

This Month at a Glance

By The Children's Bridge



March 2020 Edition

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NOTES FROM KARYN'S DESK

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March 5th, 2020

****Travel Advisories and Restrictions****

Any families seeking further information as to how COVID-19 may affect their adoption and/or travel plans can visit on our website which we are updating daily as new information becomes known:

<https://childrensbridge.com/travel-advisories/>

Event Updates

For a full list of events, please see our "Event Section" of our new website at:

https://childrensbridge.com/events/category/gen-event/2018-10/?tribe_events_cat=gen-event&tribe-bar-date=2018-10

AdopTALK

Our next AdopTALK will be held in Ottawa on April 18th and 19th, 2020. Please contact Lenore Cork-Lemay at admin@childrensbridge.com for more information or to register.

Membership

The Children's Bridge strongly recommends that all families maintain an active membership even post-adoption, so families can remain aware of services, events and resources/supports. Adoption is a lifelong process, and adopted children tend to have various needs at various ages and stages of development. Maintaining an active membership with The Children's Bridge means families will stay up-to-date with citizenship news (which can affect our children long after finalization), country changes, homeland trip and local supports.

Website/Membership: The Children's Bridge launched a new website in summer of 2018, and all families with active memberships will need to active their account on the new website. Members will not be able to access the "Member's Area" of the website or pay fees online until they have migrated over to the new website. These steps can be found at: <https://childrensbridge.com/members/>

E-transfers

The Children's Bridge is now able to accept e-transfers for all Canadian adoption related fees and services. Please see our website for more details.

Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada

Read the story of one family (Zambia, The Children's Bridge) trying to make a difference to lives of adoptees by challenging Canada's Citizenship process for adopted children:

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/parents-call-for-change-to-citizenship-law-that-treats-adopted-children-like-second-class-citizens-1.4779869>

HIV+ Kids Adoption Program

This program is available to families who are considering adopting a child living with HIV. It is not a program on its own but runs in conjunction with whichever country/adoption program the family has chosen to adopt from. The Children's Bridge can offer information, education, support and resources to families in process to adopt a child living with HIV.

If you would like any information on the HIV+ Kids adoption program, please contact me at karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com or 1-613-2112 ext. 2.





INDIA ADOPTION PROGRAM

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India

Families Progress

We currently have 2 families matched with children in India. One family has completed the court process and is now waiting for Part two of IRCC to be granted so that they can travel. The second family has completed court and is waiting for a new birth certificate and passport to be issued so that they can apply for Part Two of the IRCC process.

Welcome Home!

A warm congratulations is extended to S and S family, who traveled to India recently to complete the adoption of their daughter, Baby R. We wish you nothing but the best in your new life as a family of 3!

Program Manager Travel to India

I will be travelling to India on March 19th and will return to Canada on April 7th. During this time, I will be working alongside our in-country coordinator to arrange meeting with CARA officials, as well as visit various orphanages in Delhi, Hyderabad and Chandigarh. We will also be meeting with IRCC officials, and other child protection workers as time allows.

General Program Information

We are currently accepting applications for this adoption program. We currently have 26 families in process to adopt from India and can work with adoptive families across Canada (except for Quebec). This program is open to families of non-Indian descent, as well as those who are Non-Resident Indians (NRI's) or those with Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI). Families who have NRI or OCI status are prioritized by CARA, but all families who meet the requirements are welcome to apply.

Our India program is open to families who wish to adopt a child living with special needs, and those hoping to adopt via the mainstream program.

Most of the children are 18-months+ at time of child proposal. Special needs of the children in the Waiting Child program vary widely, and can include (but are not limited to): hearing and/or vision issues, HIV, Hepatitis B, developmental delays, Down Syndrome, heart issues such as ASD or VSD, etc.



Adopting a Child with Special Needs

Every month, we will attempt to highlight a different special medical need that we frequently see in our India (special needs) adoption program. If there is a specific special need you are interested in learning more about, please let us know and we will do our best to include it in our next update.

