Liz and Alli

Dear Birthmother,

Thank you so much for reading our letter. We know you're contemplating a huge decision in your life, and the life of your expected baby. We admire you for thinking about what you want most for your child. Please know that if you choose to place your child with us, she or he will be a cherished member of our family and will be well-loved and welcomed wholeheartedly by both of our extended families. We know that any woman in America could have this same dilemma. We are two women who will not judge you, but, rather, will appreciate you and raise your child to appreciate you and your courage. We would raise your child to respect you and to always know what a loving decision you made by bringing us together.

About Us

We are both in our early thirties, and we live in a residential community in Boston. We own the second floor of a colonial house on a quiet, one-way street made up of mostly single-family homes. The section of Boston where we live has a traditional town square, with a farmers' market every weekend in the summer, and a Christmas Tree lighting ceremony in December. Our community has a wonderfully diverse population with many families of varied backgrounds and cultural traditions. We are eager to add a stroller to our walks around the nearby pond and Arboretum, where we take our two dogs, Otis and Annie, in the nicer weather.

Speaking of our dogs, Otis is a dachshund, and Annie is a beagle. They are both middle-aged rescue dogs, who thankfully are not barkers. Otis lives to eat and curl up on our laps. Annie loves to chase her squeaky stuffed animals and curl up with them on the couch. Both dogs are gentle and friendly around our two young nieces, Abby, age 4, and Haleigh, age 10. We expect they will be gentle and enjoyable for a child who joins our family.

Otis and Annie

Alli, Abby and Liz

We first met in college, and have always had a special connection. It wasn't until several years after we graduated that we realized this connection was much deeper than friendship. Here we are, seven years later: married, enjoying our careers and a really happy time in our lives. The one part of our lives that we feel is missing is having a son or daughter. We've both always known that we wanted to be parents, but weren't sure how we would get there. After much soul-searching and learning, we made the choice to pursue adoption. We both have friends and co-workers who have adopted children, and we've seen how much joy adoption and parenting have brought to their lives.

Laughter and a sense of fun and spontaneity are central to our lives, as well as to our families and our close friends. Get-togethers with Liz's family almost always involve games and puzzles, or rides around Lake Champlain on Liz's grandfather's famous pontoon boat. At Alli's family's home, we have hoops tournaments, hide and seek games, and occasionally (as we did this past Christmas Eve) spontaneous living-room karaoke nights. At home, we make each other laugh and keep each other upbeat. We are excited to welcome a child into our home to join in the fun.

Alli's bookshelf

Liz's Christmas stockings

In addition to stable careers that are the foundation of our family's security, we both enjoy other activities – we look forward to sharing our passions with our child someday. Since college, we've both discovered new passions: Alli's include filmmaking and woodworking, and Liz's are photography and sewing. Our home is decorated with several of Liz's framed photos and quilts, and furniture made by Alli.

In each of our lives, we've been so fortunate to have had opportunities to explore our interests. Growing up in Vermont, Liz found herself interested in learning about and later studying in Africa; she was particularly drawn to spending time learning about cultures that were different from her own. Both of us lived for music in high school. Alli played 3 different instruments (the marimba, the piano, and the guitar), and Liz played the piano and clarinet. No matter what our child's passions are, and we assume they may change as he or she grows up, we are ready to encourage and cheer him or her on from the sidelines.

McMahon family - 2008

Our child will have four devoted and doting grandparents, and two wonderful uncles who can't wait to meet their new niece or nephew. Our niece Haleigh is excited about having a baby cousin and has been emailing questions about the adoption process. Our younger niece will be closer in age to our child, and a good playmate. Both girls are eager to welcome a new baby into the family. Everyone in our family is very comfortable with adoption – a child who joins our family through adoption will be loved equally with every other child.

Ruda family - 2009

We were given the gift of unconditional love and it has helped us start our family and become established in our careers. We hope to become parents with the ability to create a similar foundation for our child.

Now for the fun part! We'd like to tell you a bit about ourselves from the perspective of the person who knows us best -- each other.

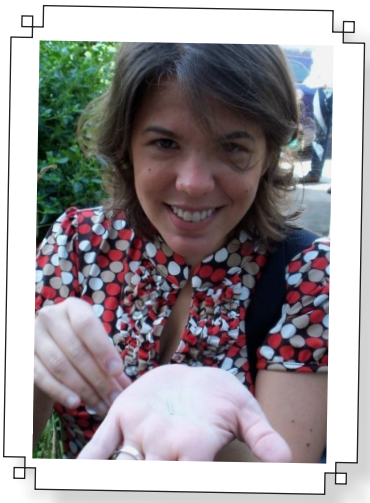
Alli on Liz

We had the good fortune of meeting when we were young and growing our lives together. Our relationship is solid because we have known each other over time and know how to adapt and change to the needs we each have and for our dreams as a couple. I remember meeting Liz in college. She wore clothes and jewelry that she had made herself. She had huge rock star posters on her wall, and you couldn't see the floor of her dorm room for all the books, clothes, and snack foods. Still, she was one of the most disciplined and centered people I had ever met without being too serious.

