



BEN & ERIC



Dear expectant parents,

Hello, we're Ben and Eric!

We appreciate you considering us to be the adoptive parents of your child. This is a big decision, and we hope that this book will help you get to know us.

We're excited to grow our family and think we'll be great, open-hearted parents. Our goal is to find expectant parents that feel a connection to us because we're hoping for a successful open adoption. We've tried to be honest about ourselves and lives in this book, and if you think our vibes mesh with yours, we would love a chance to talk more.

MEET BEN

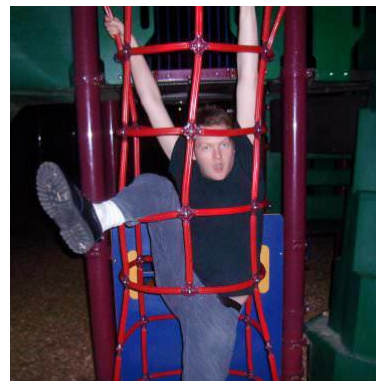
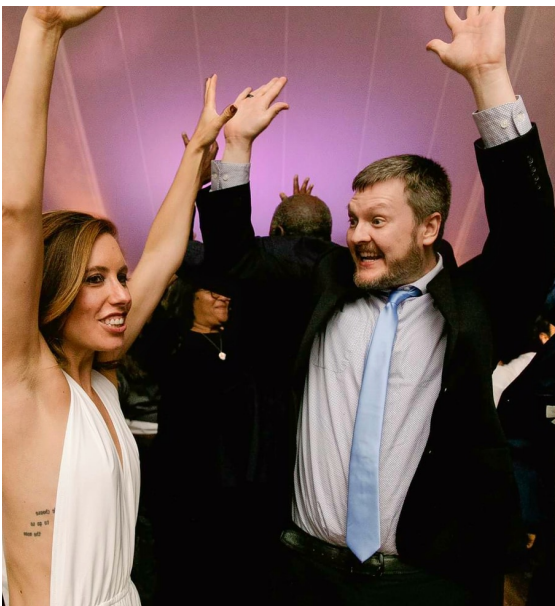


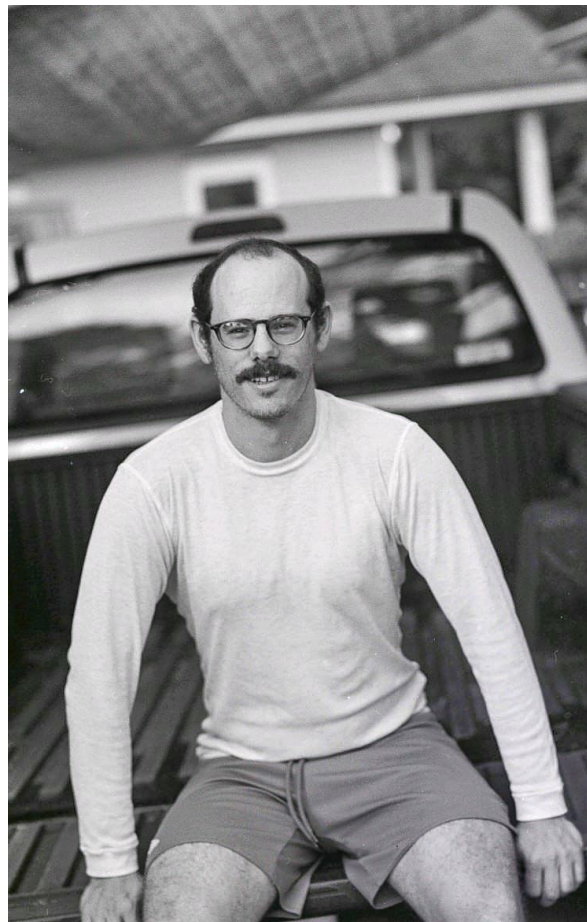
Ben is gentle, emotive, and goofy, but can be a little stern when he needs to be. He gives great advice because he's an observant listener.

