

FAMILY TO FAMILY



2007-SPRING EDITION

WWW.FAM2FAM.ORG

BIRTHMOTHERS DUE AND MATCHED

We are working with 14 birth mothers at this time, 7 of whom are not matched. We have 25 families on our active list who are not matched at this time.

2006 PLACEMENTS

- ♥ Charlie 1/4
- ♥ Jacob 1/4
- ♥ Makenna 1/5
- ♥ Mason 1/8
- ♥ Jerek 1/11
- ♥ Jack 1/18
- ♥ Sebastian 1/21
- ♥ Noah 2/13
- ♥ Anabela 2/13
- ♥ Nicholas 2/17
- ♥ Zachary 3/1
- ♥ John 3/8
- ♥ Mackenzie 3/16
- ♥ Serenity 4/1
- ♥ Freya 4/24
- ♥ Michael 4/25
- ♥ John 4/26
- ♥ Siena 4/26
- ♥ Diego 5/10
- ♥ Nichole 6/7
- ♥ Oliver 6/2
- ♥ Preston 7/5
- ♥ Anna 7/19
- ♥ Dylan 7/26
- ♥ Oscar 7/26
- ♥ Maya 8/5
- ♥ Isabela 8/20
- ♥ Skyler 8/30
- ♥ Miguel 8/30
- ♥ Mia 9/13
- ♥ Rose 9/14
- ♥ Jalen 9/23
- ♥ Ada 9/27
- ♥ Grayson 10/2
- ♥ Maria 10/30
- ♥ Isabella 11/16
- ♥ Avery 11/25
- ♥ Will 11/26
- ♥ Sam 12/13
- ♥ Micah 12/20
- ♥ Haynes 12/26



DEAR FRIENDS OF FAMILY TO FAMILY,

We have completed our 5th full year of placing children domestically. We have learned a lot in the last five (5) years and have the scars to prove it. Nevertheless, it has been worth all of the sleepless nights, budget constraints, chewed nails, tears and trips to the hospital in the middle of the night. We love this work, and the entire staff agrees that we all have the most wonderful job in the world.

It is fantastic to see the adoptive parents' faces when they hold their baby for the first time, after as well as when we inform them that the relinquishments have been signed. To see the joy that baby brings into their lives is heartwarming.

Since our inception, we have placed 180 children in homes with loving parents. 74% of these children went to married couples, 22% were placed with alternative couples and 4% were placed with singles. Of these 180 children, 44% were full Caucasian, 13% were 1/2 Caucasian/ 1/2 Hispanic, 21% were full Hispanic, 2% were Caucasian/Asian, 2% were Native American, 11% were Caucasian/ African American, 2% African American/Hispanic and 5% were African American babies.



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EDUCATIONAL FUND

Birth mothers and birth fathers place their children for adoption because they love their unborn child, but know that they are unable to take care of it in a manner that it deserves. This is often due to educational challenges that affect financial income. We give these young mothers and fathers a second chance to get an education through our Educational Fund.

Since beginning our Educational Fund in 2004, we have spent \$27,271.38 and helped 96 young women and men to get their high school diploma, go to college or go to trade school. In 2005 we helped 7 birth mothers, and in 2006 we provided funds for 11 birth mothers to get their high school diploma with Parkview Baptist Accredited High School. This correspondence course from an accredited high school costs our Educational Program \$ 390.00 per student, but the result is a high school diploma. In many cases, the high school diploma acts as a gateway to getting a better paying job, or serves as a minimum qualifier to submit their application for an entry level job. We were also able to help birth mothers to get certificates in phlebotomy, pharmacy technician, certified nurses aide, and attend college level courses in 2006.

Our Educational Program Fund is dependent on donations from our adoptive families. When we exhaust this fund, Family to Family's operating account is used to fund the educational opportunities for our former birth parents who qualify. Please donate generously to this fund. By donating to this fund, you can extend the hope of education to other birth families and honor your own birth mother and child.



ANNUAL WINTER CONFERENCE

Family to Family will have our next Adoption Conference on January 20, 2007 from 10AM to 3PM at the Pecan Grove Plantation Country Club, 3000 Plantation Dr, Richmond, TX. RSVP deb@fam2fam.org or 281-342-4042. This is your opportunity to meet former adoptive families and present and past birth mothers and listen to their stories. Lunch will be served from 11:30AM to 1PM. \$15 per person or \$25 per couple.

UNDERWRITING OPPORTUNITIES

Family to Family is very fortunate that Cord Blood Registry is underwriting the lunch for our Winter Conference this year. We depend on our vendors and client families to help offset our outreach to prospective families each year. We plan other conferences in other parts of Texas this year and we also have our Parent's Picnic each October. In June we will begin production of our new 2008 Calendar of Family to Family Miracles! It's a different concept this year and the pictures are done by a professional photographer/artist. These calendars will be sold in Borders Bookstores beginning in the fall. If you or your corporation would like to sponsor some of our events, please call Maxine at 281-342-4042 or max@fam2fam.org.

CORD BLOOD REGISTRY

Many adoptive families are having their baby's umbilical cord blood retrieved at birth. This is considered an 'insurance' policy by many families because of the adult stem cells within this blood. Present technology is helping patients in need of bone marrow transplants or as therapies for aplastic anemia and sickle cell anemia. Can you imagine what this technology will offer by the time your child is 5, 10, or 20 years old? Please see the website for Cord Blood Registry at www.cordblood.com or call Andy Sparks at 1-888-240-2027 extension 553.

