

# A BIRTH MOTHER A VERY SPECIAL PERSON

Every birth mother is a special individual who chooses to give life to her child and then give life to a new family through adoption. She gives her most precious life (her baby) to a loving couple who will forever rejoice in the miracle of the child and who will be forever grateful to her for entrusting them with her child. Every birth mother and every child is a precious gift.

So, who is a birth mother? She is any woman who is faced with an unplanned pregnancy and who may not be ready or able to parent the child. She may be a teenager, young adult or mature woman. She may be single or involved in a committed relationship. She may be economically secure or financially unstable. She may be from any ethnic heritage. She may be a victim of assault or abuse. She may be well educated or a student of life.

She may be supported by loving family or experience difficult or abusive relationships. She may be healthy or experience physical health, mental health and/or addiction concerns. Every birth mother is unique, but they all have common traits. Every birth mother makes a loving and selfless choice to give life to her child. Every birth mother loves their baby. Each birth mother has the ability to look beyond themselves and consider the best interests of their child above their own needs. Every birth mother has the forethought to plan for their child in the making of an adoption plan with adoptive parents. Birth mothers are willing to experience the emotional loss of their child in exchange for the peaceful feeling of knowing their birth child is treasured in their adoptive home. Many birth mothers also stand up against family members, friends, and society pressures that question or negatively judge their decision to make an adoption plan for their child. Every birth mother is loving, courageous, sacrificial, thoughtful, proactive, selfless, ...

Each birth mother faces choices. The first choice a birth mother makes is to give life to her child. She then must decide what is in the best interests of her child and herself – should she parent the child or make an adoption plan for the child. There will be many factors that influence her decision about parenting. For example, does she have the financial resources needed to raise a child, does she have the support of the birth father or other family members in parenting, can she provide a safe environment for the child (e.g. free from abuse and drugs), is she physically and mentally healthy, and is she mature enough to parent a child.

If the birth mother decides that adoption is the right choice for her child and herself, she will have many options to consider. She may wish to have a closed (confidential) adoption in which she and the adoptive family do not know each other and have no contact before or after the adoption. She may want to have a semi-open adoption where she chooses the adoptive family for her child. She then may decide to get to know the family prior to the adoption. After the adoption, she would then receive pictures and updates regarding the child throughout the child's life. The birth mother may also wish to have an open adoption with the adoptive family. She would pick the family for her child, spend time getting to know the family before the adoption and then have an on-going relationship with the child and adoptive family after the adoption. The birth mother and adoptive family would periodically exchange pictures and letters and have face-to-face visitations. There are many options within adoption. The birth mother designs her child's adoption and makes choices that are in the best interests of her child and herself.

Every birth mother is an exceptional woman who makes life-changing decisions. It is with tremendous respect and admiration that we say “thank you” to every birth mother who makes the decision to give their child life and their child a family through adoption.

Written by, Anita F. Stevens, Executive Director of Family Connections, Inc., a New York State authorized adoption agency. For over twenty-two years, Anita has had the honor of supporting birth mothers as they make adoption plans for the children. Also written by, Renee Hettich, MA, LMSW, Adoption Social Worker. Renee parents three children whom she adopted. She honors her children's birth parents everyday as she rejoices in each of her children's lives.