

What is a home study?

In most states a social worker will evaluate your fitness to parent during what's known as a home study. It's really a study of the adopting parents. Requirements in each state differ, but it usually includes a home inspection, physical examinations by a doctor, an audit of your finances, references from friends and coworkers, a search of motor vehicle and court records and most of the time, an FBI background check.

Nearly all people who apply to adopt do qualify and most prospective parents worry way too much about the home study. Its intent is to screen out people with mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, a criminal record of child abuse or those with so little income that an adopted child would be placed into poverty.

If your home life is stable, if you are in reasonably good health, if you have enough income to raise a child, if you are a loving and responsible person with a heartfelt desire to parent a child for life, you can usually adopt.

Do you need to be wealthy to adopt?

You don't have to own your own home or reach a certain income level to be eligible with most organizations. You must show that you can afford to provide for your family and for your new child on the income you currently have. The government recently estimated that it costs a

Adoption Myths

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 "They can't adopt because ..."

- **They've been married only two years.**
- **They already have biological children.**
- **They already have an adopted child.**
- **They're over 40.**
- **He has a physical disability.**
- **Both parents work full time.**
- **They've been married before.**
- **They don't make enough money.**
- **They don't own a home.**
- **She's a single woman.**