

Adoption News

A Newsletter From:

Adoptions From The Heart

You Are a Part of What Makes Us AFTH – Celebrate 40 Years!

As Adoptions From The Heart celebrates 40 years of service, we want to take a moment to recognize you. Your story is woven into ours and we are deeply honored to have been part of your journey. As we look ahead to the next 40 years, we are reaching out to those who know us best – YOU. We invite you to become a part of our continued journey.

Over the last four decades, we've grown -but our heart remained the same. Founder and adoptee Maxine Chalker, **created AFTH to be different:** centering adoptee voices, supporting birth parents with choices, educating adoptive families, and promoting life-long support, education and inclusion every step of the way.

That belief continues to guide us every day.

- Pioneering open adoption on the East Coast before it was the norm
- Offering inclusive, non-judgmental options counseling even amid shifting legislative and social landscapes
- Serving the LGBTQIA+ community since 1990
- Amplifying the diverse voices of the adoption triad through platforms like AFTHtv
- Providing lifelong education and support
- Ensuring every voice is heard, reflecting all sides of the adoption triad in our staff and Board members

As we look toward the future, our commitment to this mission is stronger than ever – **but we can't do it without you! At this pivotal moment, your continued support is critical.** As the landscape of adoption and reproductive



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"I never could have imagined the agency would grow into what it is today. What began in the basement of my home has become something truly incredible!"

- Maxine Chalker, AFTH Founder & Adoptee



health shifts, it's essential that AFTH remains a trusted, compassionate resource for those who need it most. We invite you to share your heart. **Join us in our 40th Anniversary Giving Campaign: Honoring our Past, Empowering the Future.**

Your gift helps us continue offering essential services and lifelong support to all those navigating the journey of adoption. [Click Here to Donate](#) to help support AFTH.

Thank you for being a part of our story-- for the past 40 years, and for the future to come!

Locations

Connecticut Office

1 Regency Dr. #108, Bloomfield, CT 06002

860.657.2626

Delaware Office

18-A Trolley Square Wilmington, DE 19806

302.658.8883

New Jersey Office

523 Hollywood Avenue, Suite 209,
Cherry Hill, NJ 0800

856.665.5655

New York

87 Mineola Blvd, Mineola, NY 11501

800.355.5500

Virginia Office

1403 Greenbrier Parkway Suite 560
Chesapeake, VA 23320

757.361.0008

Pennsylvania Offices Mailing Address

30-31 Hampstead Circle Wynnewood, PA 19096

Allentown Office

610.432.2384

Philadelphia Office

610.642.7200

Pittsburgh Office

724.853.6533

Central Pennsylvania

717.399.7766

Toll Free: 800.355.5500

Website: www.afth.org

Running with Heart: 5K Returns with Gratitude and Impact

After months of preparation, planning, and excitement, we are thrilled to share that our first **in-person 5K event since the COVID-19 pandemic was a beautiful and inspiring success!** Bringing this event back meant so much to all of us, and it was incredible to see our community come together again—not just to run or walk, but to celebrate connection, purpose, and the heart behind everything we do.



The morning of the 5K was filled with a buzz of anticipation. As the sun rose, volunteers and staff arrived early to begin setting up. Tables were arranged, banners displayed, water bottles stacked, and t-shirts handed out with smiles. Runners and walkers began arriving, some with friends, others with strollers, and all with energy and excitement. It was especially heartwarming to see so many people proudly wearing our **brand-new 5K logo t-shirts**, which gave the event such a unified and festive feel.

We were blown away by the turnout—**over 88 participants joined us**, including runners, walkers, and some of our smallest supporters in the kids' dash! The sound of laughter, cheers, and encouragement filled the air, and for a moment.

Community Support That Meant Everything:

This event would not have been possible without the overwhelming support we received from our local community. We were thrilled to welcome local running groups like **Fit4Mom Delco** and the **Delco Social Run Club**, who showed up in full force and brought an incredible sense of camaraderie and motivation to the race. Their energy was infectious and truly set the tone for the day. In addition to the runners, several local businesses

went out of their way to ensure our event had the materials and resources we needed:

- **Custom Ink Ardmore** graciously donated all of our event t-shirts, which were a hit with participants.
- **Brothers Screen Graffix** donated vibrant and professional banners that helped give our event a polished and welcoming feel.
- **Minuteman Press** in Concordville provided flyers and postcards, helping us promote the event far and wide.

