

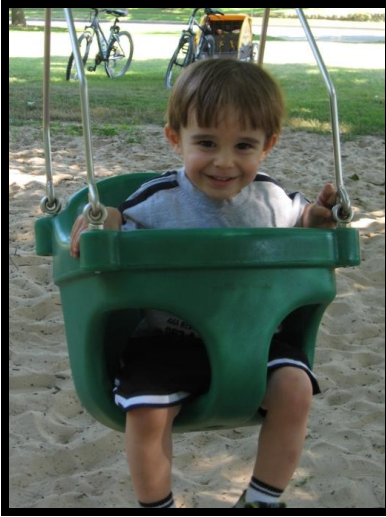
# Hello:

We are Todd, Janet and Stephen and would first like to thank you for taking the time to read our letter. That you are considering adoption makes you loving, brave and courageous in our eyes. You have already given your child the greatest gift by choosing life. As you consider adoption, we know that it is a difficult time for you. We have so much respect for you and value you greatly, as you struggle with the decision of how to provide the best possible life for your child. It is with great humbleness that we now tell you about ourselves.

**We met through mutual friends and have been married for 10 years.** Our love continues to grow each day. Our relationship is based on mutual trust, love and adoration for each other. It is such a joy to walk through life with your best friend and to share all the great events, as well as difficult times together and to be there for each other every day. After years of trying to start our family, we were blessed to be chosen by Stephen's birthparents to adopt him at birth. Stephen has brought such excitement and joy to our life, and we would love to add more joy with the adoption of another child. We love our son unconditionally and with all of our heart and feel that we have so much more love to give another child, as well. We both grew up with siblings, and it is something we value greatly. We are thankful that adoption offers us a chance to realize our dreams of expanding our family. We look forward with anticipation and excitement to the time when we have a second child to nurture, instruct and raise with a daily dose of love. Any child who comes to us through the grace of God will be loved and cared for, starting from the first time we meet them and throughout their life. We will never stop being loving and supportive parents of your child. We will be there to cheer their successes and to console their disappointments. We will



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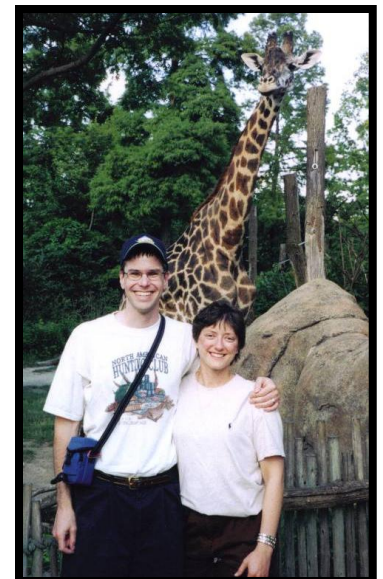
encourage them to learn from their mistakes and to work to achieve their maximum potential in whatever path they choose. This is how we were raised by our parents and hope to continue to develop those qualities with our children.

**We live in a suburb of a mid-sized city that offers a variety of activities including professional baseball, college athletics, plays, musicals and a variety of nearby outdoor activities.** There is also a family-oriented zoo in town and parks/beaches within easy driving distance that we regularly enjoy. Our cozy, four bedroom home is located in a welcoming and wooded neighborhood. Our neighborhood is full of children of all ages and families can be found visiting in

front yards or out for a bike ride after dinner. Friday evenings often bring families from our street together for relaxing conversation and marshmallow roasting for s'mores. The children are often in the yards playing baseball or a friendly game of cornhole -- and sometimes the adults cannot resist joining the game, too! We often have our yard full of children from the neighborhood as they play with Stephen. As your son or daughter grows, we envision them out in the yard having fun laughing and playing with Stephen and any neighborhood children who are visiting. When friends are not visiting, Rocky, our energetic, family dog is often chased by Stephen in our yard. As snack time rolls around, Rocky will be happy to serve on the crumb patrol moving from one child's chair to the next enjoying anything that is dropped.



