

# India Adoption Program

Dear Prospective Families:

Thank you for your interest in the MAPS India program. Our commitment is to improve the quality of life for children all over the world through adoption programs, humanitarian aid, and support services.

India has a long history of adoption to the United States. For over a decade, MAPS has worked with a multitude of wonderful orphanages countrywide to place children in caring homes. There is a great need for families for the children residing in orphanages who are legally available for adoption and have little hope of being adopted in their country of origin. Indian parents do adopt in increasing numbers; nevertheless, there are many more children needing families.

When you choose MAPS you will work with a knowledgeable program coordinator who will walk you through the sometimes-complex adoption process. This person will coordinate the U.S. aspects of the program and will work closely with our in-country representatives who guide you while you travel. Together, these teams ensure a positive experience for your family and your new child, both before and during your trip.

When choosing to adopt a child internationally, an extra measure of patience and flexibility are required. In dealing with foreign governments, program and policy changes can occur during your adoption process. While these factors are out of any agency's control, our experienced staff will keep you informed of such changes and will help you navigate any challenges that arise during your adoption. MAPS provides you with the support and guidance you need throughout this journey, as we strive to bring you and your child together as quickly as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kate Emery & Sarah Groff  
India Program Coordinators

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## THE CHILDREN

Children available for adoption are of all ages. The majority are female and we occasionally have males. MAPS has also placed many older children and sibling groups, as well as special needs children.

The children are typically healthy and through MAPS maternal child humanitarian aid work in India, most of the children we place have not been born prematurely. The most common health issues include intestinal parasites, scabies and lice, history of respiratory and ear infections, and other minor correctable conditions. As with all countries, there are children with special needs and MAPS maintains a commitment to find families for these children.

Most children available for adoption have been either relinquished at birth or abandoned. Typically, little is known about birth parents, birth history, or health history prior to admission to an orphanage.

Orphanage health records are very reliable and the health care provided by the orphanage and local hospitals is excellent. Although many children enter the orphanage in less than optimum health, we find that they do well in the orphanage and thrive once they are home with their families.

Life in Indian orphanages is simple, however the individual care, love, and attention from the caretakers is exceptional. Children are held in very high esteem in the Indian culture and this carries over to the care they receive. Older children residing in orphanages will receive early education at the orphanage and will attend public schools through high school. Some may be sent on for vocational training. The ratio of caregivers with infants and toddlers is 2-3 children per caregiver or "aya."

Families who adopt older children must be aware that these children have suffered some emotional deprivation due to institutionalization and early loss. The nurturing these children receive by caretakers helps to compensate for these early losses. Characteristics of the older children will be similar to those of any child with special needs stemming from a lack of proper parenting, multiple caregivers, a loss of personal history, and developmental delays that are often a result of institutional care.

MAPS recommends that all adoptive families make every effort to understand the issues of adoption from their child's point of view. Since adoption issues do not end at the time of placement, it is suggested that families remain open to seeking support from various resources as their child grows into adulthood. These resources include adoptive parents support groups,

professional counseling, the home study agency, and an ever-expanding body of literature on adoptive parenting and cultural affiliations. MAPS is always available to help parents with such resources.

## FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

Both married couples and single women can adopt. More specific requirements vary from orphanage to orphanage. Couples should be married a minimum of 5 years. (Some case-by-case flexibility for 2+ years of marriage with previous history of committed relationship). For couples: combined age of 90 or under; minimum age of 30, maximum age of 55. For infants (available only to NRI/OCI families) parents must be 45 or younger, preferably one parent under 42\*. For singles: minimum age of 30, maximum age of 55 (42 or younger for infant, available only to NRI/OCI family). Rules regarding the number of children presently in the family do vary according to orphanage policies. For older children and non-NRI/OCI families the general guideline is that parent should be no more than 45 years older than child.

**CHILDREN:** Infants, toddlers, and school age children. Siblings are possible but are usually older. Each child is unique and most of the children are healthy; some children with special needs are available.

**\*Currently seeking applications from NRI/OCI families requesting an infant (open for a limited NUMBER of applications prior to 5/1/09; NRI/OCI families requesting non-special needs children over 2 years old; and NON NRI/OCI families requesting non-special needs children over 3, or children under 3 years old with special needs. Contact us for further information as needed.**

Families applying for a child from India should demonstrate a sincere willingness to get to know and appreciate the culture of India and be prepared to impart that knowledge and affirmation to their child.

## TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

One or both parents may travel and the length of stay is approximately 7-10 days.

## TIMEFRAME & PROCESS

Once your family has applied to the India program, a MAPS program coordinator will assist your family to complete a dossier (an authenticated set of documents), according to the rules of the Indian Child Welfare System and CARA. MAPS works with each family to determine child preference and then works with the orphanage to identify an appropriate child. A child may be offered once the family has achieved I-800A approval. For NRI/OCI families healthy children may be referred at approximately 6-12 months of age. For non-Indian families healthy children ages 7 years and above may be referred. Special needs children of all ages are available to all families and families open to waiting children may have very fast referrals once I-800A approval has been achieved. The

referral time for OCI and NRI\* families seeking non-special needs children under 2 years is 12 to 24 months from time of I-800A approval. The referral time for NRI/OCI families seeking non-special needs children over age 2 is 2 to 8 months. For non NRI/OCI families seeking a child over 3 or a child under 3 with special needs, the referral time is approximately 2-8 months. Families must be open to a child up to 18 months of age at time of referral. NRI/OCI families may visit the child in the orphanage prior to acceptance of the referral.