We also want to send a heartfelt thank-you to our **generous event sponsor, Michelle Cabrera**, whose support helped make all of this possible.

A Slight Change in Plans, But Still a Big Success:

While we were initially planning to include a full festival alongside the 5K, Mother Nature had other ideas. With thunderstorms in the forecast, we made the difficult but necessary decision to cancel the festival portion of the event. While disappointing, we knew prioritizing the safety of our families, participants, and volunteers was the right call.



Even without the festival, the energy at the 5K was unmatched. The joy of being together, the shared cause, and the spirit of giving back carried us through the day. Despite the change of plans, we were still able to **raise over \$2,600 for our**

Expecting & Birth Parent Support Fund. A cause that helps provide essential resources and care to birth parents during one of the most emotional times of their lives.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this day such a success. Whether you ran, walked, volunteered, donated, or cheered from afar, **you were part of something meaningful.**

Michelle Cabrera: Proud Sponsor of Our Find Their Footing 5K



We're honored to recognize **Michelle Cabrera** as a generous sponsor of our **Find Their Footing 5K** this past April. Michelle's support comes from a place of deep personal connection. Her best friend is a team member here at Adoptions From The Heart, and **she's seen firsthand the love, care, and impact that AFTH brings to families.** Her sponsorship was a beautiful way to give back to a cause that resonates with her heart.

Michelle is a former elementary school teacher, mother of three, and now the **founder of a brand that is redefining what it means to carry a "mom bag."** Her journey into entrepreneurship began, like so many great ideas do, out of necessity. As a busy parent juggling school drop-offs, sports practices, snack time, and everything in between, she found herself constantly frustrated with bags that were either too bulky, too frumpy, or simply didn't function the way she needed them to.

That's when she created Michelle Cabrera. A collection of **versatile, multifunctional, and unisex bags** designed to support real-life parenting with style and practicality. Her bags are thoughtfully designed with:

- Multiple compartments to keep everything organized (yes, even that one random toy or emergency snack stash).
- Easy-to-clean materials that stand up to everyday messes.
- Neutral, sleek designs that can be worn by any caregiver. Making them perfect for moms, dads, grandparents, or anyone caring for little ones.

What sets Michelle's bags apart is how seamlessly **they blend form and function.** They're stylish enough to wear to a meeting or dinner out, but durable and organized enough to handle diapers, wipes, snacks, water bottles, and more. Each detail, down to the zippers and straps, is designed with love, intention, and a deep understanding of what parents actually need.



Michelle Cabrera represents more than a brand, it's a celebration of empowered parenting and the belief that **you shouldn't have to choose between style and practicality.** Her commitment to family, functionality, and giving back makes her an incredible partner for AFTH.

We are so grateful to Michelle for supporting our 5K and for helping us raise awareness and funds for the AFTH Expectant & Birth Parent Support Fund. Her contribution helped make the day special and continues to support the families we serve every day.



To explore her collection or learn more about her story, visit michellecabrera.com.

Thank you, Michelle, for sharing your heart, your talent, and your generosity with the AFTH community!

SUMMER ED SERIES

AFTH's Summer Ed Series is held on Zoom to welcome families from all over our service area to attend.

Registration Closes 1 Week Before Classes - Classes Fill Up Quickly

Ed Series classes fulfill AFTH's CEU requirements

Birth Parent Panel

Birth Parents will talk about the reasons they chose adoption, how they chose their respective adoptive families, their current relationship with their child and adoptive family, and the importance of maintaining an open relationship with their child.

Thursday, July 24th | 7:00-8:30 PM

Registration deadline: July 17th

Building your Community as a Single Adoptive Parent

Learn ways that single adoptive families can build support systems within their families and communities during their adoption journey. The Allentown office will dive into specific issues faced by single adoptive parents and the resources, support, and opportunities available.

Tuesday, August 19th | 7:00-8:30 PM

Registration deadline: August 12th

Adding a Sibling via Adoption

Learning to "Do's and Don'ts" of adding a sibling to your family via adoption. Addressing related topics including talking to kids about adoption, preparing them for a sibling, addressing issues related to differences in openness/relationships with birth family, spreading resources out over multiple children.

