journeys Domestic Families

***80% of families had a child home within six months of being home study ready**

***95% of families had a child home within one year of being home study ready**

Quick Facts:

Age requirements: Birthmothers often choose youthful, active families. All families are encouraged to contact Kimberly@journeysoftheheart.net for additional details.

Hague: No

Characteristics of Child: Newborn infants, on occasion children up to toddler age. The ethnicity of the children varies but can be Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, or Asian. Currently JOH is placing 75% Caucasian and 25% minority races.

Wait Time (Vary) : 70% of JOH families complete an adoption within 6 months of being home study ready. Approximately 85% of families complete an adoption within one year.

Eligibility: Usually, birthparents choose the adopting parents and often choose a couple who have 0-2 other children. However, families who don't meet this criteria also get chosen - call or email with JOH to discuss your situation. All families must embrace or be able to come to embrace open adoption - Call or email with JOH staff who will describe typical open adoption situations.

Overview:

The domestic adoption program has been placing infants and toddlers since 1993 and is a highly successful program. Over the years it has grown to a program that places approximately 38-40 infants a year. The program remains open to new adopting families all year.

This program is set up to provide for minimal financial risk to the adopting parents. Journeys pays for the birth mother's expenses during her pregnancy and if she decides not to place Journeys' absorbs those costs.

Almost all our adoptions are open ones with at least one-three visits a year. For that reason it is important that all the adopting families embrace open adoption. We suggest reading "Making Room In Our Hearts," by Micky Duxbury who takes the fear and mystery out of open adoption. We firmly believe after raising adopted children to adulthood that knowing the birth parents helps the child emotionally.

JOH staff strives to develop a close, trusting relationship with the expecting parents in the program and meet as many of their pregnancy related needs as is possible. The agency can assist with rent, food, maternity clothes, medical bills and any other pregnancy-related necessities. A drug and HIV screen is completed during the pregnancy if at all possible. Another screen for drugs is often completed on the baby at the hospital as part of hospital policy. Counseling to discuss options, the grief process, and other issues that may be pertinent to the birth parent's specific situation is available to all and is encouraged before and after the birth.

Laws:

Oregon Adoption Law- Oregon adoption laws are among the most progressive in the United States and are strongly protective of the adoptive parents. It is not necessary to have the birth father's signature to complete the adoption if he is not married to the birth mother nor has supported her throughout the pregnancy. Oregon birth mothers usually sign legal documents about 24 hours after the birth or close to discharge from the hospital. Once the adopting family has custody of the baby and the birth mother has signed the legal documents the adoption is irrevocable.

However, if the birth mother changes her mind after the adoption has taken place and takes court action, the Oregon courts may explore the legality of the adoption for up to one year after finalization. The birth mother has to prove fraud or duress during the adoption process in order to prevail. The birth father may also take court action up to one year finalization, under the same conditions. If the birth mother resides in Oregon the adopting parent's, even those from other states, must finalize in Oregon because of the protective nature of these laws.

Washington Adoption Law- Birth parents are able to sign legal paperwork prior to the birth of the child and their rights are terminated 48 hours after the birth of the child. The birth father must be notified of the adoption plans and he has 30 days to come forward to take steps to prevent the adoption.

Illinois Adoption Law- The birth mother cannot sign legal documents until 72 hours after the birth. During that time the baby can be placed with a foster family or with the adopting parents. The birth father must be notified and he has 30 days to come forward and take steps to prevent the adoption.

Interstate Compact- Interstate Compact, which is a review of the adoption documents and jurisdiction between the sending state and the home state of the adopting parents, usually takes 5-10 working days to complete after the signing of the legal documents.

Additional Information: JOH staff gathers information about the medical and mental health history of the expecting mother's family. The accuracy of this information will vary depending upon the expecting mother's knowledge of her family. There may be no information available about the father.

Families will need to send JOH their approved home study or have one completed by JOH-Oregon, JOH-Illinois, and JOH-Washington if the family resides in these states. Families also need to complete a portfolio that will be shown to expecting mothers considering families. JOH has good instructions for putting together a successful portfolio and will review the draft copy. Suggestions may be made and changes should be made. Fifteen copies of the portfolio (five for each office) are necessary because they are not always received back from expecting parents. Families may be asked to replenish the supply, as necessary. Expecting mothers almost always choose the adopting family and start a relationship with them during the pregnancy.

