



***QUESTIONS TO ASK***  
**If You are Using the Internet to Adopt (#42)**

By Diane N. Clapp, BSN, RN  
Medical Information Director, National RESOLVE

Numerous web sites are available on adoption agencies and businesses that facilitate adoptions. Unfortunately, there have been some tragic outcomes when the internet is used to adopt. Before proceeding with an adoption done via the internet, you may want to consider the following questions:

1. Ask for the full name of the agency including street address and phone number.
2. Ask for the names of the Director and the Board of Directors.
3. Find out when the business or agency was established.
4. Call the Better Business Bureau in the city/state where the web site originated to see if any consumer comments or complaints have been made.
5. Ask who screens the biological parents and find out what their credentials are.
6. Ask how the agency deals with obtaining parental release of both the biological mother and father?
7. Ask if they have legal counsel available - contact the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys at 202-832-2222, or [www.adoptionattorneys.org](http://www.adoptionattorneys.org). Ask if they are aware of all the specifics on inter-state compacts if the baby/child is in a different state.
8. Ask for an itemized expense list which should include projected costs for the birth mother's medical bills if she is uninsured, her lodging and general living expenses (if state law permits). Also get estimated costs for travel expenses for the biological father and mother to surrender the child (if state law permits), expenses for legal expenses, agency fees, as well as for a homestudy which needs to be done in your state. Ask if there are any other fees.
9. Ask if you will need to pay in advance prior to placement? If money is being put in escrow - ask what it is for?
10. Ask about under what conditions will a refund be provided?
11. Ask if the baby will need to be in or is currently in foster care? If so, who covers that expense?
12. Ask if you can arrange to have a pediatrician (paid by you) to evaluate the health of the child.
13. Ask how much contact the biological parents wish to have with you and with the child post-placement.