Ben's best days involve some screen time (likely several video games and maybe a movie or some trashy TV), a board game (or two!) with friends, and some cooking. He's comically terrible at directions, but Ben laughs about his flaws (and laughs a lot in general). Want a two-sentence synopsis of a TV show? Ask Ben. Want some math done? Ask Ben. Want a delicious meal? Ask Ben. Want to get somewhere? Ask Google.



Ben teaches high school English in Austin. He previously worked in the film industry, most notably voicing a singing garbage truck in several toddler videos with almost one million YouTube views!





MEET ERIC

Eric is smart, pragmatic, earthy, and even-keeled. He loves chatting with anyone about anything and pointing out big trees or interesting rocks.

A great day for Eric likely involves some time outside and with friends: gardening, biking, or just having a beer on a patio (it is Austin after all!) Ideally there's also some bagels and outdoor reading time.

He is close with family in Rochester, New York and has maintained strong friendships with people from every stage of his life.

Eric currently works as a renewable energy lawyer. Previously, Eric was a geologist and owned a vegetable farm.





ABOUT US

We've been together for seven fun years, even through Covid lock-downs. Ben exposes Eric to the internet, nerd culture, and feelings. Eric gets Ben outside sometimes to connect with the natural world. We let each other be our unique, independent selves, but we also make sure to find shared interests. We eat dinner together every night. With open communication, our rare disagreements never become fights. We're family oriented and excited to raise children together.

Eric proposed to Ben with a Key lime pie.

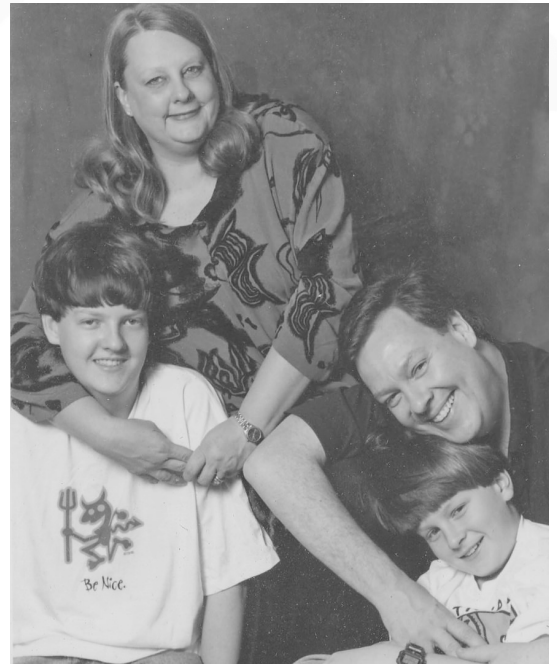
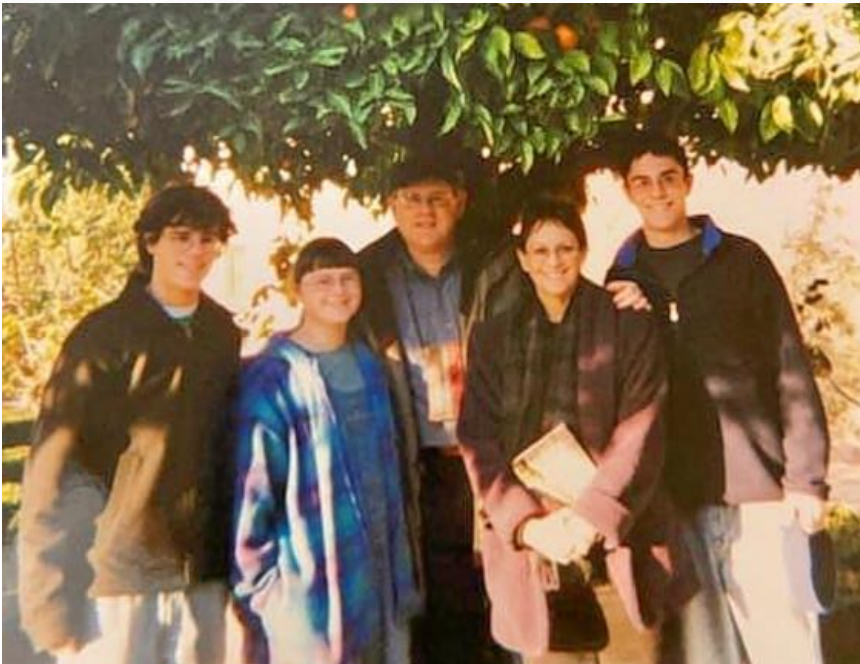


