



Building and Supporting  
Families Since 1985

## Looking Through The Windows of Chrysalis House

### Our Journey by Jason and Erika

We never planned on adopting. When we got married we wanted children immediately. After trying on and off for 10 years and multiple health factors, we made the healthiest choice for us and I had a total hysterectomy. We proceeded to grieve the loss of the dream of being what we thought were parents. We moved into a space of acceptance that our journey in life was going to be different than we had expected. We enjoyed life to the fullest. In a short amount of time we had become at peace with and grateful for the life we had and no longer felt the need to be parents. Then in October 2015, we babysat my 4 week old god daughter and everything changed.

We had her for an overnight visit, nothing was extraordinary about this visit. The magic didn't hit us until we dropped her off. We sat quiet and on the drive home Jason looked to me and said "We would have been a great team, I'm sad I'll never be able to share that experience with you." I replied "Me too." Nothing more was said the rest of the day. Two days later I heard myself say, "What do you think about adopting? Like Foster/Adopt?" His reply was simply, "I'm into it". The next day he had talked to 2 people he worked with regarding adoption and foster to adopt and I had started doing research online about our options. There we were researching a subject and path that had never appealed to us and absolutely terrified us with the same fervor as our bio-child journey with one exception, we no longer felt desperate. Instead we felt clear and divinely inspired. We knew we always wanted to be parents. Here we were, jumping in with both feet to the unknown world of adoption.

The options, organizations, and types of adoption seemed mountainous. How were we ever to make the right decision on who to go with, the type of adoption, and the child we felt we could parent? The moment we walked into Chrysalis House we knew we were home. As we decided to adopt via the foster to adopt tract, we committed ourselves to honoring that we really wanted an infant, any ethnicity and any gender.

Transracial adoption was never a word or a thing we knew prior to this path. We just wanted to be parents to a child. We didn't even know there was a choice until the questionnaire about the type of child you are willing to parent. We never saw it as a choice, we knew we were going to get the child that was best for us. For us, we felt that if we are willing to provide a mindful, culturally and ethnically supportive environment including the ability to navigate the tough conversations, that we could successfully parent any child. We understood and fully expected the fact that we would have a conspicuous adoption if we were gifted with a non-Caucasian child. The questions and conversations about being an adoptive family and the ethnicity difference conversation would come up earlier. These factors just strengthened our resolve to openness in the child we wanted to add to our family. We have a very supportive and equally diverse family and extended family where these conversations of racial inequality, white-privilege, gender bias, happen often. While they are uncomfortable to have, we have found them to be the bridge in which we strengthen our love, compassion, and understanding of one another.

When we submitted on our first child in April 2016, we only knew he was a boy, aged 2 weeks, and his name was Baby J. When we were accepted we found out his ethnicity, African-American and Hispanic. He came home at 4 weeks and the crazy life of parenting began. The social climate started to drastically shift. The Black Lives Matter movement came into full swing and while we had always supported our family members in this, our son had forever deepened our need and passion to have these voices be heard. They were now the voices of our baby who would one day be that dark skinned boy in a hoodie walking down the street and potentially be racially profiled. Our responsibility as white parents to a non-white child to hold space for the awareness of ignorance and injustice became ever more apparent. Then our second son came home unexpectedly in March 2017. He is the 16 month older brother to our baby and has completed our family. The social ethnic climate has continued to intensify and along with it our deep sense of responsibility to help our boys be aware of their intrinsic value regardless of how the world around them may or may not perceive them.

We are still new to all this, our boys are now 2 and 3. Navigating through the conversations of social, ethnic, and gender inequalities is in its infancy. There is so much still unknown for us. However our love, nurturing, celebration of differences, along with the willingness to have the awareness, we believe, gives us a chance. To be continued...



# Managing Your Expectations

So you're ready to be an adoptive parent. What exactly does that look like for you? Are you hoping to begin your family after years of painful infertility? Are you looking to grow your family because there is a need? Are you faced with secondary infertility and hoping to add to your family through adoption?

Families come to adoption for many different reasons and it is important for you as parents to identify this reason and discuss your expectations so that you can adequately prepare yourself for the journey. Those of you who have adopted before know that it is not for the faint of heart. You will go through the rigorous approval process, opening up to a complete stranger, sharing your deepest secrets, fears and desires. You will then be asked to wait, patiently, as more strangers determine when you will be blessed with your child. Then it happens, the call comes in, you have been chosen. Excitement, nervous energy and anticipation quickly fill your body and mind as you anxiously await the moment when you get to meet your kids and move them into your home.

The day has come, your kids are home and your prayers have been answered. Days, weeks, months go by and you realize, this isn't quite what you expected. Parenting is harder than you imagined. You are struggling to love these kids and you often feel more like a babysitter than "Mom" and "Dad". These kids seem angry, don't they know I have rescued them from an unsafe situation?

We all have expectations, the picture of what your family will look like, but what happens when it doesn't happen just as you've planned? It is natural to come into this process with expectations but it is important to be flexible and understand that your expectations may not be immediately met and that's ok! Our staff is here to help you navigate all of these emotions. Please reach out to your Social Worker so that we can support you through this life transition and help you realize the true joy adoption can bring!

## Resource Family Compliance

Did you know that the state requires current, approved families to renew their training annually? Did you know that you need to log all of the medications you give to your foster child? Did you know that your child's physician needs to complete a medical form for every doctor visit? These are just a few of the requirements that Resource Families need to comply with pre- and post-placement.

While it may sound counterintuitive to require so much from a newly formed family, the state must ensure proper care for their dependents. We at Chrysalis House make every effort to assist our families with the compliance standards set forth by the state. We offer opportunities throughout the year for families to receive continuing education training hours, we send out monthly reminders about completing your medication logs and we provide several extra medical forms in your placement binder. We appreciate the cooperation we get from our families! When our families are in compliance, Chrysalis House is in compliance, affording us the opportunity to continue the work that we do—helping children find their forever home!



## Celebrate Adoption!

Save-the-Date for our "Celebrate Adoption" fundraiser! **Thursday, November 29, 2018** at Second Space Theater in Fresno. We will be kicking off the holiday season with wine, appetizers, a silent auction, surprise boxes and the performance of "Good Company for Christmas" performed by the Good Company Players.

This will be our 4th year hosting this fundraiser and we are thankful for the success that we've had. The money we raise throughout the year helps us to increase our outreach and education within our community, keep costs low for adoptive families and to provide excellent pre- and post-adoption support to the adoption community.

### Chrysalis House, Inc. will be closed in observance of the following Holidays:

- Memorial Day: May 28, 2018
- 4th of July: July 4, 2018
- Labor Day: September 3, 2018
- Veteran's Day: November 9, 2018
- Thanksgiving: November 22-23, 2018