

Adoptive Families

WEEK IN REVIEW

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30 Questions All Adoptees Want Answered

One adoption expert rounded up the top things older adoptees wanted to know about their past—their birth families, adoption, and more.

by Laurie Elliott

TAGS: [Talking with Kids About Adoption](#)

Through my work as a court appointed agent with adoptees in search, I have learned that many older adoptees have persistent [questions about adoption](#). As they grew up, they wondered about very basic information but were afraid to ask their parents.

To help other adoptees avoid the same adoption-related identity issues, I made a list of the things that the adoptees I worked with most wanted to know about themselves, their birth parents, and their adoption circumstances. I recommend that adoptive parents try to gather as many answers to these [questions about adoption](#) as they can when their children are young and the information is easier to find.

I encourage parents to share this information with their child before adolescence to promote a stronger [sense of identity](#) and avoid issues later on. Information that would be matter-of-fact to children at a younger age becomes a crisis if they're older and don't know.

I have been busy gathering information to share with my own nine children. It has offered them another piece of who they are.

1. What are my birth parents' first and middle names?
2. Where was I born (hospital and city)?
3. What time was I born?
4. Were there any complications at the time of my birth?

5. Did my birth mother see me or hold me?
6. Who else was present at my birth?
7. What were the circumstances surrounding my placement?
8. Did my birth mother pick my adoptive family?
9. Did my birth mother know anything about my adoptive family? Did she meet my adoptive parents?
10. What did my birth mother name me?
11. Does anyone else in my birth family know about me? Who knows what?
12. How old were my birth parents when I was born?
13. Were my birth parents married when I was born?
14. Where did my birth parents go to high school? College?
15. What kind of students were they?
16. What religious backgrounds do my birth parents have?
17. What is my ethnic/racial background?
18. Did my birth parents marry each other or anyone else after I was born? Do I have any biological siblings? Do they know about me?
19. Did I go to a foster home after leaving the hospital?
20. What was my foster family's name? How long was I there?
21. What do my birth mother and birth father look like? May I have a picture of them?
22. Are my birth parents still alive?
23. Do my birth parents love me?
24. Do my birth parents think about me? Did they ever regret their decision?
25. Do my birth parents have any special talents, hobbies, or interests?
26. What traits did I inherit from my birth parents? Personality? Looks? Talents?
27. Did my birth parents write to me over the years (journal/letters in a file)?
28. Are there any medical concerns I should know about?
29. If I called my birth parents or wanted to meet them someday, what would they do?
30. What should I call my birth parents?