**Janet writes:** The first thing I noticed about Todd when I met him was his eyes. I looked into his blue eyes and have been captivated every since. His loyalty and honesty have made him a very considerate and genuine man. This journey through life has been made much sweeter because I have such a strong and honorable man as my husband by my side to hold my hand and wipe my tears. I am amazed at how my husband has become such an awesome father. I knew he had it in him but since we adopted Stephen, I get to see it first-hand every day. Todd patiently shows Stephen how to do something so Stephen learns how to do it for himself the next time. His love for his family is seen by us every day as he comes home from work and runs up to Stephen and me for a giant hug and kiss. We can tell by the love he shows us every day that we are the most important things in his life. I know he has plenty of love to give to your child, as well. I love to watch Todd play with Stephen. Stephen's eyes light up and sparkle as the two of them "wrestle" on the floor. I can't wait until another child joins in the fun to gang up on Todd. Two of my favorite things to watch between father and child are the



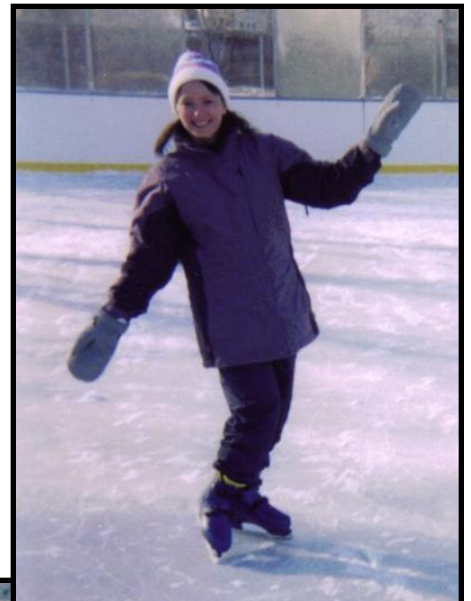
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shoulder rides Todd gives Stephen which brings the biggest smiles to our son's face. The other item happens on most Saturday mornings. Todd wakes up and starts to get breakfast ready. Stephen then wakes up and they finish making breakfast together. I often wake up to not only the aroma of freshly-made waffles, pancakes or French toast but to their giggles. They are making memories that will last a lifetime. There is always room for another "assistant chef" and plenty more giggles to be shared. The bond between father and son that these two have warms my heart and gives me excitement in knowing that this unconditional love will be shared with another child, as well.

**I grew up the youngest of 3 children to parents that have been married over 50 years.** My parents taught me how important family is and set a strong foundation of values that I hope to pass onto Stephen and our next child. Now, we all live nearby and share many meals, holidays and special events together throughout the year. Growing up, I found myself participating in lots of different sports but found my niche when it came to tennis. If I was not at home, I was most likely at the nearby tennis courts playing tennis for hours out in the sunshine. I loved the game so much, it helped pay for part of my college as I received a scholarship to a division I school and played tennis for 4 years. During the summers of college, I taught tennis to the next generation on the same courts I first learned to play on. Later, I went on to coach girl's high school tennis where I grew to appreciate the game in yet another way. To this day, I play several times a week for both exercise and relaxation.

**I have wanted to become a dietitian since I was 10 years old when I was first introduced formally to nutrition.** Since graduating from college and graduate school, I help my patients in the hospital where I work to learn to eat healthier and prepare healthier foods while balancing all things in moderation. At home, I can often be found in the kitchen making new recipes to try out on Todd and Stephen. I love to cook and value our dinnertime together every night as a way to come together as a family. While I love my career in nutrition, I presently have my dream job as a stay-at-home mother with Stephen. There is never a dull moment at our house. We are always playing indoors or outdoors and meeting up with other friends for play dates. Another child will fit right in to our present pattern of life as I plan to continue to stay at home. My favorite time spent with Stephen is when I read to him. I love how he looks at each page as a new adventure and listens with enthusiasm and excitement to the tale. I often find myself getting excited about the stories as well and can't



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wait to see if the prince and princess will live happily ever after.....Stephen often brings books to me to read with a big grin on his face because he knows another adventure is about to begin.....

**I love being there for Stephen and am very grateful that we are able to have a parent stay home with Stephen.** I look forward to more memories and time spent with another child as well as being available for homework, volunteering at school, carpools, after school activities and of course making chocolate chip cookies together!!!



**Todd writes:** Janet often lets me know in words and actions that she loves and appreciates me. It is not uncommon to find little love notes

stuck to the bathroom mirror when I get up in the morning or stuck in my lunch box. Janet has an abundant supply of hugs and kisses for Stephen and she spends hours with him playing and reading and helping him to learn about the world around him.



**Janet is a great mom and a fun, thoughtful, loving person.** When I watch her and Stephen it is obvious to me she sees motherhood as something of great importance, fun, rewarding, and a source of great joy. She regularly reads to Stephen and he has come to enjoy it so much he often gets books from our family room or the book shelf in his room for us to read to him. He also must have some books read to him while he has his bedtime cup of milk after we have said our bedtime prayers. Janet also has fun with Stephen singing and

dancing as Stephen dances right along with her. It is not uncommon for me to see a tear of joy in Janet's eye when Stephen learns a new word, blows her a kiss, or imitates me as I work on some project around the house.

