

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

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There are many people that want to have children, but cannot. There are other people who simply want to expand their family. International adoption is one great way that families can bring a child into their home. Children from abroad are oftentimes much less fortunate than those born in the United States, so adopting internationally is not only a way for a family to grow, it is also a way to help those children abroad that are less fortunate. International adoption is an opportunity for families and children to come together; by examining the history, costs, and benefits of international adoption, families will be able to better decide whether they want to adopt internationally or not.

THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

International adoption has a short, but informative history. In the short 150 years since the United States dreamed up the idea of adoption, it only went global fifty years ago (*History of International Adoption*). Many countries today still use the method of exchanging children by using the traditional idea of the foster care system, but with this method, the children are still legally tied to their birth families (*History of International Adoption*). International adoption may be a fairly new concept to the world, but it is constantly growing.

Over the years, more and more countries have opened the door to connecting children with families in the United States. After World War II and during the early stages of the Cold War, it became more apparent that there were extensive amounts of orphaned children abroad (*Adoption History*). The time after 1945 ignited the formation of religious groups that supported and assisted with international adoption for families across the United States; the League for Orphan Victims in Europe (LOVE) was formed during this time as well, and it included many of those people of religious faith (*Adoption History*). After the start of international adoption in the 1900s, people began to learn about the costs and the benefits of adopting children from around the world.



*International Adoption Agency-Holt
International-Adoption Process Overview.
2017.*

THE COSTS OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

When choosing international adoption, it is important to look at the costs. These can include monetary costs, emotional costs, and even the cost of time. International adoption can cost anywhere from \$25,000 to \$50,000 when the different fees and payments are considered (Inc. American Adoptions). Potential parents do have to consider the cost of visas and passports, as well as travel expenses to and from the child's home country (Inc. American Adoptions).

Although adopting internationally can be quite expensive for many families, there are several agencies who include loan and grant opportunities for families that need assistance with paying for the adoption itself. People can take out home equity loans, loans on life insurance, and some religious organizations will sometimes help families when adopting (Inc. American Adoptions). Other than these, though, the National Adoption Foundation can sometimes give private grants or help families find special loan programs (Inc. American Adoptions).

There are also different emotional costs that come with adoption, especially international adoptions. It is not uncommon to be scared when going through the adoption process. The process can be overwhelming and stressful. There are a lot of applications to fill out, and a lot of ideas that potential parents have to consider when adopting. Not only do they have to think about the needs and emotions of the people already in their household, but they also need to think about how to accommodate the new child's feelings and emotions after they are brought to a new home.

Sometimes, the times it takes to wait for the adoption process can be unnerving. After families finally finish filling out the paperwork to get started with the adoption process, they then have to wait for approval. Oftentimes, it can

take anywhere from a year to several years to complete the entire adoption process before a child will actually be placed with an adoptive family. Although some of these costs may seem like a large burden, adoptive families also need to think of the many benefits adopting a child from a foreign country can have.

THE BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

Adopting internationally has an abundance of benefits. Not only are adoptive families bringing a child into their home, they are removing those children from places that are not necessarily safe or healthy places to be. Adoptive families give these children hope, love, and, most importantly, a home. Many families, like the family shown in the photo below, feel that their family is complete when they got to adopt their other children from abroad. The mom in this large family writes “Our adoption coordinator called with news that we had not at all expected. She let us know that Marley and Nico’s older sister was also being placed up for adoption” (“A Family Story”); she talks about how after doing a lot of thinking, she and her family decided that this is what they were meant to do. They believe they are supposed to bring this girl into their home with her siblings to complete their family.

Another benefit of international adoption is the culture that can be brought to the United States with the child, as well as the culture and tradition that the child can learn from their new home. If an adopted child is old enough to remember different traditions they practiced in their home country, they could share those ideas with their new adoptive family to help create a stronger bond between them. For example, in the story from *America World Adoption News*, the mom discusses how she had to learn how to take care of “a black girl’s hair” (“A Family Story”) because it is so different from her biological children’s hair. She describes that after she learned how, she loves doing her adopted daughter’s hair more than doing even her own. Had this family not adopted, they would not have learned how to complete this task, which also contributes to the many new things people can learn when adopting. These different ideals and values can be shared between the children and their new families.



America World Adoption News. 2017.

For many people, the act of adopting stems from the inability to have a child naturally. In this case, families benefit from adopting internationally because they get to experience parenthood, and they finally get to feel like a whole family when they get to bring their child home. There are also parents and families who want to adopt solely to help a child in need, which is also a truly remarkable thing. Families open their homes just to help children from countries that are less fortunate than others. Families who adopt children from countries around the world are a blessing to the children they adopt; they are giving the children an opportunity to live a better life in the United States.

CONCLUSION

Building a family through international adoption may not be the route for everyone. However, adopting children from other countries gives families the opportunity to change a child’s life for the better. There are so many children sitting in orphanages waiting for what could be their future family. By choosing international adoption, families can help these children abroad. The history of international adoption is also a key part to how the different agencies run and operate today. By also examining the different aspects of international adoption, it is easily shown that the benefits greatly outweigh the costs.

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