

Reunification Resources

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Birthright: An Adoptee's Right to Know

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/information_packets/birthright_adoptees_right_to_know.pdf

The National Resource Center for Foster Care & Permanency Planning issued this information packet, which provides a brief overview of adoption and the search of those looking to reunify with their birth families. Normalizing the topic, the fact sheet addresses topics of why adoptees search for their birth parents, the difficulties involved in the search for information, and the history of policy formation of adoption records. As it provides arguments both for and against the release of birth information to adoptees searching for their birth families, this packet serves as a helpful initial resource.

Reunite.com

<http://www.reunite.com/>

Reunite.com offers an extensive amount of information to help adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents start the process of reunification. The site provides links, tools, and tips regarding a broad array of topics including access to adoption records, recommendations of support systems, stories by other adoptees, sensitive search issues, and specialized processes, such as international, medical emergency, or even black market searches. Reunite.com gives those with limited information or direction a valuable starting place to initiate their search.

American Adoption Congress

<http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/>

The American Adoption Congress provides a comprehensive resource, which offers general information as well as specific guides for the search and reunion process. The AAC supplies links to registries, information regarding state policies, and carries an extensive archive of articles authored by adoption professionals, which give advice and suggestions for those involved in any facet of adoption.

Searching for Birth Relatives

http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_search.pdf

The Child Welfare Information Gateway has issued this factsheet for families directly addressing adoptees looking for a guide in locating their birth families. The resource includes a step by step description and breakdown of the search process, helping adoptees to emotionally prepare as well as gather available information and find specific search tools. Additionally, the factsheet gives overviews about what professional searchers do, unexpected reunion issues, and searching internationally.

Policy and Practice: State Laws on Access to Identifying Information

<http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/policy/polreg.html>

The Adoption Institute has compiled this summary of laws and policies to give an understanding of the different manners in which access to identifying information is managed from state to state. Organized into the different forms of policy including

passive registration, search and consent, court ordered releases, and open access, the site allows the adoptee to learn about the assorted methods in which personal records are maintained. Further exploration will also provide a detailed explanation of variations between each state.

State Adoption Disclosure Laws

<http://www.bastards.org/activism/access.htm>

Another resource for those searching for identifying adoption records, this spreadsheet from Bastards Nation, a national adoptee advocacy group, lists the access to information that individuals have, how to go about gaining access through searches, and to whom they apply. This data presents the extreme variation across, and even within, state borders regarding the rights of adopted individuals. As a resource, it allows searching adoptees to clearly see how their birth state will handle their personal information.

The ALMA Society

<http://www.almasociety.org/>

The Adoptees' Liberty Movement Society is a non-profit corporation providing a comprehensive registry by which adopted children and birth parents are able to locate each other. ALMA advertises itself as the oldest and most successful registry of its kind. Through the website, adoptees can learn more about other individuals' successful reunion stories as well as the registration fees associated with ALMA's services.

International Soundex Reunion Registry

<http://www.isrr.net/>

The International Soundex Reunion Registry is the largest passive registry which offers members of the adoption triad to search for each other. The website also provides success stories, answers to common questions about registries, and detailed guidelines describing the registration process.

Independent Search Consultants

<http://www.iscsearch.com/Home.htm>

This ISC network is an international team of professional searchers who offer services that will actively locate individuals for adoption reunification. Once ISC has found adoptees or birthparents, the service offers the option of reunification. All consultants are trained and certified by the ISC itself, and are available in most states, as well as in some Canadian provinces and central Europe.

My Reunion Coach

<http://www.myreunioncoach.com/>

This online service provides comprehensive support for adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents who are involved in the search or reunion process. Offering emotional assistance through each phase of the process, the support system looks to decrease stress and confusion while guiding individuals through the development of a personalized plan of action. Services include teleclasses and group coaching, private e-mail coaching, and personal one-on-one coaching. A free newsletter is also issued every other week to address various topics.