

Single Parent Adopters: Wonderful Families for Kids

Single parent adoption is on the rise. About 25% of the adoptions of children with special needs are now by single men and women (Child Welfare Information Gateway.)

Single Parents are a Viable Option

The latest research shows that children raised in single adoptive parent homes compare favorably with other adopted children. There is a healthy family involvement with friends and family as well as in activities of their age group. Research supports that single parent homes may be especially well-suited for many of the older children residing in foster care. The [Child Welfare League of America](#) concludes that,

“The significant role played by single women who adopt children from the child welfare system in providing permanency for a substantial portion of the children waiting to be adopted cannot be underestimated.”

Comparisons of two-parent and single-parent homes find that single mothers and fathers report fewer problems post-adoption and that single-parents are more likely to evaluate the adoption's impact as being very positive (Groze and Rosenthal, 1991.)

Certainly single parent adopters have the same types of pre- and post-adoption service needs as do all adoptive families. Yet, single adoptive parents have unique needs: taking time off from work, finances (cost of the adoption and long-term financial planning), social stigma of single parenting from friends, relatives and community, responding to questions the child will ask, “Why don't I have a Dad or Mom?”, dating and social life, eligibility (i.e., some countries continue to prohibit single-parent adoption), locating a single-parent friendly agency and country, guardianship, etc.

This blog provides resources to help single adopters explore the various facets of fulfilling their desire to become parents. The resources cover the before and after adoption issues.

Professionals will find these resources beneficial as they guide single-parents through the adoption process. These books, websites, blogs, conference presentations and articles will also help agencies broaden their perspective about the types of families very suitable for the children who wait. With [129,000 American children in need of permanency](#), no stone should be unturned in finding “forever” families.

Websites

[Single Mothers by Choice](#) provides information, resources and a unique support network of peers for those considering the possibility of being a single mother or who are already a single mother via adoption or reproductive technology. Single Mothers by Choice (SMC) was founded in 1981 by Jane Mattes and to date several thousand single women, predominantly in their thirties and forties, have joined this organization since that time. SMC members have met with one another all over the United States, and in Canada, Europe, and beyond. Members network with one another and share information and resources at local levels as well as through e-mail lists and a newsletter. The newsletter puts forth regular articles on adoption such as, *One or Two, Flying with Infants or Pre-Mobile Babies, Traveling with Toddlers, Ten Ways to Talk to Kids About Adoption, Culture and Race, Choosing Adoption, A Child is Yours: Getting Started Down the Road to Adoption, Support for Working Mothers, Financing Adoption and Answering the “Daddy” Question*. This website is also home to the DVD, [And Baby Makes Two](#), a candid

and touching documentary about a group of single women in New York City who are actively pursuing motherhood—without the participation of husbands, lovers or boyfriends.

[National Adoption Center](#) has helped over 21, 000 children and parents come together as families. The site provides invaluable information for those seeking to adopt—couples, single parents, gay and lesbian parents and parents with disabilities. The National Adoption Center offers a Social Networking Community of forums—yes, there is a [social network forum just for single moms and dads](#)! Post-adoption, you may want to introduce your children to [Adoption Clubhouse](#), a one-of-a-kind website where adopted kids can learn about and express their thoughts about adoption.

[ComeUnity](#) and [Adoption.com](#), both websites packed with all types of information about domestic and international adoption, offer forums specific to single mothers and fathers. Talking online with other single parents is a great way to get answers to questions about traveling as a single parent, how to handle questions from the child and others, vent frustrations, locate an agency, find post-adoption services, etc. If you prefer an in-person support group, visit the [North American Council on Adoptable Children's Support Group Database](#). With over 900 support groups registered, any adoptive parent is sure to find other parents with whom to share.

Blogs

[Ramblings of A single Dad](#) is a blog by Don, a single adoptive parent to a teenage son. Don writes about parenting and life in general. Or, single fathers may opt to visit, [Day in the Life of a Single Father](#), written by a single working dad.

Conference Presentations

Each year adoptive parents and professionals gather for the North American Council on Adoptable Children's (NACAC) annual conference. Overall, the conference features almost 100 workshops in the areas of: therapeutic techniques, parenting, post-adoption services, parenting children with challenges, preparing and supporting families, international adoption, race, culture and diversity, agency issues, recruiting permanent families, permanency options, policy and legal issues, and kinship and birth family connections.

If you can't attend, don't worry, you can purchase CD recordings of the current and past NACAC conference workshops. Some titles of interest to single parents or professionals seeking information in the area of single adoptive parents include, [Adoption: Where Do I Start?: As a Single](#), [Parenting: As a Single](#), [Single Parent Adoption: An Underused Adoption Resource](#).

Books

[Adopting on Your Own: The Complete Guide to Adopting as a Single Parent](#) by Lee Varon is certainly the best-seller in the single adoptive parent category. This book give singles who are considering adoption the information they need in decision-making and maneuvering through the adoption maze. The content covers how to decide if adoption is the path to building a family, the stages of arranging and financing an adoption, the pros and cons of international vs. domestic adoption as well as choosing an agency and preparing for the [homestudy](#). Additionally, Varon tackles the latest developments in transracial adoption policy, the legal rights of gay and lesbians to adopt and the evolving attitudes of agencies toward single-parent adopters. With all of this information it is easy to see why this is a must-read!

If you prefer personal stories written by those who have “been there”, then [The Pumpkin Patch: A Single Woman’s International Adoption Journey](#), [Chicken Soup for the Adopted Soul: Stories Celebrating Forever Families](#) or [Chicken Soup for the Single Parent’s Soul: Stories of Hope, Healing and Humor](#) may be to your liking.