Monday, August 25th | 6:30-8:00 PM

Registration deadline: August 18th

Prenatal Drug & Alcohol Exposure - \$100/family



AFTH aims to help families make informed decisions about their profile keys. Dr. Erin Meyer, a pediatric hospitalist who works in the neonatal intensive care unit and adoptive mom, will discuss the effects of prenatal drug and alcohol exposure, withdrawal symptoms, and short and long-term impacts. Families often feel more confident opening their keys after this class. Questions are welcome.

[Click for a Video Message from Dr. Meyer About the Class](#)

Upcoming Webinar Dates

Link for webinar will be emailed 1-2 business days after registering

- **Saturday, July 26th | 10:30AM-Noon**
- **Tuesday, October 28th | 7 - 8:30 PM**

DEADLINE: 1 week before webinar

6-Hour ON-DEMAND CHILDCARE WEBINAR - \$247/family with AFTH discount

In collaboration with AFTH, New Parents Academy created a 6-hour course covering Baby Gear, Newborn Care, Soothing, Newborn Sleep, Bonding, and more including five printable/checklists. Access for two years, so videos can be re-watched at any time. On-Demand Webinar [HERE](#). Use Code **AFTH** to receive discount.

Classes are \$30/family unless otherwise noted. Click [HERE](#) to Register

Roberta's Story: Helping Shape 40 Years of Adoption Advocacy at AFTH

Meet Roberta Evantash, one of the very first social workers at Adoptions From The Heart and a true champion of adoption centered care. Roberta's journey with AFTH began all the way back in 1985, but her story started long before that, when she became best friends with AFTH's founder, Maxine Chalker, at just 12 years old. The two met as neighbors, became fast friends, and later attended Temple University together, both majoring in Social Work.



What began as a childhood friendship blossomed into a lifelong partnership grounded in shared purpose. Maxine, who was adopted and lost contact with her biological family, had a vision: **to create an adoption agency centered around the needs of adoptees.** Roberta believed in that vision from the very beginning, and stood beside Maxine as they brought it to life.

Starting an agency like AFTH wasn't easy. In those early years, Roberta spent much of her time **educating people about open adoption.** A concept that was largely unfamiliar and often misunderstood.

Roberta and Maxine knew from experience that **closed adoptions** left many questions unanswered and often left lasting emotional gaps. Together, they became passionate advocates for **transparency, communication, and connection in adoption,** long before it became common practice.

"Since the beginning, I felt like I was a part of building a successful organization that was going to change the world," Roberta shared.

And she was right. Forty years later, open adoption is now widely embraced, and **AFTH continues to lead the way in ethical, compassionate adoption work.**

During her time at AFTH, Roberta wore many hats, including **full-time social worker, Director of the Wynnewood office, and Manager of International Services.** But through every role, one thing remained

the same: her deep love for people and their stories.

"There is always a new person to learn from, which keeps every day interesting," Roberta said. "There were moments when a birth mother would change her mind or something unexpected would happen, but somehow, we always found a way to make it work and ensure everyone felt supported."

Roberta's ability to stay grounded, flexible, and caring made her a trusted guide for so many families during incredibly emotional times.

Adoption, In Roberta's Words

Roberta's understanding of adoption was shaped by years of experience, compassion, and listening.

"People who may never have crossed paths get the chance to grow together. That's what family is. Learning, adapting, and embracing different aspects of one another," she explained. "Adoption is just one of the many ways to build a family. It's nothing to be afraid of, it's something to learn about, explore, and celebrate."

Why Roberta Will Always Be Part of Our AFTH Family

Although Roberta has since retired from her role at AFTH, her legacy continues to live on in the work we do every day. She believed in Maxine's vision before it was realized, and she helped lay the foundation for the **nationwide adoption community that AFTH is today.**

From guiding families to supporting birth parents, from championing open adoption to mentoring new social workers. Roberta has done it all, always with heart, compassion, and a fierce commitment to doing what's right.

We are proud to honor Roberta Evantash. Thank you, Roberta, for being a part of our story, and for helping build something that truly changed the world.

