

a-DOP-tion (uh-dop-shuhn) - *noun*

*To take into one's family through legal means and raise as one's own child.**

To some, it's just a word they hear from time to time. But for some children in Hamilton County, adoption is a dream – one that you could turn into a reality.

Kids who have been part of the child welfare system can have very specialized needs. But there's one thing all of them need: a loving, permanent home. Learning more about the process is the first step to making one of the most important decisions of your life.

It may seem like an awesome responsibility – but adopting can also be extremely satisfying.

Are you ready?



*adoption. (n.d.). *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fourth Edition. Retrieved April 12, 2007, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/adoption>

Who needs you?

A lot of kids, that's who.

The Children's Services division of Hamilton County Job and Family Services cares for hundreds of children from a variety of economic, social, racial and ethnic backgrounds. Most have been abused or neglected.

While our primary goal is to stabilize families and keep children with their birth families, there are times and a variety of reasons when reunification is simply not possible. When Hamilton County Children's Services must take permanent custody of children, we strive to find the best home that will meet the child's needs.

Do I have to meet certain criteria to adopt?

There's no "perfect" adoptive parent. You don't have to be rich. You don't have to own a home. And you don't have to be married, either.



But there are some basic requirements to get started toward becoming an adoptive parent:

- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You must have sufficient income to meet basic needs.
- You must be in good physical, emotional and mental health.

You'll also have to pass a background check. All of that will be explained when you attend an Orientation session. You can find a listing of upcoming dates on our Web site at www.hcadopt.org.

How do I prepare to become an adoptive parent?

There aren't a lot of steps to becoming an adoptive parent. However, a few of them can take time to finish. Bear in mind that state laws and procedures govern the process.

Here's how it works:

1. **Look over our information at home, online.** Visit our web site at www.hcadopt.org where you will find a wealth of information about the process, available resources, and the children waiting to be adopted. You can complete the online interest form or you call (513) 632-6366. Either way, we'll get the packet to you.
2. **Attend an Orientation.** When you're ready, call (513) 632-6366 and register for an upcoming Orientation session. During the three-hour session, you'll get an overview of everything you can expect: you'll learn about the kids who need you, the support services available to you, and specific class information. You'll also begin the paperwork including authorization to conduct a background check.
3. **Complete Pre-Service Training.** Once you pass the background check, you will begin your 36 hours of pre-service training. Classes take place during the work week, usually Tuesdays and Thursdays, or on Saturdays. You will also complete some additional paperwork including your adoption application.



4. **Have a homestudy completed.** An adoption assessor will visit you at your home for interviews. At the same time, the assessor will conduct a safety review of your home.
5. **A Match is Made.** The time between finishing your homestudy and being matched with a child is perhaps the longest stretch of the process – but it's great when a match happens.
6. **Pre-Adoption Process.** Once a match is approved, your adoption worker will present a child to your family and will share the child's history. You'll then have a series of pre-placement visits, and later your child will move into your home.
7. **Finalization.** Over the next six months, your worker will visit with you and your child to monitor how things are going. Your worker can also connect you with a variety of support services to assist you and the child. Any time after the six months is complete, you and your child appear before a magistrate, who will finalize the adoption.**

**HCJFS will not delay or deny the adoption of a child based on race, color or national origin of the child or the adoptive family.

Does it cost me anything to adopt through HCJFS?

If you adopt a child through HCJFS, your cost is usually less than \$200. In most cases, this cost can be refunded to you.



How do I get started?

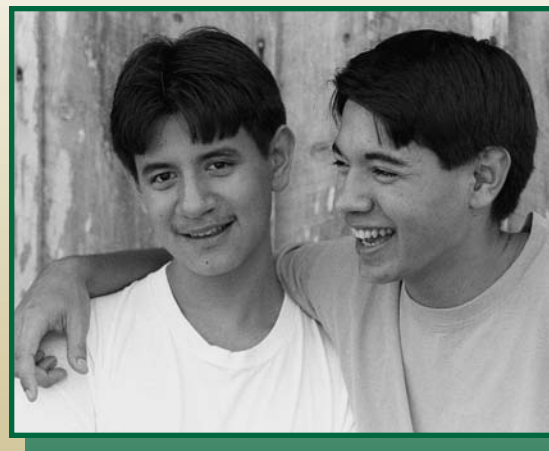
The next step is up to you.

Call (513) 632-6366 and ask for an information packet. You can also find the packet online at www.hcadopt.org. Review the information, then call to register for an Open House.

**But don't wait.
The reality is...
we need you now.**



For information
call (513) 632-6366
Or visit www.hcadopt.org



**ABOUT
*Adoption***