



**AFFEC Adoption Agency:
Serving Oregon &
Washington Families;**

Matching Assistance Program Newsletter

April 2016

Join Our Free Matching Assistance Program!

If you are living in Oregon or Washington and are considering adoption, now is the time to contact A Family for Every Child's Adoption Agency! We are an all-inclusive, full-service agency whose goal is to reduce the barriers to adoption by providing excellent customer service, while keeping the process low-cost. We can set your family up with an informative orientation meeting, complete an adoption home study, oversee placement, provide post-placement services, and provide **support** during the entire adoption process.



If you are a home study-approved family seeking to adopt from foster care, sign up for our **FREE** Matching Assistance Program using MAP Express! With our new registration form, families can quickly and easily sign up for the Matching Assistance Program.

Our goal is to work alongside families nationwide, providing them with one-on-one communication, assurance, and support during the submission and waiting process. As a member of Matching Assistance you will enjoy many benefits, including:

- **Submit your home study** for thousands of nationwide waiting children on our site, with the guarantee that your home study is sent directly to a child's caseworker.
- **Caseworker contact information** post-submission for certain states, allowing you to follow up on your submissions
- **Recruitment services** that connect your family with a child's caseworker.
- **Suggested child matches** via email, with a link to submit your home study
- A private online **support group** to connect with other waiting MAP families
- Low fee **Additional Services Program** with an Adoption Specialist
- Access to **helpful resources** on a variety of adoption topics

[Contact us today](#) to find out how we can help grow your family through adoption!

[And more!](#)

**Create a Free MAP for
Adoption Professionals
Account!**

[Sign up](#) today to take full advantage of our free program!

The Adoption Process

If you are a family adoption worker or a child social worker, and have not created a MAP for Adoption

Adopting from foster care can be a long journey, but typically it is worth the wait in the end. Understanding the different steps in the adoption process can help your family be proactive during the entire process, which in turn can help expedite the process.

Professionals account, we encourage you to create a free account today!

Our **MAP for Adoption Workers** account allows you to quickly submit a family's home study, recommend children to a family, view a family's recent child inquiries, private message a child's social worker, and more.

Our **MAP for Social Workers** account allows you to quickly list children and update their recruitment status, search for home study-approved families, private message a family and/or their adoption worker, request child recruitment services, and more.

[Create a free MAP for Adoption Professionals Account!](#)

Adoption Specialist Volunteers & Interns Needed!

We are seeking motivated volunteers and interns in Eugene, Oregon to assist with our Additional Services Program! As an Adoption Specialist you will work with a small caseload of families, sending them monthly child searches, following up on child submissions, assisting with home study submissions,

Orientation Meeting - This is the first step in the adoption process. A family will meet with an adoption agency or adoption worker to discuss the adoption process, the needs and characteristics of the children in foster care, the agency's policies, and the services their adoption worker/agency will provide for them. During this time, a family will often begin their pre-service training classes to provide further information on the reasons children come into care, their needs, and information on national and community resources.

Home Study - After the family and agency mutually agree to work with each other, the home study process will begin. The applicants and any resident over the age of 18 will have to clear state and federal background checks. Each applicant and the applicant's child(ren) will need to complete a physical through their family physician. The home study consists of information on the adoptive parent(s) and their family history; information on their child(ren), if applicable; training classes completed; parenting experiences; child preferences; physical and mental health information; financial information; and the adoption worker's recommendation for the type of children the family should be matched with. A list of references is also required. The home study provides a child's social worker with a complete view of the family: their strengths and needs, hobbies, interests, lifestyle, experiences with parenting and/or special needs, etc. It is used to determine if the family will be a good match for children on their caseload. During the home study process the family's adoption worker will make a couple of visits to the family's home to complete a home inspection, and interview each applicant and their children, if they have any. Adult children living outside of the home, and 3-5 references will be contacted as well. While the home study process may feel very intrusive, the goal is to provide a complete and accurate picture of who the family is so families should be honest with their adoption worker. This in turn will help a child's caseworker determine if a family is the best match for a child, ensuring a successful placement.

Matching - The next step in the adoption process is often the longest. During the matching phase, families should be actively searching and submitting for children. It is also important to attend as many adoption events, either online or in-person to connect with children's caseworkers. Families should also continue their education during this time, by attending online webinars, in-person trainings, reading books, etc. Continuing your training can help prepare you for the challenges you may face parenting a child with special needs, and will make you a stronger candidate for adoption. Building a support network during this time is also important. Joining support groups in your area or online can help normalize the process and keep you going on tough days. During this time a family's adoption worker should follow up on children they are most interested in, and connect with their caseworkers to learn more about the children to determine if the family would be a good match.