Debbie Spivack - A Legal Advocate with a Heart for Adoption



We are proud to highlight Debbie Spivack, a dedicated adoption and assisted reproduction attorney whose connection to adoption is both personal and professional. As an adoptive parent and aunt, Debbie has experienced the beauty and complexity of family building firsthand. These life changing moments have shaped her career and continue to inspire her work as she helps others navigate the deeply personal journey of adoption.

Debbie chose to focus her legal practice exclusively on adoption and assisted reproduction law because it allows her to play a meaningful role in people's lives. With a unique blend of legal advice, empathy, and collaboration, she guides clients through evolving laws and emotionally complex situations.

"This area of law is not only intellectually challenging," she shares, "but it also allows me to support people in making difficult decisions, and collaboration rather than conflict, with parties coming together for the benefit of a child."

Some of Debbie's most impactful experiences come from working closely with birthparents who are facing difficult life circumstances, such as homelessness or substance use. She considers it a meaningful role in planning for their children's future.

"It is beautiful to witness the peace birthparents find when they locate an adoptive family who will fulfill all of their hopes and dreams for their child," she says.

These stories continue to reinforce her commitment to ethical, compassionate legal advocacy.

While the legal challenges in adoption can be complex, especially when unforeseen issues arise after placement. Although she is not a social worker, she approaches the emotional aspects of adoption with compassion by trying to put herself in their shoes and tuning into what they may be experiencing. She educates her clients by

offering families a roadmap through the legal process to help manage periods of legal risk and help them focus on parenting the children who are in their care.

Debbie has been a long supporter of Adoptions From The Heart for many years. Initially drawn to the agency's leadership in open adoption, advocating for openness long before it was the norm.

She notes, "I continue to support the agency because of its commitment to ethical practice, the hard work and dedication of staff members, and the compassion the agency shows for birthparents even when they choose not to place their child or even long after placement."

We are deeply grateful for Debbie's partnership and her tireless advocacy on behalf of adoptive families and birthparents alike. Thank you so much for being the **Presenting Sponsor of our Annual Family Picnic!**

Legal Guidance for Growing Families



Debbie Spivack is an experienced adoption and assisted reproduction attorney working with families in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. With deep knowledge of the legal process and a thoughtful, compassionate approach, Debbie has helped guide hundreds of families through adoption, surrogacy, guardianship, and parentage matters.

Whether you're starting the adoption journey, navigating a surrogacy arrangement, or finalizing a stepparent or second-parent adoption, Debbie offers clear guidance and support every step of the way.

Learn more about her work at familybuildinglaw.net or reach out to schedule a conversation.

Coming Together, Growing Together: Our 35th Annual Picnic



This year marks a special milestone for Adoptions From The Heart as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary **four decades of building beautiful families, creating lasting memories, and forming connections that span generations.** As part of this celebration, we gathered for one of our most cherished traditions: our Annual Family Picnic.

The Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware offices hosted the 35th Annual Family Picnic on June 8th. It was a day filled with joy, laughter, and community spirit as families from across the region came together to celebrate the connections that make AFTH so special.

To make the event even more vibrant and inclusive, we opened the picnic to the wider community for the first time, welcoming supporters and friends to join in the festivities. With expanded food options, guided games, craft vendors, and a brand-new Kids Zone, there was something for everyone.

Over 12 amazing local artists and artisans joined us, offering hand-knit crochet toys, children's books, art prints, candles, and more. Their creativity added a unique flair to the day, and we're so grateful for their participation.

The Kids Zone was a big hit, featuring a basketball shootout, 8-foot soccer darts, gaga ball, duck pond, axe throwing, and more. Kids of all ages had a blast! We also welcomed iFacePaint from Philadelphia, whose colorful designs transformed kids into superheroes, mermaids, and animals.

Our traditional sack races, hosted by DJ Rambo, kept energy levels high with music and prizes, while the expanded food tent offered new favorites like walking tacos and nachos alongside our classic hot dogs, chips, and water.

Another beloved tradition, free family portraits, was captured beautifully by our photographer Maria. These timeless keepsakes are a favorite among families and a touching reminder of our shared journey.

It was heartwarming to see so many families and supporters come out to celebrate with us. These events go beyond fun, they strengthen the bonds between adoptive families, birth parents, adoptees, and the broader community.