Photo listings and Family Letters are posted to the website where expecting parents can view and get to know the adopting parents better. This is a powerful family-building tool.

Open Adoption:

JOH believes that open adoption is the healthiest arrangement for the child. This belief comes from many sources including pleased children, families and birth parents who are actively involved in open adoptions and knowing the grief of many children who will never know their birth parents. It is encouraged with all expecting parents. Therefore, it is necessary that all adoptive parents who apply to the program feel comfortable with and are willing to be in an open adoption. JOH staff educates expecting parents that all adopting parents enrolled in the domestic program desire and are willing to be in a meaningful, lifelong relationship with them, all for the good of the child.

JOH staff is pleased to talk with adopting parent(s) about open adoption and we recommend reading "Making Room In Our Hearts," by Micky Duxbury for more information on this arrangement.

Open adoption helps the child in these ways:

- Know they are loved by their birth parent
- Reduce the feelings of loss, abandonment, rejection, shame
- Gives access to birth family information (family stories, medical information, cultural knowledge)
- Encourages connections that are lost in a traditional adoption (siblings, extended family)

Open adoption does include visits with the child and the birth parents and should not be viewed as something the adopting parents have to do in order to be in the program. Instead it should be seen as a positive arrangement put in place to benefit the child and one that the adopting parents look forward to being involved in.

Adoption agreements between birth parents and the adopting parents are legally binding in many states and must be adhered to by the adopting family.

It is anticipated that this program will place babies, toddlers and older children who may be Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian or full or part African-American. JOH is looking for families who can help the child achieve and maintain an ethnic identity if adopting across racial lines.

Adopting parents who enroll in the program will fill out paperwork allowing JOH staff to assess whether the program will meet their need. JOH is looking for adoptive parents who are willing to embrace open

adoptions. Being open to different races and some drug exposure is also an advantage. After an in-person or over-the-phone interview, the family will be notified about their status in the program. There are no guarantees that a family will be chosen by expecting parents, and no time frames can be predicted. For more information please call (503) 681-3075 Monday-Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM or email info@journeysoftheheart.net

A special service for families in the Domestic Program are the photo listings on all four of Journeys' websites where expectant parents can view and get to know the families better. We have found this to be a powerful family building tool.

Photo listings and Family Letters are posted to our multiple websites, where Birth Mothers from all the across the United States can view and get to know you better, any time night or day. A professionally administered marketing campaign assures that families appear to Birth Mothers via all the major search engines and social networking sites. We find this to be a power family-building tool. For more information please email info@journeysoftheheart.net

SCHEDULE OF FEES JOURNEYS OF THE HEART DOMESTIC PROGRAM

Illinois Residents

EXPENSE ITEM	AMOUNT	TO BE PAID
Application fee	\$300	With application or submit online
Adoption preparation class-must be completed before home study is approved by JOH	\$150 per person	With contract
Home Study	\$1,700	With contract
Home study review (non-Journeys of the Heart home study)	\$300	With contract
4 Post placement reports at \$500 each (If adoption is not finalized prior to 4 th report, add'l reports are required every 90 days.)	\$2,000 \$500 each	With contract Prior to social worker visit
Investigative report for finalization	\$200	With contract
Home Study updates-when required	\$400-\$800 each	Prior to social worker visit
Social Worker mileage and related travel expenses.	Actual costs. Travel time in excess of 2 hours round trip will be billed at \$10 per hour	Billed as home study and post placement reports are completed; due upon receipt
Program fee	\$6,000	With contract

Placement fee (for one child)	\$18,000	At time of match to expectant mother
Additional Placement fee (for siblings)	\$15,000	At time of match to expectant mother
Post placement report deposit-to be refunded when all reports are completed as required	\$250 per report	At time of match to expectant mother
Legal fees	\$1,500+ (varies by attorney)	To attorney after placement
Infant medical expenses	Average \$1,500 for healthy infants. To be paid by adoptive parent(s) and/or their insurance company.	Arrange payment with hospital

All fees are subject to change. Sibling groups require extra fees. Shaded areas describe services and fees provided by non-Journeys of the Heart agencies or individuals. These items are subject to change without notice.