

**INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION CENTER**  
**CINCINNATI CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER**  
**CINCINNATI, OHIO**



Welcome to the International Adoption Center (IAC) at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC). The IAC provides comprehensive medical services to assist parents in their exciting journey to international adoption. The IAC offers *four* services including pre-adoption consultation, post-adoption evaluation, community outreach, and research.

The ***pre-adoption*** consultation includes assisting families in identifying the special needs or limitations that parents are willing to accept in their child, evaluating medical histories and videos of referrals, preparing families for their trip abroad and providing medical support to families through 24-hour telephone access to the IAC.

The medical histories/videos may be mailed to the IAC or hand delivered. Please see the instructions in this packet regarding review of medical information. Our goal is to have each medical record/video reviewed within 2 to 3 business days (excluding weekends and holidays). Once the review is complete, we will call you to discuss the review.

As part of a comprehensive health-care center, the International Adoption Center can readily call on experts in gastroenterology, neurology, genetics, psychology, occupational and physical therapy and other specialties as needed.

***Post-adoptive*** services begin when your child arrives home in the United States. Ideally, the IAC would like to see your child within **one to two weeks after their arrival**. The IAC offers a medical evaluation for the newly adopted child that includes a comprehensive medical, developmental and nutritional assessment, baseline laboratory tests, screening for infectious disease, and immunization recommendations. IAC staff also can offer ongoing consultation to the doctors who will routinely care for these children. A Nurse Coordinator, a developmental pediatrician, and an infectious disease pediatrician will examine your child. The focus of this appointment will be to examine your child to identify medical issues that your child may have including screening for infectious diseases and other problems seen more frequently in children who are internationally adopted. We will also review your child's immunization status, make immunization recommendations and obtain a baseline developmental assessment. This appointment will last approximately 2 hours.

Subsequent follow-up appointments are important in order to identify any additional medical issues and especially to follow your child's development. Early intervention of developmental issues is important in maximizing your child's developmental potential.

After their arrival, formal testing will be more reliable if the child has been given some time to adapt to their new surroundings. As a part of the post-adoption evaluation, hearing and vision testing and formal developmental assessments are offered after the initial visit to the IAC. Because these children are undergoing many changes in their young lives during the first weeks it is important to re-evaluate these children frequently to monitor their progress and to determine if additional testing or interventions are needed.

All results of the screenings and evaluations and any recommendations will be shared with you and your child's physician.

Pre-adoptive services are not generally covered by insurance. Post-adoptive services are usually covered, wholly or in part, by insurance. *You will need to check with your insurance provider to determine whether a referral by your child's physician must be made before making an appointment with the International Adoption Center.* Post-adoptive services include:

- Infectious disease consultation
- Occupational therapy evaluation

The International Adoption Center is dedicated to raising awareness of the unique medical needs of children who have been internationally adopted. The IAC will offer periodic **educational** programs for families as well as professionals in the community that will include a repeat of our 5 session seminar on Medical Issues in International Adoption as well as new seminars on psychosocial issues affecting children who are internationally adopted. The IAC works closely with many of the local adoption agencies, adoption advocates, and support groups to help meet the needs of families built through international adoption.

The International Adoption Center will also build a database to document the health status of international adoptees. These data will provide an analysis of country-specific health trends, and will also be used to assess clinical outcomes and support **research** initiatives.

We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions about services provided by the IAC, please do not hesitate to call us at 513 636-2877.

Sincerely,



Mary Allen Staat, M.D., M.P.H.  
Associate Professor Infectious Disease  
Director International Adoption Center  
513-636-2877  
Fax: 513-636-6936





## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE-ADOPTION ASSESSMENT

Please sign and date the attached, one-page Release form, and fax or send it with the information that you are giving to the IAC for assessment. The pre-adoption assessment cannot be done without the following items:

1. One signed and dated copy of the IAC Release form for each child
2. A check for the specified amount, made payable to "CCHMC" (or call the IAC with credit card information)
3. One copy of the medical information \*
4. Copies of the photo(s) \*
5. One copy of the videotape, if applicable \*

\* **If sending hard copies, please provide us with 2 copies of each of these items if the child is considered special needs.**

Please do not send any originals. All materials submitted for review become the property of the IAC. Please include copies of earlier records as well as the most recent information, since it is helpful to make the comparison between the different points in time.