Best of all, proceeds from the picnic support AFTH programs and services, helping us continue our mission of supporting families through every stage of the adoption journey.



Thank you to every family, volunteer, vendor, sponsor, and supporter who made this day so special. We can't wait to create more memories with you!

Thank you to Aqua-Tots Swim School of Horsham



Coming Together, Growing Together: Our 35th Annual Picnic Cont.

We're proud to recognize **Aqua-Tots Swim School of Horsham** as a **Teal Sponsor** of our 35th Annual Family Picnic. Owned and operated by Andrea and Brad Stahl, Aqua-Tots is committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment where children, ages 4 months to 12 years, build confidence while learning essential swim and water safety skills. Their small class sizes and personalized approach ensure that every child learns at their own pace, supported by certified, caring instructors.

Aqua-Tots has become a trusted resource for local families, helping children grow both in and out of the water. Their passion for community and child development aligns beautifully with our mission at Adoptions From The Heart.

As a special offer, new families can enjoy **a free first swim lesson!** To learn more or get started, visit aqua-tots.com/horsham.

Thank you, Aqua-Tots, for your generous support and continued commitment to families!

Virginia Picnic Highlight

This year's Virginia Picnic, hosted by Cecilia, Katie, and Kimberly, was a heartwarming day filled with meaningful connections and joyful reunions. With 34 attendees, the picnic brought together a beautiful



mix of adoptive families, birth parents, siblings, and even grandparents. One standout moment was seeing a group that has attended for seven consecutive years, birth grandparents, two sets of adoptive parents, and their children, gathering again to celebrate their unique

bond. Another special moment featured Katie's birth parent and her children alongside their adoptive family, who continue to share an open and loving relationship, even celebrating holidays together. We

are so grateful to witness these lasting connections and the continued support of our AFTH community.

Connecticut Picnic Highlight



The Connecticut office enjoyed a beautiful afternoon for this year's Family Picnic. While the turnout was smaller, the day was filled with warmth, sunshine, and

meaningful moments that reminded us what these gatherings are truly about. One of the most special parts of the day was witnessing three reunifications, each one heartfelt, emotional, and a powerful reminder of the lifelong connections built through adoption. Seeing families reconnect and spend time together in a relaxed, welcoming space is what makes these picnics so special. Thank you to everyone who came out and shared this meaningful day with us—we are already looking forward to next year!

Pittsburgh Picnic Highlight

Despite the heat and humidity, the Pittsburgh Family Picnic was a warm and joyful day in every sense. Held at the beautiful Hempfield Park, families enjoyed the shaded spaces and the park's wonderful inclusive playground, which was a big hit with the kids! While the



turnout was small, with three adoptive families and one birth mother who brought her extended family, the atmosphere was full of love and connection. A touching reunion between the birth mother and adoptive parents made the day especially meaningful. With nearly 20 attendees in total, the picnic offered a perfect mix of fun, friendship, and heartfelt moments that truly reflect the spirit of the AFTH community.

Brittany's Story: Post-Placement Support That Made a Difference



After Brittany made the difficult decision to place her child for adoption, life became understandably overwhelming. It wasn't just the emotional toll of the adoption process, it was also the physical and financial challenges that followed childbirth. As Brittany worked hard to prioritize her recovery and mental health, even basic daily needs felt like a heavy burden.

In that critical and vulnerable time, Adoptions From The Heart's Birth Parent Fund provided a vital source of relief. With a Walmart gift card from the agency, Brittany was able to purchase essential groceries and postpartum care products, items necessary not just for survival, but for healing. This simple yet powerful gesture helped Brittany focus on her recovery without the added stress of unmet basic needs.

Brittany had been making great strides in her sobriety and mental wellness, fully committed to building a better future. But just as she was starting to regain stability, another major challenge arose, her landlord announced a rent increase. Living on a tight budget, Brittany couldn't afford the higher rent and feared losing access to the local recovery programs and services that had been instrumental to her progress. With limited transportation options, moving to a different area simply wasn't realistic.