Disclosure: although every attempt is made to ensure this information is accurate and is taken from reputable sources, families should consider this as a resource and starting place only, and not as a replacement for medical advice or independent research.

A few things in general when considering adopting child with special needs:

- Although timelines are generally faster in a special need's adoption program, this should not be the primary motivating factor. Adoption is a lifelong commitment, as is parenting any child (born to you or via adoption).
- The costs associated with adopting a child with special needs are not lower than other programs. Adoption fees cover the cost of your process, which does not change when a child has special needs. However, as the program tends to have shorter timelines than does the mainstream program, the cost of annual administration fees can be a bit lower. As well, some families have been able to access grants to help to partially cover the cost of their adoption (A Child Waits Foundation and ABBA are the two main sources of adoption grants and/or loans).

Many older children are also available for immediate placement. There are many older children waiting for families in India, and CARA is able to match families fairly quickly who are open to children over the age of 6 - 8 years old. Sibling groups of 2 to 4 children are also waiting for immediate placement, with the ages of children usually ranging between 3 and 12 years.

Relinquishing Indian Passport and Renouncing Citizenship

Once families are home in Canada with their child, they must complete a formal process renouncing the child's Indian citizenship (dual citizenship is not recognized by India's Immigration laws). This must be done within 3-years of receiving Canadian Citizenship (or Record of Landing if you complete the Permanent Resident Visa route). It is very important to complete this step, as failure to do so may result in penalties when your child travels back to India at any point in their life. It is a punishable offence under the Indian Passport Act, 1967, to "apply for an Indian passport, continue to hold an Indian passport, get an Indian passport re-issued or travel on an Indian passport after acquiring foreign citizenship. Under Indian law, Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who have acquired foreign citizenship are required to surrender their Indian passports to the nearest Indian Mission/Post immediately after acquisition of foreign citizenship".

Please see this link for more information on relinquishing Indian citizenship and relinquishing your child's Indian passport: http://www.blsindia-canada.com/renunciation_ppt.php





THAILAND ADOPTION PROGRAM

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March 2020

As you know, there has been a lot of press each day updating the public on the coronavirus situation throughout the world. Below are a couple of links that address this issue and are relevant to anyone travelling. Also, on our website, on the main page, there is a new section "Travel Advisories & Restrictions" for you to check out.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/about/index.html>

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories/>

As well, this week, the Department of Children and Youth (through the Child Adoption Center) have asked all families travelling this month to either postpone their travel or re-route to ensure they are not coming to Thailand through a high-risk area. Families scheduled to travel up to May, have been asked to postpone until further notice.

We will keep all families up-to-date by posting information to the main page of our website.

Thailand

Adoption Program News

We have been advised by the Department of Children and Youth that they will no longer be translating files for us. Luckily, we have a translator, Pitch Sookmark, who currently translates the birth certificate and house registration for each family. Khun Pitch has agreed to also translate the proposal documents.

In addition to the in-country fee and post placement fees that are due at time of proposal, we will also be adding a translation fee.



Referrals and Travel

A big welcome home to Jason, Crystal, Arjun, Kristen, Lacey, Jonathan and Karen who are all home now with their kids! Three families reported that they had a very successful adoption trip and seem to be settling in nicely. I have yet to speak with Jon or Karen as they only arrived home this week.

I am very excited to congratulate three families this month on their proposals!

Congratulations to Phil and Rosemarie on the proposal of their son who is 4 years old and currently living at the Si Thammarat Home for Boys in Si Thammarat Province.

Congratulations also go out to Drew and Brooke on the proposal of their 1-year old son. He is residing at the Rangsit Babies' Home in Pathum Thani Province. Drew and Brooke have a confirmed Interview Date and were able to modify their flights so are still on track to travel to Thailand this week.

And, congratulations to Erik and Karen on the proposal of their 18-month old son from the Thai Red Cross.

We are unable to confirm travel dates for the other families at this time.

Matching

Please remember that files are **not** matched in the order that they are received. Matching is based on the children currently waiting, the number of files on hand and of course the age, sex and special needs a family is open to. The DCY continue to match in 2 ½ - 3 years and the TRCCH still quicker than that (but longer wait to travel).

