

- To speak to an adoption counsellor, learn more about a specific type of adoption or agency/licensee, or to start the process of arranging an adoption, contact a private agency or licensee (for private adoptions) or a local Children's Aid Society (for public adoptions). By contacting them or booking an appointment, you are not committing to a decision.

### Listings of private adoption agencies and licensees

- Agencies: [www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/adoption/decided-to-adopt/privateagencies.aspx](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/adoption/decided-to-adopt/privateagencies.aspx)
- Licensees: [www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/adoption/decided-to-adopt/privatelicensees.aspx](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/adoption/decided-to-adopt/privatelicensees.aspx)

### Children's Aid Societies

- Toronto Children's Aid Society: [www.torontocas.ca](http://www.torontocas.ca)
- Native Child & Family Services: [www.nativechild.org](http://www.nativechild.org)
- Jewish Family & Child Services: [www.jfandcs.com](http://www.jfandcs.com)
- Catholic Children's Aid Society: [www.ccas.toronto.on.ca](http://www.ccas.toronto.on.ca)

### More info about adoption

- The Adoption Council of Ontario: [www.adoption.on.ca](http://www.adoption.on.ca)

### For youth ages 13-29

#### Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services

Offers drop-in and scheduled appointments  
Call 416-961-0113 or visit [www.ppt.on.ca](http://www.ppt.on.ca)

### For youth ages 13-19

#### Teen Health Source

Offers anonymous and confidential sexual health information for teens by teens.  
Text (647) 933-5399, call (416) 961-3200, email [teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca](mailto:teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca)  
Chat online and visit [www.teenhealthsource.com](http://www.teenhealthsource.com)

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## pregnancy options series

# adoption

**Planned Parenthood Toronto (PPT) is a pro-choice organization. When you are pregnant, we believe that you have the right to access factual, caring and non-judgmental information and services on all 3 of your options: abortion, adoption and parenting. If you need support with decision making, contact PPT to book an appointment.**

**Below is some information about adoption.**

### What is adoption?

- Adoption is a legal and social process where a child becomes a part of a family separate from that of their biological parent(s).
- In Ontario, any pregnant person can choose to release their child for adoption.
- Anyone over 18 living in Ontario can apply to adopt, including single people, common law couples and same sex couples.

### Types of adoption

#### *Public Adoptions*

In Ontario, public adoptions are arranged through Children's Aid Societies, which are approved and regulated by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (see back page for a list). These services are free of charge for you and for adoptive parent(s).

#### *Private Adoptions*

These adoptions are done through a person or agency that is licensed to arrange adoptions. These services are free for you but adoptive parent(s) pay for them.

#### *Indigenous Customary Adoption*

For Indigenous children, a customary adoption involves a child living with and being cared for by people other than their biological parents according to their community's customs. This may or may not involve

a legally formalized adoption, as some people may not want to involve courts or Children's Aid Societies in their choices.

In Ontario, customary care can be formalized through a court process and agreement with a Children's Aid Society, but confers different rights from legally formalized adoption.

### **Adoption arrangements**

You also need to consider what kind of adoption arrangement you would like. The arrangement determines what kind of relationship, if any, you would have with the child after the adoption is finalized.

#### ***Confidential/Closed Adoption***

- You don't have direct contact with the adoptive family. Non-identifying information about you (such as medical history) may be provided to the adoptive family through a third party (an agency or licensee).\*
- Reasons for choosing a closed adoption can include wanting privacy or closure. There is no responsibility to communicate with the adoptive parent(s) or be involved in the child's life.

#### ***Semi-open Adoption***

- You don't have direct contact with the adoptive family. Non-identifying information about you (such as medical history) is provided to the adoptive family and you can make non-identifying contact with the adoptive family and child via cards, letters and/or pictures through a third party (an agency or licensee).\*
- Reasons for choosing a semi-open adoption can include wanting to know about the child without having to communicate with adoptive parent(s) or be too involved in the child's life.

#### ***Open Adoption***

- You and the other biological parent can meet prospective parent(s) in advance if you want.
- You interact directly with the adoptive family and the child. The identities of the biological parent(s) and adoptive parent(s) are fully known to each other.
- Reasons for choosing an open adoption can include wanting to be involved in the child's life and allowing the child to connect to their racial/cultural background.

\* For all adoptions finalized in Ontario after September 1, 2008, adoptees can access birth information and adoption records (which include the names of birth parents) when they turn 18. Biological parents can access identifying adoption records when adoptees turn 19. Biological parents or adoptees can apply for no contact notices if they do not wish to be contacted, but their information will still be available.

### **Releasing a child for adoption**

When you have a baby you're responsible for registering the birth within 30 days. This gives the child a legal identity and enables them to get a birth certificate, passport and other documents.

You can sign a consent for adoption any time after the child is 8 days old, in front of a lawyer. After signing you have 21 days to change your mind. Between signing the consent and the 21 day limit, the child will be placed in temporary care.

#### ***If the other biological parent is not involved***

You may not be in contact with the other biological parent. You can talk about this with a counsellor and your licensed adoption professional to decide the best course of action to address this.

#### ***If you are under 18***

All decisions related to the child and the adoption are your responsibility and your choice, even if one or both biological parent(s) is under 18. The Office of the Children's Lawyer will also meet with biological parent(s) who are under 18 to ensure that they are making decisions without coercion.

#### ***Remember:***

- It is illegal in Ontario to receive payment for releasing a child for adoption.
- Giving your child to someone, even someone you know, without going through an adoption process, is classified as a criminal offense.\*\*
- Whether an adoption is private or public, birth parents have significant say in the choice of the family in adoptions in Ontario.

#### **For more support/next steps**

If you're considering adoption you may have lots of questions. It's important to have a place where you can ask these questions without fear or pressure. If you want more support or info, or want to start the process to arrange an adoption, check out these resources:

- PPT's Case Coordinator can help you understand your options and the different types of adoption, and help to find other resources that fit your needs.
- To see a counsellor for more in-depth decision making help or to discuss other supports, contact PPT or the Bay Centre for Birth Control (BCBC, 416-351-3700).

\*\* Indigenous customary adoption has been recognized by Canadian courts as a constitutionally protected right, but hasn't yet been legally recognized in Ontario.