On a moment's notice, she'd leave campus with me to shoot hoops at a nearby park, or we would lose hours of study time to card tournaments, or to conversations about sometimes silly—and, sometimes not so silly--things. While her homemade clothes have been replaced by work suits, and we shudder at pictures of that messy dorm room, the sense of fun, closeness, and spontaneity we had in College has never been absent from our relationship, and has only deepened over time.

Abby & Liz

Liz loves problems that have logical answers. She loves to bake because of the preciseness and attention to detail, and she loves practicing law for the same reason. Among some of our close friends, her nickname is "Rules." Yet, for all of the ways that she loves structure in her world, she has a natural ability to bring humor and spontaneity into our lives. She belts out alternative lyrics to pop songs or breaks into ridiculous dance routines with spot-on comedic timing. She often has me doubled-over laughing when she narrates what our dogs must be thinking. She's a vegetarian who makes a mean meat loaf (which she did once for me as a treat after a bad day), and our nieces, Haleigh and Abby, light up when "Lizzy" is around. She has an ability, like no one I've ever known, to recognize what people need most emotionally at certain moments, and to provide just the thing needed most. She reads newspaper articles out loud that she thinks I should read, but knows I'll never get to. She is kind and gentle, generous and empathic, and will make an amazing mom.



Liz on Alli

Alli and I met in college and were drawn to each other because of our shared senses of humor, love of life, and interests in music and history. This is not to say we were similar, because in fact we were, and still are, very different people in the ways that make us interesting to each other. We have complimentary personalities, and we fit together like puzzle pieces. Alli and I became very close within our friend group - I loved her ability to be one of the goofiest people around, but also a serious student. I learned a lot from her on our routine trips to Dunkin' Donuts or on lazy vacation days spent unraveling the mysteries of whichever anthropology book she was reading at the time. One night she told me all about her family's Christmas and Easter traditions, which I found fascinating. Her family still has cultural traditions outside of mainstream American culture. It is a family tradition to share homemade nutbread with close friends and family at Christmas time.

Our holiday nutbread

Haleigh & Alli

Alli and I now make the nut-bread every year, using her grandmother's original recipe. We bring several loaves to Alli's family gathering on Christmas eve, and ship loaves to those who can't be with us that night.

Alli's love of life is infectious - she comes alive when the radio is on, or when she is outdoors, or cooking, or singing or playing games (she is going through a Scrabble phase right now). Alli brings life into the house; she often walks through the door after work saying, "you know, I was just thinking..." followed by anything ranging from a dish we could try making with dinner, to a new theory about why Annie doesn't bark. Alli is very inquisitive, leading to a love of history, museums, and documentaries. She doesn't indulge her interests by sitting still, though. One example is mudlarking - Alli read about people who search for historic objects during low tide on the banks of the river Thames in London. When we went to England last year, she climbed down the side of the river bank and dug around, finding pottery and pipe stems dating back over 200 years ago. I admire her openness to wonder and learning, and am excited to see her engage our child in her quest for knowledge and adventure.

Mudlarking treasures

Alzheimer's Walk
Boston 2009

Our Values

Our child will be raised with a sense of faith and security. They will grow up knowing that they can safely pursue their dreams. We'll value what is important to them. We'll plan ahead so that we can provide for their college education and support them further as well. We think it's important to raise a child to appreciate their good fortune and to help others who haven't had the same luck and opportunities. Caring for others and contributing to the community, each of us, in our own way, is a value our child or children will live and know.

We both attribute much of who we are today to our experiences in school, and we're both strong advocates for education. Liz mentors high school seniors who are applying to college, and she volunteered for her College's Alumni Association after graduating. Both of us aspire to lend a hand with whatever extra-curricular activities and/or sports our child chooses to be involved in. Liz thinks about teaching soccer (she was a goalie throughout high school), and Alli is already excited about helping out with school projects and girl or boy scout troops.

We were both raised to value equality, kindness, and generosity toward others, and we try our best to reflect those values in the lives we lead now. We feel strongly about civic participation, the protection of animals and the environment. Thinking about all the good fortune and good people in our lives has allowed us to meet life's challenges positively, and we hope to help our child grow up to be an adult who shares these same values.

We understand that what you may want, in terms of communication, over the years that your child is growing up, may be different from time to time. We want you to know that we're happy to provide photo/letter updates, set up a web site where you can view photos anytime/anywhere, to stay in touch so we can talk by phone and even have time for picnics or other in-person connection if this is something that you'd like. If you want more privacy, please know that we want to follow your comfort level as well. We want you to feel respected, appreciated and known to whatever degree is comfortable to you. Mom to mom, we want to have an open channel of communication and care.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you'd like to speak with us, we'd love to hear from you. Please call our adoption worker at Full Circle if you'd like to connect with us; 800-452-3678 is their toll free number. Whatever path you choose, we sincerely wish you all the very best.

With gratitude,
Liz & Alli