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SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISERS

In late 2006 Family to Family began to get serious about growing and accomplishing our goals of building new offices and a maternity home. We were the beneficiary of a wonderful fundraiser on December 2, 2006 at Meadow Brook Farms Gold Club which was put on by Indulgence Day Spa and AmeriBrit Event Planning. A fashion show and silent auction was held benefiting Family to Family's Christmas Fund to guarantee that our birth mothers and their children had a wonderful Christmas. Anne Phillips at Indulgence Day Spa and Katherine Bittner of AmeriBrit raised \$ 1,421.00 for this great cause. The staff of Family to Family wants to thank both of them and their staffs as well as all of the generous people who bought tickets and participated in the silent auction. We believe this event was a great success and are excited about the next event planned for March. A fashion show including children's fashions and a silent auction are planned for March, and a gold tournament is in the works for later in the summer. Thank you again, Anne and Katherine.



BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Family to Family held its first Open House on November 4 at the Pecan Grove Plantation Country Club to enlist advocates in supporting our work by joining our Board of Advisors or Fundraising Committee. We were honored that eight (8) people came to find out more about Family to Family and the work we do to help birth parents, their children and adoptive parents. A small silent auction was held and we raised \$ 505.00 for our educational fund. We also got several people interested in joining our team! If you are interested in becoming a board member or helping on a committee, please contact Stephanie Moore @ schaneymoore@yahoo.com . Stephanie is helping us with board development and recruitment.

OUR NEWEST FUNDRAISER

We are happy to announce a new fundraising effort that appears to be a benefit to all whom are involved in our adoptions efforts. We began instituting a program called Donations: Honorariums, Memorials, and Gifts. This program could be a way to solve your gifting quandaries, and help us with our fundraising efforts for our birth mothers. This effort is ideal for recognizing someone on birthdays, anniversaries and special events such as Christenings, Quinceanearas, Bar Mitz-fahs, Confirmations, Graduations, or even just a "thank you" to someone that you wish to acknowledge. This program also allows one to give Memorials for the deaths of loved ones, friends or business associates, instead of flowers at the funeral.

As we are a non-profit child placing agency, why not consider giving to Family to Family? Our special events rely on donations. We will acknowledge your generosity in this section of our quarterly newsletters.

We already have several donators who have contributed prizes and money towards our November and December events:

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|-------------|--|
| Honorariums | Honorable Judge Robert Kern & Staff
Of the 387th District Court of Fort
Bend County, Texas |
| Donated By | The Kerlick Company, Inc. |
| Honorariums | Honorable Judge Ronald Pope & Staff
Of the 328th District Court of Fort
Bend County, Texas |
| Donated By | The Kerlick Company, Inc. |
| Gifts | Auction and Door Prizes |
| Donated By | Irby Kerlick Farmers Insurance |
| Gifts | Auction & Door Prizes |
| Donated By | Indulgence Day Spa |
| Gifts | Auction & Door Prizes |
| Donated By | Houston Family Magazine |
| Gifts | Auction Item |
| Donated By | Dr. Bryan Blonder, MD |

ADOPTION CHANGES AND STATISTICS

From the Desk of the Director

After tripling over the past 15 years, the number of foreign adoptions by Americans dropped from 22,728 in 2005 to 20,679 in 2006. Recent changes in foreign adoption criteria and the US ratification of the Hague Convention will increase the need for more domestic adoptions in the United States to meet the demand posed by singles and infertile couples. Many of you may be aware of some of the factors affecting the many choices that Americans have formerly had in adoption. Those options have been relatively easy adoptions from countries such as Russia, China, Bulgaria and Guatemala; however recent events such as restrictive criteria decreed by China and the United States' planned implementation of The Hague Convention standards will impact the chances of many couples and singles to be able to create or complete their family through foreign adoption.

According to the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute's recent study on contemporary infant adoption in the United States, 135,000 adoptions take place every year and only 13,000 or 14,000 involve babies who are voluntarily relinquished by their parents. Of non-step-parent adoptions each year, 59 percent are from the child welfare system, 26 percent are from abroad and 15 percent are domestic infants. The study noted that parents placing their children for adoption in the 21st Century are more diverse and different from previous generations of birth families. The study demonstrates something that we already have experienced here at Family to Family, the predominant profile is young women in their 20's and 30's who have other children. Most of these birth families are requiring mediated adoptions, in which ongoing information is exchanged through an agency. The study also verified that those women who have placed their child in a closed adoption have more significant struggles with chronic, unresolved grief. The primary factor bringing peace of mind to these mothers is knowledge about their children's well being. The study makes it very clear

that the highest grief levels are found in women who placed their children with the understanding that they would have ongoing information, but the arrangement was cut off.

The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute is working hard to develop guidelines to determine and shape critical rights of birth parents and ethical adoption practice through out the adoption community. Family to Family tries to meet or exceed the study's reported practice standards and ethics already and we are working toward developing even better practice standards for our adoptive families and our birth parents. Please see the link to this study on our website, www.fam2fam.org. Your comments would be helpful in our continuing assessment of our practice standards.

FAMILY TO FAMILY GIVES A WARM WELCOME TO PARENT GALLERY

Family to Family and Parent Gallery are partnering up to make the profiles of our active adoptive families viewable online. This option allows the profile that you submit with Family to Family to be downloaded to a webpage, safely giving maximum exposure to potential birthmothers. Sample profiles are available for viewing at www.parentgallery.com.

If you would like your profile viewable online with Parent Gallery, please email Pat Kurth at pkurth@fam2fam.org or Jennifer O'Leary at jennifer@fam2fam.org. If you have further questions about this please call our office at 281-342-4042. This opportunity is for our active adoptive families and is free of charge.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Maxine L. Seiler, LCSW
And Staff of
Family to Family Adoptions Inc.

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Richmond, TX 77469
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