Home study-approved families should join our free Matching Assistance Program (MAP) and begin searching and submitting their home study for children they find on the A Family for Every Child photo listing site, and other state photo listing sites.

and providing support and guidance as needed.

Desired qualifications include:

- Customer service experience
- Computer skills with proficiency in Microsoft Word and the Internet
- The ability to work with minimal supervision while completing work in a timely manner
- Excellent verbal and written skills with the ability to communicate across diverse populations
- The ability to provide support, empathy and resources to adoptive families
- Three-month minimum commitment

Training will be provided.

Contact the [Matching Assistance Director](#) for more information.

Register for Online Matching Events!

A Family for Every Child offers two different online matching events:

Child Matching Events - Caseworkers present children on their caseload to home study-approved families. Families can ask the caseworkers questions,

Selection - The selection part of the adoption process can vary from state to state, but in general this is when a child's team decides which family is the best match. A child's team can consist of the child's recruiter, their caseworker, CASA or GAL, and/or a caseworker's supervisor. During the selection phase, the adoption worker will connect with a child's team to discuss the family as a potential match. After the meeting is over, the child's team will determine which family is the best match for the child and will notify the family. At this point, the family should receive full disclosure on a child, meaning they will review a child's files. These files can consist of birth parent history, child's history before coming into care, a child's history while in care, their diagnoses, behaviors, school history, current medical information, mental health history, etc. The family should have the opportunity to discuss the child further with their doctor, teachers, CASA, foster parents, etc. After reviewing the child's files the family will be able to decide if they want to move forward with the match.

In some interstate adoption cases, full disclosure will not be given to the family until after ICPC paperwork is approved by both states. However, a family should review full disclosure documents before agreeing to meet the child.

Transition - A child's caseworker, foster parent, and the adoptive family should draft a transition plan together. It is important to keep the child's needs in mind when creating a transition plan. The transition may consist of visits, phone calls, video chats, and in-person meetings to help the child become comfortable with the family. The transition timeline can vary depending on if the family is matched with an in state or out of state (interstate) child. Some children may need a longer transition period depending on their needs and adoption-readiness. Typically a child will move into a family's home permanently during a school break so the move is less disruptive for the child. If the child is from a different state, ICPC paperwork will be worked on during this time. ICPC paperwork must be approved by both the child and family's state before a child can move into a family's home.

While you wait for your child to move in, you should begin setting up services and activities for your child in your community. You should connect with adoption-competent therapists, pediatricians, and other organizations that will help meet your child's needs. You may find it helpful to create a "parenting plan" with your adoption worker, outlining the child's needs, how you will meet those needs, and what resources are available in the community to help you address your child's specific needs.

Post-Placement - Post-placement begins the day a child is placed in the family's home. From now until finalization, a family's adoption worker will visit the family and child to see how everyone is adjusting, and to provide support and resources as needed. It is important for a family to be honest about how things are going at home and what they need during these visits. There is no shame in asking for help! Your adoption worker is not looking for ways to find fault with your family and remove your child from your home; they are there to help your family to ensure the adoption will succeed. During this time a family will also file for adoption assistance.

Finalization - After the post-placement phase is over, you will get to

and submit their home study after the event is over.

Family Matching Events -

Families present themselves to listening caseworkers, who can ask the family questions. After the event is over, caseworkers can request the home studies of families for specific children on their caseload.

Learn more about our online matching events and register for upcoming events [here!](#)

New Adoption Resources

The following are some resources the Matching Assistance team found for foster and adoptive families:

- **Adoptive Families webinar** - [Imagining Your Future Child](#)
- **Child Mind Institute** - [Calm Voices, Calmer Kids](#)
- **Child Mind Institute** - [How to Give Kids Effective Instructions](#)
- **NCTSN** - [Children with Traumatic Separation](#)
- **NCTSN Webinar** - [Understanding and Addressing Medical Manifestation of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder](#) (free NCTSN account required)
- **Understood** - [At a Glance: 4 Ways Brain Structure and](#)

finalize the adoption and your child will legally join your family! Typically a child will be in a family's home for 6 months before the adoption can be finalized, although this can vary. You will want to hire an adoption-competent attorney to assist with finalization.

