



Adoption ARK
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Choosing an adoption agency is a critical first step into the international adoption process. When interviewing an adoption agency there are some very important things that you should know about their objectives, experience, and history. Attached is a list of questions that all international adoption agencies should be able to answer and account for. We want you to know our qualifications right from the start so the answers for Adoption ARK are in blue.

Is the agency licensed?

Adoption ARK is licensed by the State of Illinois. In addition to our Illinois office, we are registered in California. Our agency is a medium-sized, international adoption agency. Adoption ARK offers the same level of personal attention that a small agency would but has the same organization and paperwork process as a larger adoption agency.

Is the agency Hague Accredited?

Adoption ARK is Hague Accredited by the Counsel of Accreditation in the United States. This is a high honor for an adoption agency. Having this accreditation means that we meet the ethical and procedural guidelines established in the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. Having Hague Accreditation is not required to assist with adoptions in all countries. However, Adoption ARK upholds the same, Hague approved, standards in all countries where we work.

Is the agency a certified, 501c3, not-for-profit adoption agency? If not, how does that affect their adoption fees and humanitarian giving?

Adoption ARK is a certified not-for-profit, 501c3 International Adoption Agency. Our not-for-profit status enables Adoption ARK to keep adoption fees low and support our humanitarian mission projects in the countries where we work.

How much experience do the agency founders and case coordinators have in the international adoption process? What background prompted them to pursue international adoption as a career?

The founders of Adoption ARK each have ten+ years of experience in international adoption and have helped hundreds of families adopt from abroad. Many of our adoption professionals are adoptive parents themselves. Our staff brings a unique understanding into the emotions that adopting parents face while in the adoption process. All caseworkers hold degrees in the human services field.

How many adoptions has the agency completed?

The number of adoptions that Adoption ARK has completed grows almost weekly! Since 2003, when Adoption ARK was founded, we have united over 800 children with their families. Many of our ARK family's adoption success stories can be read [here](#).

What experience does the agency have in the country which you are considering adopting from?

Adoption ARK has programs in 10 countries and more programs on the horizon. Before we include a country into our adoption program we study the countries adoption procedures, laws, culture, and the orphanage system to make sure that it is a good program for parents considering international adoption. We carefully interview and select the in-country coordinators and we feel confident that they share Adoption ARK's professionalism and commitment to orphaned children. Please see our website, www.adoptionark.org, for specific country information.

Can they provide a parent referral list that includes telephone numbers?

Everyone knows parents love to brag about their children. Yes, please ask you adoption consultant for names and telephone numbers for Adoption ARK references.

Do agency representatives travel to the countries they represent to evaluate a program's effectiveness and meet with adoption officials? How often?

Yes, Adoption ARK travels annually to different countries and meets with the in-country representatives and regional officials. This is an important part of why Adoption ARK is so well-respected in the regions were we offer adoption assistance and humanitarian aid.

What standards does the agency adhere to in cooperating with in-country associates (attorneys, facilitators)?

The board of Adoption ARK drafted a strict Code of Ethics which all in country representation is required to adhere. We expect the in-country representatives to respect and appreciate our parents as much as Adoption ARK does.

Does the agency have U.S. staff fluent in the languages of the countries in which you work?

Yes, many of our staff members are fluent in the languages of the countries we work in. This enables Adoption ARK to communicate directly with in-country representatives and local governments. Having direct communication is one reason why Adoption ARK is able to complete adoptions in shorter timeframes than some other agencies.

What type of humanitarian assistance does the agency offer to the countries they work in?

Adoption ARK is dedicating to making a difference to orphaned children around the world through the many humanitarian aid projects that it holds each year. Adoption ARK sponsors orphanages in Africa, supplies clothing and formula to orphanages in Russia, provides dental care to orphaned children in Nepal, maintains upkeep on several orphanages in Kazakhstan and much, much more. For a detailed description of our projects please visit [Adoption ARK's website](http://www.adoptionark.org).

What type of parent education and support services does the agency provide?

Adoption ARK has a support group, booklist and website full of resource to encourage and offer support during and after adoption.

What type of support can I expect once my adoption is completed?

Help is always just a phone call away. Adoption ARK's staff has both professional and personal experience into issues of bonding and attachment. In addition, our parent support group, ARK Families, is comprised of parents in all stages of the adoption process. This group consists of over 600 parents that exchange ideas and offer support in the post adoption period. ARK Families enjoy meeting each other and introducing their children at our annual Holiday Parties or Summer Picnics.

What type of assistance is offered to clients when they travel to the country of their adoption?

The in-country representatives will accompany you during the legal paperwork and various appointments with the regional government. They will make sure that your paperwork is organized and appointments are scheduled so that your time in-country is spent efficiently. Adoption ARK has a 24 hour emergency phone number for traveling parents. In addition, it is required that our in country staff provide their contact information to adopting parents.

Is Adoption ARK a member of the JCICS?

Yes. Adoption ARK is a member of the Joint Council on International Children's Services.

What is the overall philosophy of the agency?

Every adoption is a life-changing journey for both parents and the children they adopt. ARK stands for Aiding and Rescuing Kids. We do this primarily through international adoption. However, there are far more orphaned children than there are adopting parents. Adoption ARK is committed to those children left behind. Our philosophy is that every child deserves to have their physical and emotional needs met regardless of age, circumstance, physical impairment and, very importantly, regardless of their eligibility for international adoption.

You may have other questions or concerns that are not listed above. Do not be afraid to ask your adoption agency any questions that are important to you. Please contact Adoption ARK at adopt@adoptionark.org with any questions.

***"Adopting one child won't change the world; but for that child,
the world will change."***