SOME OF OUR FRIENDS



Look! We're well-socialized people with fantastic friends who will make wholesome and fun aunties and uncles.

SNAPSHOTS OF FAMILY



We're both close with our immediate and extended families, and they're all excited to add a new little one to the fold.

HOBBIES

Growing up, Eric was a nerdy, outdoorsy kid, and Ben was a nerdy, inside kid. Not so much has changed. We have lots of separate and shared interests that keep life fun, and we can't wait to see which ones our child enjoys (and what new hobbies our child introduces to us).

Ben loves:

Video games
Reality TV
Anime
Dancing
Swimming



Eric loves:

Gardening
Kayaking
Camping
Hiking
Biking



**We both
love:**
Reading
Board games
Puzzles
Cooking
Museums



WELCOME TO OUR HOME

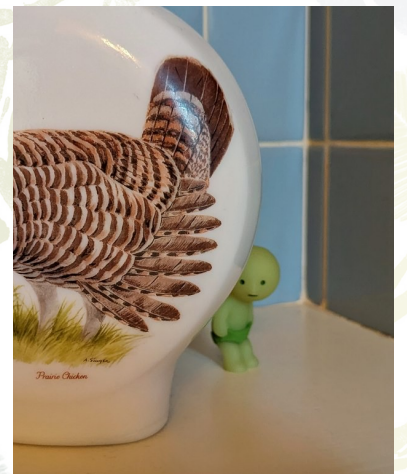




We own a 1940's ranch house in central Austin. We love the mix of old and new, making our house feel like a family home that's perfect for cookouts, playdates, and get-togethers.



Our favorite part of our house is our yard. We have a garden, chicken coop, swing, basketball hoop, and even a creek!



We (i.e., Ben) hide these little figurines (called Smiskis) around the house!

PARENTING PHILOSOPHY

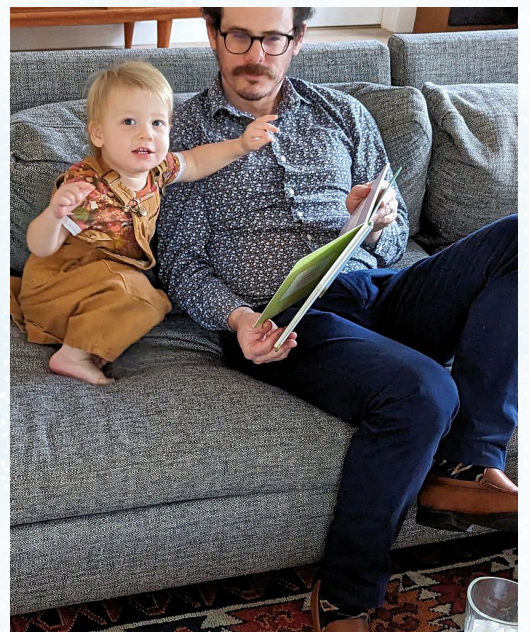
1. We believe that children are human beings, not an accessory or extension of our own sense of self. Children can be guided and encouraged, but they can't be molded into one fixed shape.

