



Profile Guidelines for Kirsh & Kirsh, P.C., Families

(Revised 9/9/24)

I. Introduction/Overview

- A. An expectant/birth mother choosing you depends largely, if not entirely, on your profile.
- B. The profile is 99% about the photos.
- C. If an expectant/birth mother does not like the photos, she will not read the words. If she likes the photos, **she still may not read the words.**
- D. We recommend that you use ParentFinder for the creation of your profile.
 - 1. You can sign up as Kirsh & Kirsh, P.C., client at <http://bit.ly/ParentFinder>
 - 2. If ParentFinder's guidelines contradict these guidelines, please follow these guidelines.

II. Selection of Photos

- A. If you are not smiling, do not include the photo. If she thinks that you are mean, sad, angry, upset, etc., you will probably not get selected.
- B. All, or most, photos should have "hooks". "Hooks" are things that might catch the birth mother's attention...a Notre Dame hat, fishing, baking, farming, playing soccer, horseback riding...Anything that the mom might see and say, "Oh they ride horses, I love horses." Photos of the two of you sitting next to each other smiling only tell the birth mother that you like to sit next to each other and smile. (Exception: front and back cover photos – see E.2.)
- C. The photos should depict a realistic view of your life.
 - 1. Photos of your home, yard, neighborhood, nearby parks, etc. are better than photos of exotic places.
 - 2. One or two photos of exotic places are okay, **IF** you are in the photos. She is not going to choose you because you have included a photo of a beautiful beach or sunset – perhaps, if you are in the photo, maybe, but not just because it is a photo of beautiful scenery.
 - 3. Likewise, photos of food will not help you, unless you like to cook, and you include a photo of you making the dish or dessert. Like a photo of a beautiful sunset that does not include you, a photo of a plate of cookies or casserole, will not cause her to choose you.
- D. **ONLY** include a photo of a child or children unless it is a photo of your child or children **OR UNLESS** you include a clear caption with the picture.
 - 1. Remember, it is unlikely that she will read what you have written, if she does not like the photos. If she sees photos of children, she will assume they are your children.
 - 2. The photos of your child or children should depict the oldest, most independent version of the child or children. If she sees a photo of your child as a newborn and as an older child, she will think you have two children. By the way, trying to adopt with a newborn in the home is very challenging.

3. Do not include your child(ren) on the cover or within the first few pages of your profile. Try to put as many photos as possible with hooks in them before you show your child(ren). Lots of birth mothers think that they want a family without children. If she gets “hooked” because you like horses, she may no longer care that you already have a child.
 4. Her best way of knowing what her child's life will be like with you as a parent is to show her what your child's life is like.
 - a) Show your child doing whatever your child enjoys doing.
 - b) It is okay to hold your child in some of the photos but not all. If you hold your child in every photo, your arms are full. She needs to see that you have time for another child.
 5. Include photos of other children if they are great photos, not because there is a child in the photo. If you include such a photo, make sure to include a BIG caption, something like: “Not our child. Want one like this one but not ours.” Obviously, the quoted words should not be used verbatim, but make it clear that the photo is not your child.
- E. Photos of you should not leave her confused about who is depicted in the photo or who you are, if she chooses to meet you, in person or via Zoom. For example,
- a) You have gained or lost considerable weight.
 - b) You have changed your hair color or significantly changed the length of your hair.
 - c) You have aged significantly. Specifically, do not include photos of you as a teenager and at your current age. If you were high school sweethearts, you could include “before and after” photos, if you include a conspicuous caption like: “We have been together since high school. This is us then and now.”
2. The first photo should be the best, casual photo of you ever taken, with you looking into the camera. The last photo should be the second-best photo ever taken, again, with you looking into the camera.
 3. Candid photos are better than photos of you smiling into the camera, except for the first and last photos of your profile. By “candid,” we mean photos of you doing something rather than a posed photo of you smiling into the camera.
 - a) If you have children, you probably have lots of candid photos of your children.
 - b) You may even have candid photos of each other.
 - c) Getting candid photos of you as a couple (if you are adopting as a married couple) are hard to come by, but priceless, if you can get them. Ask friends and family to take candid pictures of you whenever possible and send them to you, whether for your current profile, or a revised version later.
 4. **Consider some professional photos**, especially to get candid photos of the two of you (again, if you are adopting as a married couple).
- F. Photos of your house and yard are great, if your home and yard photograph well, and if you are in the pictures. Pictures of your house on its own can seem cold,

like a real estate listing. Just be sure that your name or address is not on the outside of the house.

1. Avoid photographs of
 - a) Your car,
 - b) Work vehicle, and
 - c) Anything that might identify you.
 2. Do not include a photo of your Christmas tree. Everyone seems to want to include a photo of the Christmas tree. **NO ONE** has ever been chosen because they have a beautiful Christmas tree. By the way, it is really hard to make Christmas trees ugly!
- G. Include pictures of your furry pets. Avoid photos of reptiles and spiders. Puppies and kittens are particularly good. If you don't have a puppy, get one. Just kidding about the puppy – not about the snakes and spiders.
- H. You should avoid photos of other people unless you are in the photo and the photo furthers the goal of you realistically depicting your life.
1. Photos of extended family **SHOULD** be included, with captions. Birth mothers want to see your family and support system. At least one entire page can and should be dedicated to showing family/traditions, etc. Make sure to add a big caption to any photo that includes nieces and nephews, to make it clear that they are nieces and nephews.
 2. If you are white and seek to adopt a black child and you have a photo of you and a close friend who is African-American, you might want to include the photo, with a conspicuous caption: "Robert and I have been close friends since the 5th grade," "William and I try to play golf once a week," "Annette and I teach 5th Grade Math together."
 3. If you like to fish, it is okay to include a photo of you and your fishing buddy **fishing** – not just of the two of you.
 4. Including a photo of your sister, best friend, neighbor, or any other random person will not help you. In other words, avoid including photos of other people unless the photos help to tell your story.
- I. Often expectant/birth mothers review the profiles on their phones. A small photo on an 8 ½ x 11" sheet of paper is really tiny on a phone.
- J. **USE HIGH RESOLUTION** photos. You can make a large, formatted photo smaller, but if try to increase the size of a low-resolution photo, the photo becomes grainy.

III. **Written Sections**

- A. If a mother takes the time to read the words, make them interesting.
- B. Do not describe each other in a way that everyone would. For example, "My husband, Bill, is my best friend, he loves children and will make a great father."
 1. Everyone writing a description would use those words.
 2. One could substitute any name for "Bill," and the description would be true.
 3. No one would ever describe "Bill" the opposite way: "Bill is a horrible person. I hate him. I would not let him take care of my goldfish."
- C. Fun facts are more interesting.

1. Coke or Pepsi, KFC or Church's, Football or Baseball, etc., or
 2. Favorite places and things.
- D. A description of how you met is sometimes interesting. Include it if your story is interesting.
- E. A description of your town or neighborhood might help her decide you are the family for her baby but only if it is interesting. "We live in tract house, in subdivision of 500 homes" is not as compelling as, "We live in a neighborhood, where people sit on their front porches in the evenings and watch the children playing on the sidewalk or the park across the street."
- F. Do not feel compelled to include a section that would not cause her to choose you. For example, if you met in an interesting way, include that, but do not feel compelled to include a description of your neighborhood if you live in tract home.
- IV. **Conclusion**
- A. You do not have to be "model-like" attractive to be chosen.
- B. A realistic, honest portrayal of your life will serve you better than trying to create a "Ken and Barbie" portrayal.