



ON YOUR FEET FOUNDATION

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE



We **define** a birthparent as a person who has placed a child for adoption.

We **provide** the comprehensive support, services, and community that birthparents deserve no matter when they placed their child for adoption *and* we **advocate** for birthparent rights and ethical practices in adoption in order to improve outcomes for all members of the adoption constellation.

Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.

OVERVIEW

Over twenty years ago, our founders recognized the importance of post-placement care for birthparents. Today, **On Your Feet is recognized as the leader in comprehensive post-placement support for birthparents, a demographic that has historically been underserved within the adoption community.** In the adoption landscape, we are a completely neutral third-party, providing birthparents with case management, adoption-competent therapy, therapeutic retreats, education and counseling grants, adoption education and strong, vibrant community in which to heal and thrive.

Finding a neutral place in which to process their adoption, one not affiliated with their placement, is enormously beneficial for birthparents and vital to their healing process. We know that many birthparents are reluctant to reach out for post-placement help from the same adoption professionals that assisted them with placement, preventing them from seeking the help and support they need, and we know that often that help is necessary not just months after placement, but years afterward, making it incredibly difficult for adoption professionals to provide the dedicated level of care birthparents may require. We exist on the other side of the adoption process, a safe space dedicated to helping birthparents heal.

The adoption landscape has changed considerably over the past twenty years. Today, potential adoptive parents have a wealth of internet resources to help them do their pre-adoption research, birthparents have a greater platform with which to connect to the other members in the adoption constellation and share their stories, and everyone can now see, first-hand, via social media and online forums, how providing excellent post-placement care for birthparents doesn't just help them heal, but also gives adoptive parents a stronger, healthier foundation upon which they want to build their families.

Joining On Your Feet's **Birthparent Support Alliance** gives adoption professionals the opportunity to enhance their current post-placement care, or outsource it completely, by giving their birthparents lifetime access to our comprehensive resources, community, and support, freeing up both their staff and resources in order to better fulfill their mission.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT & SERVICES

On Your Feet offers the most comprehensive set of birthparent support and services in existence. At the core of what we do is **case management**, offering birthparent-directed, bespoke solutions designed to best support every client's unique needs.

Our Case Managers work with birthparents to support them by identifying individual needs; linking to community resources and providers; creating a plan of action; and monitoring progress on their plan, ensuring needs are being met.

On Your Feet Case Management Services Include:

- Assistance in finding qualified adoption-competent therapists, coaches and counseling.
- Assistance in establishing and supporting educational and career goals.
- Budget-planning and connecting with financial counseling resources.
- Helping identify housing, utility assistance, parenting, childcare, and other resources needed to reach goals.
- Connection with On Your Feet's birthparent community.

Beyond Case Management, On Your Feet offers both in-person and virtual programming designed to recognize and meet our community's needs.



Thank you for having this safe space for us! I am so happy and thankful to have found this community of amazing women.

BirthmomsConnect is a Zoom-based support group for all birthmothers, regardless of when they placed.

- Three moderated calls a month.
- Two of these moderated calls are organized around a monthly theme (financial literacy, coping with strong emotions, etc) and are moderated by case management staff.
- One moderated call a month dedicated to navigating closed adoptions, and/or birthparents in reunion.
- Three un-moderated calls a month. These are open conversations for any birthparent choosing to call in.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT & SERVICES

Thank you so much for an amazing weekend! I felt so comfortable here with everyone and I was glad I got to share my story with people that can relate, and that we all have a special bond that brings us together.



BIRTHPARENT RETREAT

September 24th-26th

REGISTRATION CLOSING SEPTEMBER 14TH!

by birthparents, for birthparents



On Your Feet runs four **therapeutic birthparent retreats** a year, using an all-birthparent staff so that everyone in attendance understands each other's experiences and journey. These retreats are a mix of both in-person and virtual events, in order to make them accessible to as many participants as possible.



OYFF has helped me grieve the placement of my son 14 years ago. I love sharing my heart with other women who have walked in my shoes.

Our **Birthmother's Day Events** each year are an opportunity for us to recognize and honor birthmothers, and often, ours is the only recognition they receive that day. In the past, we've done online events that included a poetry workshop, a yoga class, and a guided art lesson from an art therapist, using art kits we mailed out to all of our participants. Other gifts we've sent birthmothers on what can be a difficult day include bracelets designed just for our birthmothers, reminding them that they are never alone.



We also offer case management services and community to **birthfathers**, a group that is very often completely overlooked in the adoption triad. Our private, online group for birthfathers provides them the space they need to connect and heal.



BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT & SERVICES



Our **Mentor Program** pairs up birthmoms in a mentor/mentee dynamic, giving birthmothers a safe space in which to get more comfortable talking about their feelings, and enabling them to achieve goals within their adoption while becoming better connected to the On Your Feet community.

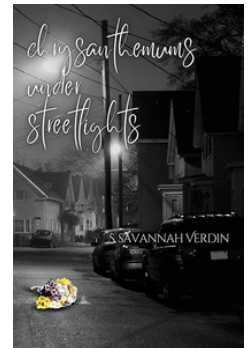
Throughout the year, On Your Feet offers our birthparents fun and inspiring **events and celebrations**. Our annual holiday party is always a blast, and starting the New Year creating a vision board is a great way for our birthparents to practice being intentional in their goal-setting. Our Case Managers always have a lot of creative, fun ideas for new events!



We started our **Create! grant** in 2020 because we know the power of making art as a catalyst for healing. Our 2023 grant winner, Tiffany, proposed a project that provided birthparents an opportunity to do just that. Her winning submission, **More Than Art**, was a four-session intentional art-making group held in 2024, led by Tiffany — an artist, social worker, and birthmother — and was designed to give other birthparents a space to process and create art to help them heal.



Previous Create! grants were awarded to birthmothers who wrote **memoirs**, two of which have been published — one from Candace Cahill, and the other from S. Savannah Verdin.



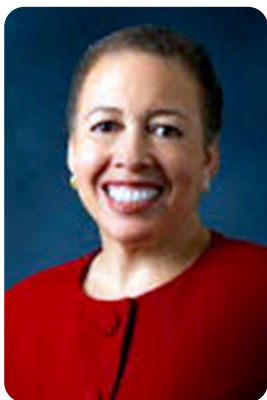
ACTIVISM IN ADOPTION

adoption education for the 21st century



Activism
in
Adoption

Activism in Adoption is organized around three key concepts — Race, Relationships, and Resilience — centering birthparent and adoptee voices, bringing the nuance and detail that can only come from lived experience. When we listen to the individuals whose lives are most impacted by adoption, when we allow ourselves to sit in uncomfortable spaces, we learn and we grow, and we become the change-makers - improving outcomes in adoption for our children, for ourselves as adoptive parents and adoption professionals, and for the birthparents who chose to place their children for adoption. **We are Stronger Together.**



Activism in Adoption is not just an educational series, but a *movement* dedicated to privileging the voices of birthparents and adoptees in adoption education in order to improve outcomes for everyone in the adoption constellation. Most adoption education ends before an adoption is finalized, but **where other adoption education programs stop, we are just getting started.**

www.activisminadoption.org



BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT & SERVICES

ON YOUR FEET 2024 IMPACT

In 2024, On Your Feet served 703 birthparents — a 21% increase from 2023 — including 99 new clients, in 46 states and 3 countries.

2024's highlights include:

- Hosting 88 **BirthmomsConnect Calls**, providing support to over 368 birthparents
- Connecting more than 371 birthparents through closed **Facebook groups**, including our birthfathers support group
- Having 20 participants in our **Birthmom-to-Birthmom Mentoring Program**
- Sending over 1330 **birthday card emails** to our clients for both their birthday, and for the birthdays of the children they placed, providing them connection, recognition, and community on difficult days
- Welcoming 31 birthmoms at either an **in-person or virtual therapeutic retreat**
- Mailing pocket heart hugs to more than 30 birthmoms and hosted a virtual gathering to honor them for **Birthmother's Day**, providing birthmoms the kind of care and support they need on a difficult holiday
- Giving Kintsugi hearts to more than 24 birthmoms and hosting a virtual gathering to honor them on **Birthmothers' Day**
- Hosting **special events** like Palentine's Day and a holiday party for 54 birthparents
- Providing gifts for 52 children through our **Holiday Assistance Program**. Since 2020, this program has provided over 275 gifts for the children placed by our birthparents, along with children they are parenting.



On Your Feet and my case manager have believed in me, in my goals, since I reached out seeking educational funding. They've been supportive beyond those goals, supportive of me as a whole person. My case manager has been insightful and very mindful of all of my potential needs. I've had a lot of loss in my life in the last two years, and sometimes it is hard to convince the world that, despite all of this, I still have so much left in me to give and to grow. My OYFF case manager has been one of the rare people in this world I didn't have to convince of that. She inherently saw my value as a person and the value in my plan and my goals. It's meant the world to me in some dark days.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT & SERVICES

WHO WE ARE

- Our Staff and Board of Directors are represented by all **members of the adoption constellation**:
 - Lived experiences include open adoptions, closed and reunion adoptions, transracial adoptions and foster care.
 - We hold undergraduate and advanced degrees in social work, organizational psychology, sociology, education, psychology, marketing and beyond.
 - Our Board of Directors and Advisory Boards include adoption professionals (MSW, JD), healthcare professionals, teachers, non-profit, business and marketing professionals.