2. We believe that parents help shape a child's understanding of and connection with the world, and that power should be used responsibly, intentionally, and lovingly. A child's home should empower them to be their best self.

3. We believe that children need security as well as freedom to thrive. That balance changes constantly and requires reflection.

4. We believe that all relationships take work, time, and attention. We have the capacity and will to provide all three to our children.





WE'RE JEWISH!



Who says gays can't have religion?

Our Judaism is about community, ancient rituals, and “tikkun olam” (Hebrew for “repairing of the world”). A religion of practice more than belief, Judaism in our lives primarily looks like gathering with friends and family over food for holidays (which are loosely related to the seasons throughout the year).

The Jewish values of Eric’s upbringing strongly influence our values today: we work to create the world we want to live in, we recognize our actions do and should impact others, and we’re thankful to be connected to something greater than ourselves.

We’re excited to raise Jewish children as the newest link continuing our small but proud religion.



ADOPTION PROFILE

Ben

Age: 40

Race: White

Nationality: American

Height: 6'2"

Weight: 225 lbs

Hair and eyes: Brown and blue

Occupation: High school English teacher

Education: BA in English from Rice University

Religious background: Raised Methodist



Eric

Age: 36

Race: White

Nationality: American

Height: 5'5"

Weight: 145 lbs

Hair and eyes: Brown and brown

Occupation: Lawyer

Education: Law degree from University of Texas

Religious background: Jewish



Date of Marriage: July 3, 2022

What religion will your children be raised in? Judaism

Current/previous children: None

Description of our home: We live in a 4 bedroom, 2.5 bathroom home in a neighborhood in North-Central Austin. We have a very large backyard with a garden, a chicken coop (chickens coming soon!), a basketball court, and a creek. Our street has a bike lane and jogging path and is within walking distance of an ice cream place and other fun stores.

Childcare plans: We will take paternity leave for the first few months of the child's life, hopefully staggered to maximize the time that we can spend at home with the child. After 6 months or a year, we will likely use daycare except for the summers when Ben doesn't have school.

General philosophy about raising children and discipline: We believe that children are most successful and happiest when they're in a home where they know that they will be nurtured, supported, and loved unconditionally. We want to help our children become the best version of themselves, and we look forward to giving options but letting our children tell us who they are. For discipline, we believe that clear expectations and fair, natural consequences can create a sense of safety and security in our children. We will not spank or use physical punishment.

Why do you want to adopt?

We both love children and have always wanted a family. We both had positive experiences with our families growing up and want to create family memories with children and get the opportunity to help raise some of the next generation.

What kinds of contact are we willing to have with you prior to placement?

We would love the opportunity to meet with you to whatever degree you feel comfortable. We hope to have a positive ongoing relationship, and we feel like that can start before placement. In person contact would be wonderful, but we would understand if you would prefer phone calls or more limited contact.

What kinds of contact are we willing to have after placement and adoption?

Our best case scenario would be a world where our child feels like they have always known all their parents and feels loved and supported by many adults. We hope to have a good relationship with you that is ongoing, but we feel like we all would have to figure out the specifics of what that looks like as we get to know each other. That being said, we're open to many different levels of correspondence, including in-person.

Are we willing to share personal information about ourselves? To what extent?

Yes, if you feel comfortable with that arrangement. The goal is to have a trusting and positive relationship, which feels harder to achieve if we're refusing to share basic information about ourselves.

Beyond letters and pictures in the first six years, what are our thoughts on additional contact?

Our dream adoption arrangement would involve a situation where we, the child, and the first parents all know one another and where everyone feels like this adoption was in the best interest of everyone involved. We recognize that this process could create some large feelings in everyone that makes that level of contact unrealistic, but we'd like for that to be the goal. In order to get to the best possible outcome, we would be open to more contact if it feels positive for both the child and the first parents.

Thank you for looking at our book! If you have any questions, we'd be happy to answer them!

- Ben and Eric

