



## Preparing for Parenthood

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Congratulations! You have finished the home study process and soon will be an actively waiting family! Now is the time to shift your focus from **PAPERWORK** to **PARENTING**. Consider yourself a Hopeful Adoptive Parent and begin to prepare for the arrival of your child. Here are some suggestions to help you while you wait for the newest member of your family.

### Networking

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Share the news you are planning to adopt as much as possible...and then continue to remind others now and again. You never know where your match will come from.

Utilize your placing agency's website to list your profile online if possible. For The Cradle's program, review the instructions on how to set up your online profile at: [https://cradle.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Online-Profile-Instructions\\_2022.pdf](https://cradle.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Online-Profile-Instructions_2022.pdf)

Some families ask about updating their profile and we recommend after one year has passed to change relevant information and give it a fresh look. Consider consulting a profile professional. Contact your Adoption Counselor for more information.

### Take Good Care

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Take time to do things that will not be as easy once your child comes home. Plan a vacation, have a spa day or spend time wandering around a museum! Prepare a list of fun things to do on days you feel anxious or down.

Attend a Cradle event to meet other families. The Cradle hosts a Holiday Party and Summer Picnic each year. More information is available on The Cradle's website.

Connect with other families you met through your pre-adoption training or through social media. Ask your counselor for a Mentor Family! Families who have been down this road are often happy to be a supportive ear and offer firsthand perspective.

Keep in touch with your Adoption Counselor. Let her know if you are heading out of town, especially if you may not have phone or email access.

If you find yourself struggling with the wait, seek outside counseling with a therapist who specializes in adoption. This will help you move forward in your adoption process in a healthy and positive way, which will ultimately benefit your child. Your Cradle counselor is happy to help you identify someone.

## Getting ready for baby

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Read, read, and read on all the topics that you will not have the time or energy to focus on once your child comes home. Being informed on topics like development, sleep and discipline will come in handy. Ask your counselor for some suggestions of books and subscribe to The Cradle's blog and/or e-newsletter here: <https://cradle.org/blog/>

Subscribe to *Adoptive Families Magazine* at <https://www.adoptivefamilies.com/join/>

Familiarize yourself with The Fussy Baby Network at <http://www.erikson.edu/fussybaby/> and infant night nurses in your area.

Interview and select your pediatrician. You will want someone who can be available and responsive when you are presented with a child referral.

Sign up for infant child care or parenting classes. There are numerous options available on a variety of topics--anything from basic care to different ways to wear your baby carrier-- explore topics that interest you. The more you learn now the more confident you will feel when your baby comes home.

Take online classes offered by StageWise Parenting (fka Adoption Learning Partners). You might want to re-visit some of the classes you took for your home study preparation and sign up for new classes.

Prepare your home for baby's arrival to your comfort level. If you feel comfortable, set up your nursery or maybe just paint the walls. If you would rather wait, perhaps purchase key items you will need when your baby first comes home (car seat, bottles, bassinet) and stash them away for when the time comes.

Create a baby registry. You have the option to keep your registry private for the time being, but this may help you feel organized about what you'll need and like when your little one arrives.

If you are approved to adopt transracially, continue to research transracial adoption and cultural resources in your community.

Once you have decided what classes you would like to take and what tasks you would like to accomplish; spread them out. Maybe pick one item to do a month.

## Stay connected to the adoption process!

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Waiting can be hard at times. We find those who stay connected are able to stay more positive during the wait. Take the suggestions above, keep an open dialogue with your Adoption Counselor and take good care of yourself!