

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Baby Adoptions vs. Older Child Adoptions

AN ADOPTION EDUCATION
PUBLICATION



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Which is Best Suited for You and Your Family?

There are many advantages and disadvantages to a baby adoption vs. an older child adoption. Here are just a few to consider as you make your decision.

Consider the following:

- Shorter Wait** - There are many older children in need of homes. This may mean a shorter wait for you, as well as knowing that you have helped a waiting child find her forever family. What a rewarding feeling!
- Discover Special Needs Sooner** - An older child adoption may mean that you have the opportunity to discover the child's special needs early. Possible fewer "surprises" when it comes to behaviors and/or disabilities than with infant or toddler adoptions, when it may take years for these needs to fully surface.

- ❑ **Life History** - In most older child adoptions the child will know and remember his birth parents and history. This is helpful in handling a child's past and [grief issues](#). This will also help the child to move on with his life.
- ❑ **Help with Life Books** - Many adopted children crave information regarding their birth parents. This information may be the only link back or connection to a child's birth family. An adoptive parent will need to make it a priority to form a [lifebook](#) for the child as soon as possible to help with this important connection. An infant or toddler may not have this knowledge to add into a lifebook. Even when abuse or neglect has occurred in a child's past, many children still love their birth parents. A simple picture of a birth parent or a memory book of happy times together may help in healing old wounds.
- ❑ **Done With Baby Stuff!** - With older children there is hopefully no potty training! Older children are also ready to be involved in family activities such as sports or camping. You can share more of your interests with older children.
- ❑ **Fewer expenses associated with daily child care** — With school age children there are fewer costs associated with daily child care, formula, diapers, etc.

However:

- ❑ **Forming Bonds** - With an older child adoption you will not get the chance, within the important, formative, first few months or year of life to form a valuable attachment or bond with the child.
- ❑ **Learning as You Go** - With older child adoptions you will not have the opportunity to "grow-up" with your child. My husband and I are very young to be the parents of the children we have now. We have found that we are still growing up ourselves while raising teen boys. If they were our birth children we would be 15 years older and perhaps a little wiser in our dealings with the teen years.
- ❑ **Teaching Opportunities** - With older child adoptions you will not have the opportunity to teach the children your values and morals at an early age. In fact, you may have to do a lot of "*re-teaching*" of values you don't agree with.
- ❑ **Educational Needs** - With an older child adoption you *may* be playing catch-up with the child's education, emotional, and spiritual development. It is always a lot of work and many times frustrating, but often times worth the battle.

Whether you choose a baby adoption or an older child adoption, both options are a wonderful way to add to your family, each with advantages and disadvantages.

From [Carrie Craft](#), Your Guide to [Adoption / Foster Care](#).