Determined to stay close to her support system, Brittany searched for new housing nearby. She was fortunate to find a new apartment just five minutes from her current home. However, the new landlord required both the first and second month's rent plus a security deposit, an amount Brittany had mostly saved, but she was still short on the full total. She turned to the agency once again, sharing her concerns and gratitude.

"I'm gonna have the rest of the money. Thanks so much, Jackie. You and the agency are such a blessing in my life," Brittany said.

Recognizing the urgency of her situation, Adoptions From The Heart stepped in without hesitation. The agency worked directly with the landlord and provided the remaining funds Brittany needed to secure her new apartment. This rapid response allowed her to move in the very next day, ensuring she had safe and stable housing to continue her recovery. With a secure home and the support she needed, Brittany was able to keep building on the progress she had already made.

"I'm loving my new place," she shared. "I'm still in the program. I'm still staying clean."

Brittany's story is a powerful example of how adoption post-placement support services, when combined with a birth parent's own strength and resilience, can lead to lasting change. Through timely financial assistance, emotional encouragement, and compassionate care, Brittany was able to stay focused on her healing and growth, free from the fear of financial instability.

If you'd like to help support birth parents like Brittany on their journey, please consider making a donation to Adoptions From The Heart's [Expecting & Birth Parent Support Fund](#). Your generosity can make a life-changing difference.

NEW On-Demand Webinar Video Series

AFTH has easy-access on-demand webinars geared for waiting and adoptive parents as well as extended family members and professionals. The on-demand webinars not only count toward AFTH's waiting family yearly education requirement credits but are also a valuable way to spend the wait learning even more about adoption related topics.

JUST ADDED ON-DEMAND WEBINARS:

Attachment-Focused Parenting: Grief and Loss in Adoption

Attachment Focused Parenting- Grief & Loss in Adoption



In this webinar, Rebecca shares advice for adoptive families that have experienced a loss in some way, whether that comes from the child's side or the parent's side. Many ways that kids act out and misbehave can be traced back to any traumatic experience they might have had in the past. It is important to remind yourself that their actions are not personal, and that despite what they say or do they are a child that deserves love and a safe place. Rebecca also shares tips for parents on how to navigate these tough situations using caring and loving gestures rather than intimidation and fear tactics.

Birth Mother Panel

Birth Mother Panel



In this panel, guest speakers Monica, Ashley, and Stephanie share their personal journeys as birth mothers. They discuss their emotions during pregnancy and how they ultimately found the right adoptive family for their child through Adoptions From The Heart. They also address common questions, offering insights for expectant mothers and prospective adoptive families. While the adoption process may seem scary at first, they share how AFTH provided support and guidance every step of the way even years after placement.

We are always adding new topics to our webinar page. To discover all the classes currently available please visit our [On-Demand webinar page](#).



AFTH Support Groups

Support groups allow expecting and birth parents, waiting, and adoptive families to connect about their shared experiences. Come with others who truly "get it" and can understand your questions and concerns and celebrate the joys with you.

Adoptive Parent Support Groups

Waiting Family Support Group (Zoom)

Open to **ANY family in the adoption process** working with any AFTH office. Join other waiting prospective adoptive parents for a time to process the highs and lows of the adoption journey. One credit hour will be given for waiting families for attendance. [Click here to register.](#)

Waiting Family Support Group (Facebook)

Facebook support group moderated by AFTH social workers to help waiting families come together in support. [Click to join.](#)

Transracial Adoption Support Group (Zoom)

This support group is to connect adoptive parents who have also adopted transracially. It is a safe space to discuss thoughts and concerns. [Click to register.](#)

Post Placement Support Group (Zoom)

Join AFTH social work staff and families in post placement. Parenting itself is a challenge, when adding adoption issues, support and guidance may be required to assist in navigating these struggles. [Click to register.](#)

Single Parent Support Group (Zoom)

Join AFTH social work staff and other single waiting and placed families for a time to connect and process the different aspects of your adoption journey as single adoptive parents. [Click to register.](#)

LGBTQ+ Adoptive Parent Support Group

Join our LGBTQ adoptive parent support group to engage in meaningful discussions about the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ families. This group is open to any past or present AFTH LGBTQ families and fosters a supportive environment where you

can share your experiences and gain insights from others who understand the complexities of navigating family life within the LGBTQ community. We aim to create a safe space that acknowledges and honors these intersecting experiences, while also providing opportunities to connect with individuals from similar family backgrounds. [Click to register.](#)