The Adoption Process Resources

Assoc. of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance -

[AAICAMA Home Page](#)

Adopt Us Kids - [Finding a Fit That Will Last a Lifetime](#)

Adopt Us Kids - [Legalizing an Adoption](#)

A Family for Every Child - [Picking the Right Agency](#)

A Family for Every Child - [Questions About Your Child](#)

A Family for Every Child - [The Basics of Adoption](#)

Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Adoption Assistance by State](#)

Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Helping Your Foster Child Transition Into Your Adopted Child](#)

Child Welfare Information Gateway - [Summary of State Background Check Laws](#)

Child Welfare Information Gateway - [The Home Study Process](#)

ICPC State Pages - [ICPC Information](#)

Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange - [The Waiting is the Hardest Part: Tips and Survival Strategies for the Matching Process](#) (free 45 minute video)

MN Adopt - [Becoming Your Own Advocate: Learning to Be Assertive](#)

NACAC - [State Adoption Subsidy Profiles](#)

MEET DAVID AND STACY!

As a co-culture couple (Dave American, Stacy South African) we naturally celebrate and appreciate diversity and various cultural backgrounds. We are prepared and willing to go the extra mile to instill and foster the child's heritage and growth. We have no kids of our



**David & Stacy;
Oregon**

- [Chemistry May Effect Processing Speed](#)
 - **Understood -**
[Checklist: Questions to Ask During Your Child's Next IEP Meeting](#)
 - **WI Adopt tip sheet -**
[Effective Management of Crisis Behavior](#)
-

own, so we relish in the opportunity of being first time parents and we understand the importance seeking opportunities to further learn/educate/inform ourselves along this learning path.

We love spending time at home with our cats and in the yard. We love cooking ethnic foods for friends and family. Dave is a great cook and Stacy enjoys baking. We love the outdoors, being close to nature, walking, biking, hiking, camping, and Stacy practices yoga. We have a strong and supportive family network and a diverse group of friends that we spend time with.

We have been interested in having children in our lives for about four years now and in the last nine months alone we have experienced the emotional ups and downs of the adoption process. We have confidence and ample fortitude for the road ahead. One idea of adding children in our lives is to create our own new center of gravity, one that can only add positively to our extended families. The timing for adoption is important: we are not getting any younger and attempts to get pregnant naturally on our own terms have thus far been unsuccessful. We feel it is time to give back, share our blessings, talents, and grow as only people who have children can grow, emotionally, and spiritually. We feel we have what it takes to parent and raise children and we're willing to focus our time, energy, love, and resources to make it happen. [Learn more about David and Stacy!](#)

MEET MARTY AND MELISSA!



**Marty & Melissa;
Ohio**

Hello, we are Marty, Melissa and Karsyn. We are interested in adopting children that are ages newborn to six years old. We are open to both boys and/or girls with any ethnic background. We will consider sibling groups up to 3 children. We are open to some minor medical issues. As a family we will make it a priority to help support our children if they have different ethnic backgrounds than

our own by exposing them to events or people that can help them and us gain the understanding and pride of their heritage. We also feel that we have the responsibility of being prepared to help our children know where they came from so we will support a relationship with biological family members as long as it is healthy and safe for our children.

We work full time but there is some flexibility in our schedules because we

are both tenured employees. Marty is a Senior Project Manager and Melissa is a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and we both work for Nationwide Children's Hospital. As a family we enjoy camping at our lake place where we have a permanent spot with a 5th wheel camper, participating in 5k walks to help raise money and awareness for different things we feel passionate about like heart disease and pet rescue, and we recognize the importance of making family traditions like making gingerbread houses at Christmas and celebrating birthdays with family and friends. We are fortunate to have a strong support system around us so we feel that we are prepared to tackle challenges that might come up. We have 2 Bengal cats and 1 chocolate Lab and 1 deaf Great Dane. All of our animals have been around all ages of children and they do very well.

We have built a network of family and friends around us that love and support who we are and they are ready to jump in to help as needed. We have strong beliefs and we turn to that for support as well. Our network is made up of different cultures and race so we feel like we would have the support if needed during any challenges that we might face. Also, we feel that it is important for our children to be exposed to different cultures and race so that they learn to love and accept people for who they are even if they are different than who they are. Our desire to have a family led us to become foster to adopt parents so that we could adopt children that needed a forever family. We are committed to loving and supporting our children thru the good and bad times forever. We understand that some struggles can be difficult but that is when the family stands together and works thru the hard times and celebrates the good times. [Learn more about Marty and Melissa!](#)



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A Family For Every Child , 1675 W 11th Avenue , Eugene , OR 97402