**I also know that Janet is anxious to see your child grow and be able to provide love, comfort, and support to your child.** I know that she has a place in her heart filled with love that she is waiting to share with your baby. While Janet does all sorts of things with Stephen and has certain routines, I know that she is anxious to start a whole new set of routines with your baby as well.

**I look forward, with excitement, to the day when Janet and I can look at your daughter or son and then at each other as parents knowing that we have been richly blessed by you.**

**I grew up in a small, rural community where I spent a lot of my time outside.** After a weekday spent in our two room elementary school, my younger brother and I would come home and often spend the rest of the day playing outside with our Tonka trucks. As I got older, I found other outdoor activities that I enjoyed including hiking, backpacking, fishing, and exploring the many miles of

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uninhabited woods around our house. In the winter, our whole family would strap on our snowshoes and go for walks in the unspoiled snow enjoying the beauty of the sun glistening on the snow. To this day, I love the outdoors and wildlife. Watching the birds, squirrels, and rabbits in our yard is always enjoyable for me and is a great way to relax. It has been one of my biggest joys to watch Stephen's amazement when we sit on our deck and watch the hummingbirds at the feeder or have him touch his first grasshopper. I look forward to being able to share my love of the outdoors with your child and see the excitement on his or her face as new discoveries are made.

**My parents taught me many important skills and life lessons.**

These range from giving my best effort in anything I do and finishing what I start to knowing how to cook, clean, and maintain a house. Care and concern for family, friends, and neighbors was also stressed. The most important lesson of all that I learned from both my Mom and Dad is the importance of family. I grew up knowing firsthand how time together as a family should be a priority and now as an adult, I truly appreciate it. I am anxious to include your baby in our time together as a family and I know the she or he will make that time even more important to me.

**Growing up, I was always interested in how things work.** In school, I quickly found that my favorite subjects were math and science. These two things led me down the path to become a mechanical engineer as work would bring both of those interests together and allow me to have a career that I enjoy and find rewarding.

***Stephen writes (with a little help):*** I know firsthand how great adoption is and how much my Mommy and Daddy love me. I am also excited about having a brother or sister to play with and really keep Mommy and Daddy busy. I know they are both excited and waiting for a baby to join our family. At night when we say our bedtime prayers, we ask that God will bless us with a baby so Mommy and Daddy can share their love with another child and I can share mine with a sibling. I can't wait for each of us to get Daddy's big "Daddy hugs" as he calls them. Mommy is sure to make play time each day fun for both of us. As my new little sister or brother gets a bit bigger we will be able run around the yard with Mommy. I am sure she will come up with a bunch of new things for us to do that will make us laugh and giggle. I will make a great big brother and will watch and protect my little sibling as we grow up together.



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**We love spending time together as a family and can often be found bike riding in our neighborhood or in parks near and far.** It often turns into a way for us to enjoy ice cream too, as it isn't very often that we pass up a stop at an ice cream shop. We look forward to the addition of your child to this sort of fun too. An annual tradition we have is going on "the hunt" for our Christmas tree. We lace up our boots every year and go searching for the perfect tree. Each year brings laughter and snow ball fights as each of us claim to have found "the one." After a few frozen toes (okay, maybe just a little cold), the tree is found and brought home where

we hang the ornaments with hot chocolate in hand. We can't wait to bundle up your baby for this annual event. Stephen is sure to play the part of big brother and show how to shake the snow off the tree branches. These are the memories that will last a lifetime. Together we look for ways to share and grow in our faith and church on Sunday is one way we can do that. In addition to being renewed, church gives us a way to praise and thank God for all the blessings he provides us. Whether you realize it or not you are one of those blessings because you are considering adoption and are taking the time to read our letter.

**We admire your strength and courage for considering adoption. We understand that this is a difficult decision for you.**

*If you would like more information or would like to talk to us, please call Steve or Joel Kirsh, at 1-800-333-5736. Our goal and their goal is to provide you with the information you need to make an informed, loving decision that is right for you and your baby. Please know that if you choose us as the adoptive parents for your child, we will provide a lifetime of unconditional love and support. Our promise to you, as we promised Stephen's birthparents, is that your child will be at the center of our lives for the rest of our lives. We will also make sure that your child will know about the loving choice you made for her or him. If you wish, we will be happy to send you letters and photographs letting you know how your child is doing. You will always have a special place in our hearts.*



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