Families Waiting (Files in Thailand)

Family	Log-in-Date	Province	Referral Received	Home
J & C	March 2016 (DCY)	NS	October 1, 2019	December 18, 2019
J & K	August 2016 (DCY)	ON	November 22, 2019	March 2, 2020
A & B	December 2016 (DCY)	ON	January 21, 2020	March 29, 2020
P & R	February 2017 (DCY)	ON	January 21, 2020	TBA
T & P	February 2017 (DCY)	NS		
M & A	March 13, 2017 (DCY)	MB		
G & I	June 30, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
M & C	July 7, 2017 (DCY)	AB		



M & J	July 11, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
W & N	Aug. 28, 2017 (DCY)	AB		
A & K	Dec. 25, 2017 (TRCCH)	ON	May 7, 2019	December 18, 2019
M & T	Sept. 8, 2017 (DCY)	NS		
LG	Sept. 11, 2017 (DCY)	ON	October 29, 2019	January 18, 2019
KS	Nov. 20, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
JB	Nov. 20, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
J & A	May 3, 2018 (DCY)	AB		
E & K	Sept. 14/18 (TRCCH)	ON	Feb. 19, 2020	TBA
JK	Oct. 16/18 (DCY)	AB		
H & K	Nov. 19/18 (TRCCH)	ON	October 23, 2019	TBA
M & C	Dec. 24/18 (DCY)	ON		
J & K	Jan. 23/19 (DCY)	AB		
JL	Feb. 22/19 (DCY)	ON		
T & M	March 21/19 (DCY)	ON		
R & J	April 17/19 (DCY)	ON		
M & J	May 27/19 (DCY)	ON		
R & L	June 10/19 (TRCCH)	ON		
C & K	July 8/19 (DCY)	ON		
J & S	Oct. 21/19 (DCY)	AB		
D & R	Dec. 16/19 (DCY)	ON		
K & C	Jan. 13/20 (TRCCH)	AB		
H & J	Feb. 3/20 (DCY)	ON		
C & S	Feb. 6/20 (DCY)	AB		
M & N	Feb. 17/20 (TRCCH)	ON		
R & Y	Feb. 28/20 (DCY)	ON		

Two families have sent in retainers and are working on their dossiers.



Finalization

Adoptions are finalized at the Royal Thai Embassy in Ottawa or the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Vancouver.

AdopTALK

You should plan to attend our 2 day AdopTALK workshop about 6 - 8 months before you anticipate receiving your proposal. All details for AdopTALK workshops are on our website.

*Attendance at AdopTALK is mandatory no matter where a family live or what other training they take.

**The next AdopTALK will be held in Ottawa on April 18th and 19th, 2020.

Ontario Ministry

The Ministry has indicated that they continue to process home studies and updates in 4 – 6 weeks and proposals in 5 – 10 business days; however, we have seen an increase in this timeline. To process a home study/update the Ministry is currently taking about 10 - 12 weeks.

Alberta Ministry

Families will need to complete an addendum to their home study every 12 months. I have recently been advised by Alberta Human Services that they will send the approval directly to a family's coordinating agency and to the family. Once you receive this letter, kindly scan and email me a copy.

Travelling outside of Canada (before adoption finalization)

When you come home with your child and you want to travel with him/her outside of Canada, you are required to obtain a Statutory Declaration from our office (or your provincial ministry for those outside of Ontario) to travel since the adoption is not finalized. The Children's Bridge (or the provincial ministry) is the guardian of the child until the adoption is finalized. Finalization happens approximately 1 year after you arrive home. Please contact me if you are travelling outside of Canada. Children travelling to the US before finalization need to obtain a US visitor's Visa as they are not Canadian Citizens. Please call your local US consulate for further details.

Homeland – China

Due to the current situation regarding Covid19, all China homeland tours have been put on hold.