Adoptee Support Groups

Adult Adoptee Support Group 15yrs+ (Zoom)

Adoption is often times a difficult journey for all of those involved. As adoptees ourselves, we understand the hardships that come while navigating life as an adoptee. Although our journeys may look different, many of our feelings and ideas are similar. Here is an open group to hear the stories of others and share your own in a safe environment that promotes adoptees finding their own voice. [Click to register.](#)

Expecting & Birth Parent Support Groups

Online Support Group (Zoom)

An opportunity to come together, lean on other birth parents and share your thoughts, feelings, and concerns with others with similar experiences. Reach out to Amanda Aliberti at AmandaA@afth.org for more information.

Virginia Support Group

Held in-person quarterly with special events in May & December. Email NicoleF@afth.org to learn more.

Facebook Support Group

AFTH has a Facebook Expecting and Birth Parent Support Group. It's a great place to connect directly with other birthparents to share in experiences and to both receive and provide support. [Click here to request to join.](#)

"Being able to know that there are other people out there; that you are not alone, is one of the biggest things for me."

- *Dominique, Birth Mother*

Stay Connected!

Christmas in July: Help Us Support Birth Parents in Need


At Adoptions From The Heart, we know that the holidays can be a challenging time—especially for the birth parents we serve. That's why we're kicking off our now!

By starting early, we can ensure that every birth parent in need receives meaningful support this holiday season. Your donation will help us collect gift cards for essentials like groceries, warm clothes, and household needs offering comfort, dignity, and care when it matters most.

Give today to make a lasting impact this December. Every contribution, big or small, goes directly toward helping a birth parent feel seen and supported during the holidays.

Let's come together to spread some off-season holiday cheer!

Gift Card Drive 2025



If you would like to donate a gift card or make a donation towards the Gift Card Drive.

You can send your donation to AFTH at
30-31 Hampstead Circle,
Wynnewood, PA 19096

or
[donate online](#)

" I wasn't going to be able to give my two little girls presents this year but YOU made it possible. There will never be enough ways to express how thankful I am for this. "

- Kristen D

40 Years, 40 Families: A Celebration of Love and Legacy



This year, Adoptions From The Heart is celebrating a huge milestone: **40 years of building families through adoption.** To honor this incredible journey, we launched our 40 Families Campaign on Instagram, where we're featuring the heartfelt stories of families who have been part of our agency's history.

So far, we've had the joy of highlighting families from all walks of life, each with a unique story of love, resilience, and connection. These stories remind us of the powerful impact adoption has, not just on the child, but on everyone involved.

We're still looking for more families to feature! If AFTH has been part of your journey and you'd like to share your story with our community, we'd love to include you in this special celebration.

Please reach out to MayraH@afth.org to be considered for a feature.

Let's celebrate 40 years of family, together.

AFTH is Launching a Donor Newsletter

Stay connected with the heart of our mission. Join our donor newsletter! Be the first to hear inspiring stories, see the impact of your support, and get updates on upcoming events and ways to get involved.

Sign up today and help us continue building beautiful families, one story at a time. [Click here to register!](#)

Agency News



Domestic Program Update

Written by Nicole Fowler & Amanda Gomes

As many of you may know, voluntary adoption placements have been steadily declining across the country. This shift is largely due to a nationwide drop in birth rates (Davi, 2025; Shorstein & Kelly, 2023). These changes have impacted adoption agencies nationwide, leading some to close their doors or pause programs for adoptive families.

At Adoptions From The Heart, we remain deeply committed to the families we serve and to keeping our programs accessible. To avoid raising fees in our updated June 2025 contract or making changes that would affect families directly, we've had to make some tough decisions behind the scenes. This has included restructuring and, in some cases, eliminating staff positions. These decisions were not made lightly, and they are in no way a reflection of the talent, dedication, or work ethic of the affected team members. We are heartbroken to part ways with such compassionate professionals who have contributed so much to our mission.

If you are directly impacted by these staffing changes, you've already been contacted. But we understand that transitions like this can be felt more broadly. If you have questions or need support, please don't hesitate to reach out to your local office or email us at adoption@afth.org.