\*NRI = Non-Resident Indian OCI = Overseas Citizen of India (OCI card holder)

Administrative and judicial processing usually takes 6-8 months, but is subject to variability in Indian courts. The courts will issue the family a guardianship of the child. After guardianship has been granted, the family can travel to India to bring your child home. CIS and Interstate Compact approval needs to be in place before a visa can be granted for the child to enter the U.S. - MAPS will assist you with this process.

Pending successful completion of a post-placement supervisory period, finalization of the adoption in the court of your family's state of residence can occur. Families are required by the Indian government to send periodic reports and photographs, through MAPS, for a specified period of time prior to and following U.S. finalization.

Non-resident Indian families of Hindu faith can formally adopt a child under the Hindu Adoption Act. The post-placement supervisory period is still required in the family's state of residence, followed by a recognition of foreign adoption by a local court.

Please be aware that international adoption programs are always evolving. During the course of your adoption, you may encounter some policy and procedural changes, delays, restrictions, or moratoriums placed on programs by the foreign government. We will keep you advised of any changes and will work diligently to bring you and your child together as soon as possible.

## **COSTS**

The initial fee, submitted to MAPS, is the application fee of \$600 and is not country-specific. MAPS agency fee for India is \$10,500 (\$5,500 payable at program acceptance, \$5,000 at child acceptance). The India foreign program fee is \$7,000 (payable upon NOC- "No Objection Certificate" issued by CARA, the central authority in India). This includes MAPS costs both in the U.S. and India, Indian administrative and court fees, orphanage child maintenance costs, and orphanage donations. For more information, please refer to the fee schedule for possible additional costs.

## **GETTING STARTED**

The adoption process begins with the application packet. In this information we walk you through the materials needed to open your file. Your application to MAPS should be submitted as soon as possible, whether or not your home study has been completed. Your home study must be done by a licensed adoption agency in your state. We cannot accept studies done by licensed independent social workers or probate courts. We will be able to formally accept your completed file after full review of your home study and related application materials.

Your home study is valid for approximately one year (varies by state). If placement has not occurred within that time, you will need your home study agency to provide MAPS with an original, notarized update. We recommend that you determine the fee for this service up front so you will be prepared if the process takes longer than expected.

Also enclose one photocopy of your CIS I-800A approval/cable (if completed; otherwise send later, and in your cover letter to this application state your estimated or actual I-800A filing date.)

## **HUMANITARIAN AID**

An important component of our adoption program in India is humanitarian assistance. Families are encouraged to participate at whatever level of involvement they can offer to help support the children who remain behind. Contributions can range from a donation of supplies to your child's orphanage to giving financially to long-term orphanage assistance projects. We are proud that our families continue to care and put forth efforts on behalf of the children of India.

Please review the enclosed material and let us know if you have further questions regarding adoption through the MAPS India program. We would be delighted to speak with you about the children who are waiting and your plans to build your family through adoption.

Sincerely,

Kate Emery & Sarah Groff  
India Program Coordinators

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**FEE SCHEDULE FOR ADOPTIONS FROM INDIA**

MAPS application fee (due with application)	\$600
MAPS agency fee for India	\$10,500
(\$5,500 due upon acceptance to India program, and \$5,000 at child acceptance)	
MAPS foreign program fee (payable at time of NOC- "No Objection Certificate")	\$7,000
(Of this fee \$3,500 is the orphanage maintenance fee, which goes towards care of the child. The remaining \$3,500 is applied to in-country adoption processing and in-country administrative/operational expenses.)	

\$7,000 for a second child (sibling) adopted at the same time  
 (breakdown: \$3,500 agency fee and \$3,500 foreign program fee).

The agency fees for the India and Nepal programs are greater than that of the other programs due to the higher staffing pattern and cost of operations for these programs, which include a MAPS' employee in India. Approximately 30-40% of a combination of the India agency fee and foreign program fee, may be designated for humanitarian aid purposes. Of the \$10,500 agency fee, approximately 80% is used for stateside adoption program expenses; of the \$7,000 foreign program fee, approximately 80% is used for the in-country adoption processing expenses, which include the CARA approved orphanage donation of \$3,500 and in-country administrative/operational expenses.

**The above fees and costs are estimated and, due to the nature of international adoptions, are subject to change without notice.**

**Other expenses to plan for:**

Immigration application (I800-A)	\$670
USCIS fingerprints (per adult in home)	\$80
Passports/visa fees	Approximately \$100-\$200 per person
Travel to and from India	Approximately \$1,200-\$1,800 per person
Travel within India	Approximately \$500 per person
Lodging, food, necessities for parents and child/ren on accommodation	Approximately \$100-\$200 per day depending
Travel for child/ren	Approximately \$500-\$1,000 per child
Travel and lodging costs for MAPS India staff*	Approximately \$20-\$50 per day
Fee for car and driver, if needed	Approximately \$20-\$50 per day
US visa exam for child/ren	Approximately \$25 + any lab work
Escort fee (if applicable)	\$4,000
Child's Visa	\$400

\* if orphanage is outside Pune or Delhi

**Miscellaneous expenses that vary case by case:**

Home Study and post-placement fees	Approximately \$2,000-\$6,000
Notarization & authentication/certification	Approximately \$200-\$300
Physical exams for parents for dossier	Approximately \$25-\$150 per person
Medical exam/lab expenses for child as requested by adoptive parent	Approximately \$100
Additional orphanage expenses (such as medical)	
Miscellaneous personal expenses	