If you'd like more information, please contact Darlene Catton at darlene.catton@childrensbridge.com



SOUTH KOREA ADOPTION PROGRAM

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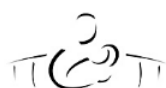
February-March 2020 - There are no program updates this month. Please contact the Program Manager if you have any questions

KOREA

2019 has been an absolutely busy year. I have taken some time to look back and reflect on my work. My ethical values and professional guidelines will continue to be grounded on finding permanency in the best interest of children, critically recognizing that systemic injustices are forcing some birth families to relinquish their children. We, as the adoptive community, should continue to advocate for children to remain with their birth family whenever possible.

I am excited to continue our work in the new year and look forward to welcome many new families. On that note, I would like to provide you with brief updates:

- **Timelines:** SWS indicated that the current timelines will remain for the new year. Of course, as you know, I cannot guarantee these timelines as policies and regulations change periodically.
 - Child referral: 3 – 14 months (after dossier submission)
 - Court hearing: 5 – 7 months (after EP submission)
 - Placement: 2 – 2.5 months (after court hearing)
- **Referral news:** One of the waiting families received a referral of a healthy 6-months old baby boy! The family was thrilled to accept the referral and finalized the process earlier this month. I look forward to working with the family to finalize their adoption later this year. Two other families received a referral and are currently in the review process. Congratulations!





USA ADOPTION PROGRAM

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bruno.jung-millen@childrensbridge.com

February-March 2020 - There are no program updates this month. Please contact the Program Manager if you have any questions

USA (ASC):

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I am excited to continue our work in the new year and look forward to welcome many new families. On that note, I would like to provide you with a brief update:

- **Referral/Placement News:** A beautiful healthy baby girl was born just before Christmas and was placed with a family over the holidays. They crossed the border without any issues and are now back home busy being parents. Congratulations!





USA ADOPTION PROGRAM

Bruno Jung-Millen, Program Manager
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February-March 2020 - There are no program updates this month. Please contact the Program Manager if you have any questions

USA (HSA):

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I am excited to continue our work in the new year and look forward to welcome many new families. On that note, I would like to provide you with brief updates:

- I am consistently in communication with Heartsent to structure the program in ways that would better serve adoptive families while the focus is on the permanency of newborns and creating respectful dialogue and openness with birth families. This cannot be done without an effective and positive working relationship with Heartsent. Thank you for your patience while we are still putting the moving pieces of the process together.
- **Communications with Heartsent:** Unless previously arranged or initiated, all communications must be first directed to TCB in order to prevent any delays in updating your file or missing crucial information. Please be advised that TCB is your adoption facilitating agency and thus your adoption file is subjected to the relevant law and regulations in Ontario. It is our licensing condition that all communications for each file to be confidentially maintained and recorded. If you have any questions about your file and the process, or questions for Heartsent, please direct them to me.





HIV+ KIDS ADOPTION PROGRAM

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

HIV+ Kids Adoption Program

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If you would like any information on the HIV+ Kids adoption program, please contact me at karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com or 1-613-2112 ext. 2.



ZAMBIA ADOPTION PROGRAM

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

****NOT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS****

Republic of Zambia

We are not accepting applications for our Zambia program at this time. This section will be updated once more information becomes available on Zambia's progress in implementing The Hague protocols in its adoption policies.

If you would like any information on the Zambian adoption program, please contact the Program Manager, Karyn Bakelaar at karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com or 1-613-2112 ext. 2.





CHINA HOMELAND VISIT PROGRAM

Darlene Catton, Program Manager
(905) 836-6776
darlene.catton@childrensbridge.com

*****Due to the current situation regarding Covid19, all China homeland tours have been put on hold.***

If you'd like more information, please contact Darlene Catton at darlene.catton@childrensbridge.com**

The March 2020 tour registration package is on the website.

This tour will take place from March 13 – March 27th and will include a visit to Xi'an to see the Terra Cotta Warriors as well as a trip to Guilin!

We have also determined the date of the May 2020 tour and this will take place from May 8 – May 22nd. The itinerary has not yet been finalized but should be on the website within a few weeks.

If you'd like more information, check out the registration package on the website or contact Darlene Catton.



Children's Bridge
making families happen