We know change can be difficult, and we're so grateful for your patience and understanding during this time. Your continued trust means everything to us. We remain committed to walking alongside every member of the adoption triad: birth parents, adoptive parents,

and adoptees, with honesty, empathy, and care.

AFTH will always support a parent's right to explore all options when it comes to pregnancy and parenting. We acknowledge the grief and loss that can come with adoption and do not take it lightly. Even so, we continue to believe in the strength of our program, our families, and the work we do is enough to hope that every parent exploring adoption finds their way to our support and services.

Thank you for being part of our community. We're honored to walk this path with you.

Agency Waiting Statistics

Over the years, we have observed a significant reduction in the number of families experiencing extended wait times of over two years for placement. While extended waits can still pose challenges for those affected, our current wait time statistics are notably lower compared to other agencies offering domestic adoption services.

As of July 1st, 74% of our waiting families have been waiting less than 2 years, making it 8% less families since March 2025. 61% of AFTH's waiting families have been waiting for 18 months or less and 41% a year or less.

2026 Building Beautiful Families Calendar

We are now accepting photos of children who were adopted through AFTH for the 2026 calendar. The deadline to send photos is August 11th, 2025. If



you are interested in sending photos of your child, please email KristyG@afth.org or mail to AFTH's Pennsylvania office in Wynnewood, PA. For more information about

the photo contest and details on how to submit photos, go to [page 15](#).

Congratulations to AFTH's Newest Families!

Wishing you all joyful days and endless happiness as you embark on this beautiful adventure together.

March 2025 to June 2025 Families:

- Sarah
- Paul & Serena
- John & Rebecca
- Jarret & Nicole
- Philip & Elizabeth
- Raymond & Michael
- Kathryn & Steve
- Amanda & Marcial
- Tristen & Rachel
- Bradley & Brian (triplets)
- Alex & Chawanna
- Timothy & Colin
- Meredith & Krista



AFTH's Building Beautiful Families Calendar



Deadline: August 11th

We are now accepting photos of children who were adopted through AFTH for the 2026 calendar.

Photo Submission Tips:

- Send horizontal photos when possible those are best for the large photos)
- Send photos of **ONLY** the children (make them the stars, pictures with siblings are great too)
- Send multiple pictures, seasonal photos work too

How to Submit Your Photos...

Email your photo submissions to KristyG@afth.org (you will receive confirmation of receipt)

If sending multiple emails due to the file size, number your emails so can confirm we received them all (ex. email 1 of 4, email 2 of 4, etc.)

Information to Include in Your Email:

- Child's Name (as you want it to appear in calendar)
- Child's Age
- AFTH Program (USA, China, Vietnam, etc.)
- Parent(s) Names & Address (internal use only)

or you can MAIL your photo submissions to:

Adoptions From The Heart
Attn: AFTH Calendar Search
30-31 Hampstead Circle
Wynnewood, PA 19096

The calendar is a fundraiser for AFTH's Expecting and Birth Parent Support Fund. The Fund helps women and men who are or who have worked with AFTH to make an adoption plan for their child who could benefit from assistance securing food, transportation, housing, etc. Learn more about the support fund [here](#).



30-31 Hampstead Circle
Wynnewood, PA 19096

Adoption News is a publication of Adoptions From The Heart, a private, non-profit, licensed agency.

Year Round Donor (YRD)



At Adoptions From The Heart we believe every expectant and birth parent should have the support they need to make informed choices. Your donation helps provide critical resources, counseling, and financial assistance to those navigating the adoption journey.

By giving today—or *becoming a Year-Round Donor (YRD)*—you ensure that expectant and birth parents have ongoing support, adoptive families receive the guidance they need, and children find safe and loving homes. A monthly commitment creates a ripple effect of lasting change!

Join us in making a difference. [Donate today](#) and become a YRD to help us build brighter futures, one adoption at a time.



You're Invited

AFTH ANNUAL NY FAMILY PICNIC

SATURDAY
AUGUST 16TH
11AM-2PM

BILLY JOHNSON PLAYGROUND (CENTRAL PARK)
E 67TH STREET, NEW YORK NY 10022

RSVP TO CIERA MESITS
AT CIERAM@AFTH.ORG