On Your Feet is committed to fostering a community that celebrates the uniquely individual experiences that have brought each of us to adoption. We strive to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive space in order to create a culture of safety and belonging for all of our stakeholders, one in which each voice is valued and heard.

- **We are not an agency.** We are firmly committed to our neutral position in the adoption landscape. We do not counsel expectant parents and if approached by an expectant parent, we refer them to agencies/organizations who offer options counseling. It is imperative to our staff and mission that our services are not used as an incentive to place for any expectant parent and that we do not influence any expectant parent in their choice.
- **We are a secular organization.** We recognize that many birthparents who connect with us are strongly guided by their faith, while others are not. We counsel our staff and clients that their faith, beliefs and values are valid and that they are welcome to share them provided they never impose their faith, beliefs, or values on others.
- **We are not a 24 hour response organization.** We monitor our closed groups on social media closely with set alerts that go out to all admins when certain language is used and provide information on crisis resources on our website and in our groups.
- **We are listening and learning every single day.** While many of us have walked the journey of adoption for years, decades, even lifetimes, we recognize that we can always learn, grow and do better.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

A **Birthparent Support Alliance Membership** provides access to our complete suite of services, starting with dedicated case management for your birthparents. As well, all of your birthparents have access to our social programming, such as our annual holiday party, mentoring programs, and Birthmother's Day events.

Onboarding is quarterly, with 12-month contracts beginning on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. With a Birthparent Support Alliance Membership, your agency can outsource most, if not all, of your post-placement services to On Your Feet. We know that birthparents need that neutral space in which they can access support while healing, and our organization will provide it for your birthparents — *for a lifetime*.



CORE BENEFITS

Your birthparents will work one-on-one with one of our Case Managers. Benefits of this include:

- Eligibility for our Counseling and Education Grants
- Comprehensive assistance in identifying resources, including qualified adoption-competent therapists, housing, tuition assistance, legal resources, resume-building and job assistance, and life coaching
- Help with budget-planning and connection to financial counseling resources
- Access to our Birthparent Mentor Program and BirthMomsToday Cohort
- Assistance in establishing and following through on educational goals

Additionally, all of your birthparents also have access to:

- Connection with On Your Feet's birthparent community
- Access to our Holiday Assistance Program, Birthday Card Program, and all Birthparent events



I want more birthparents to know about On Your Feet Foundation because... having support after placement is vital to processing the psychological aftermath of relinquishment. The impact of sharing space with someone who understands what you've been through, can relate to the complex feelings and rollercoaster of emotions, and will not judge you can not truly be measured.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

Birthparent Support Alliance Members also receive:

- A thorough onboarding process that includes client contact releases for your birthparents, a web page template to add Alliance information to your site, examples of the sample email we send to your birthparents, and quarterly reports detailing the support your birthparents are receiving.
- The ability to print bespoke copies of our Amazon five-star reviewed therapeutic birthparent journal, that includes your own logo and introduction on the front pages.
- Access to Activism in Adoption Education Recordings, both for your hopeful adoptive parents to use to earn their education credits, and as a staff training tool.
- Guaranteed space for up to five birthmothers annually at our retreats, and discounted pricing for their retreat fees.
- Access to dedicated Birthparent Support Alliance Adoption Professionals Networking Meetings, held twice a year.

Thanks to On Your Feet, I have really gotten back on my feet. They helped me get back into school, update my résumé, and find a job, which has lead me to the career in which I now have six years of experience. Thanks to On Your Feet Foundation, I have hope.

In addition to featuring your logo on our website and regularly posting the names and links of adoption professionals and agencies who are **Birthparent Support Alliance Members** on our social media, we also provide you with an annual graphic, suitable for display both on your web site and on your marketing and promotional materials, a powerful signifier to both clients and potential clients of your commitment to post-placement birthparent support.

Birthparent Support Alliance Members automatically stand out from their peers because potential adoptive parents are looking for agencies that have committed to the level of birthparent care necessary to give every new family formed by adoption the best chance possible for a healthy and rewarding open adoption.



BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

AGENCY BENEFITS

Providing birthparents with the post-placement support and care they need to heal and get back on their feet doesn't just benefit them; it also benefits adoptees, adoptive parents, and of course, adoption professionals. These benefits include:

When adoption agencies prioritize post-placement care, outcomes improve. Not just for birthparents, but for adoptees and their families. Life-time access to post-placement care needs to be the standard. Not the exception.

- The opportunity to outsource some, or all of your post-placement care, allowing you to refocus the time and resources you are currently spending trying to create, manage, and maintain the support birthparents need
- The comfort of knowing that On Your Feet Foundation is a large, sustainable community, giving your birthparents more opportunities to build connections while participating in our programming
- The comfort of knowing that your birthparents are receiving ethical, comprehensive, post-placement support, in order to heal, and to thrive.
- The knowledge that your birthparents have access to a level of support that can help them build and maintain healthy relationships with their child's adoptive parents
- The opportunity to include Birthparent Support Alliance membership on all marketing, social media, and promotional materials as a means of differentiating your agency in the adoption landscape.



BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP CAN DIFFERENTIATE YOU FROM OTHER AGENCIES

How birthparents process and heal from their placement impacts both adoptees and adoptive parents for a lifetime

- Alliance members are able to tell prospective adoptive parents that their child's birthmother can receive comprehensive post-placement care - for a lifetime
- Alliance members are also able to outsource the help, mediation, and solutions adoptive parents often ask for, post-adoption, when trying to build a relationship with their child's birthparents.



Nothing prepared me for how much time I'd spend trying to help Daniel's birthmom. I didn't realize we would just be left to deal with her forever, and that she might not see our adoption as the blessing we do.

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

CONSULTING SERVICES

To better customize your experience, Birthparent Support Alliance Members can tap into our wealth of knowledge and experience to suit their organization's needs, and the needs of their birthparents.

On Your Feet has been a Light In The Darkness for me I am so grateful to not feel alone in this wonderful community!!!!

I started regularly attending the Closed/Reunion monthly Zoom calls last year and found the support and camaraderie really helpful and affirming but stopped going after things soured with my son during the holidays. I returned this month (June) and Robyn and the group made me feel so welcome after being away--it felt really great. Thank you to the On Your Feet team for showing up for us so we can learn to recognize we're worthy of showing up for ourselves.

On Your Feet consulting services are completely customizable and may include staff training, site reviews, materials review, or providing you with birthparent speakers for your events. Our staff include non-profit professionals, case managers, and social workers, all of whom are experts in the field of adoption.



Someday, you are going to have to tell your child the circumstances surrounding their adoption. Are you going to be able to tell them that you did everything you could to make sure their adoption was ethical? That you made sure that their birth mother had access to the resources she needed to heal?

- Hope Baker

*On Your Feet Board Member, and author,
Finding Hope: A Birthmother's Journey into the Light*

BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE

ANNUAL COST

For small to mid-size agencies, **Birthparent Support Alliance Memberships** are \$6,000 per year + a one-time \$500 set-up fee. Memberships provide access to our complete suite of services, including dedicated case management for your birthparents. As well, all of your birthparents have access to our social programming, such as our annual holiday party, mentoring programs, and Birthmother's Day events.

Onboarding is quarterly, with 12-month contracts beginning on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. New members may choose from one of the following additional benefits:

1. Up to 10 Solace Birthmom Gift Boxes for their birthmoms
2. A virtual mini Retreat-in-a-Box for up to 10 birthmoms
3. A 90-minute session for your adoptive families featuring seasoned adoptive parents on "*What I Wish I had Known When I was Adopting*"



WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO JOIN THE BIRTHPARENT SUPPORT ALLIANCE?

"I think it is important to fund and pour resources into organizations that are caring for birth parents. Especially when looking through a historical perspective and how our society, agencies, adoptive families viewed birth parents, it's even more necessary to correct it today. **Birthparents cannot be the disposable party. Our agency was already providing counseling to birth parents post placement, but as we have seen, some birthparents need time to distance themselves and process this loss before seeking out counseling. So whenever a birth parent reaches out in the life of her child we want to be there for her/them.** [Working with] On Your Feet broadens the community and scope of support available to parents. And for this, we are grateful agencies like yours exist- to help with counseling as well as case management resources that she might need years after engaging with the adoption agency. This service broadens our commitment to support our clients "every step of the way" to a birthparent when she/he is ready."



Give your birthparents lifetime access to our comprehensive resources, community, and support, freeing up both your staff and resources in order to better fulfill your mission. For more information, please contact:



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