Label videotapes with the following information:

- Adoptive parents' first and last names
- Child's birth name, and his/her city or region and country of origin
- Age of the child in the video
- Length of video
- Date(s) of video(s)

Include the following information with your materials:

- Adoptive parents' first and last names, home address, and home/work telephone numbers
- Child's birth name, and his/her city or region and country of origin
- Name of international adoption agency, and social worker

The IAC Mailing Address:

For <i>U.S. Mail</i> :
Barbee Sjödahl
International Adoption Center
CCHMC
3333 Burnet Avenue, <b>ML 7036</b>
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229-3039

For all <b><u>overnight</u></b> deliveries:
Barbee Sjödahl
International Adoption Center
CCHMC
619 Oak Street, <b>Suite 2408 AB</b>
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206-1613

If you use an overnight delivery service to send the material to the IAC, we ask that you **do not use the US Post Office's overnight services**, as these packages are delivered with the rest of the hospital's US mail, and delivery to the IAC department is delayed.

Hand Delivered:

If you wish, you may hand deliver the medical information, photographs, and/or video to the IAC. **Please call the IAC at 513-636-2877, option 2, before you come to CCHMC** to let us know when you'll be dropping off the information. Address the package to:

Barbee Sjö Dahl  
IAC  
Ext. 66754

## **PRE-ADOPTION CONSULTATION**

The International Adoption Center will provide pre-adoption consultation of medical histories and/or videos for those pursuing international adoption. An infectious disease physician will review the medical history, photographs, and/or video. At times, the medical record or the video may indicate a need to consult other specialists within Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. There is no additional charge for these professional 2<sup>nd</sup> opinions.

To give a thorough review of the information, the review process will require a minimum of 2 business days (excluding weekends and holidays). Review by the Director of Developmental Disabilities or other specialists within Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center will increase the review time by approximately one day. You will be contacted by telephone when the review is complete.

The review process will include an examination and explanation of the medical record. The child's growth parameters will be placed on a growth curve. Their height, weight, and head circumference will be compared to the general population of children of the same age in the U.S. The child's general development will be assessed. Photographs and videos will be examined for evidence of facial and other physical abnormalities.

## **LIMITATIONS**

Medical records, photographs, and videos can be helpful in providing some information about the child. There are, however, significant limitations to the information provided in medical records, photographs, and videos. Information contained within the medical record, photographs, and/or video provides only a glimpse of this child's current condition and is not predictive of the child's future. Emotional, behavioral, and cognitive abilities (mental retardation and learning disabilities) are difficult to assess by medical record, photographs, or video. Future emotional, behavioral and cognitive issues are impossible to predict. Information contained in these records cannot replace a physical examination and assessment by a qualified physician within the United States.

### **Medical Record Limitations**

- Medical records are often incomplete and difficult to assess.
- Different medical terminology is often used. Direct translation is not often possible.
- Growth parameters and lab work may be inaccurate.
- Medical tests done in foreign countries are frequently not done properly. Equipment may be out of date. Technicians performing the tests are not always properly trained.
- Medications such as antibiotics and immunizations are not always dated, stored and administered properly and therefore may not have been effective.
- A thorough developmental assessment is not possible without appropriate testing.

### **Video Limitations**

- The quality of the video may be poor. The video may be out of focus, may not show the whole child or close-ups of the child. It is difficult to assess facial abnormalities when the child is videotaped from a distance or the tape is not in focus.
- The child may have been videotaped in an unfamiliar setting or with unfamiliar caregivers and therefore, may not be comfortable with their surroundings. Optimally, the tape should depict the child interacting with adults.

- The length of video is important. The video may be too short. A good video should be 5 minutes or longer.
- The video may represent one point in time. Several videos at different points in time are helpful in identifying developmental concerns.
- A child less than six months of age is difficult to assess on video, since at this age the child is not able to do many things.
- Age-appropriate toys may not be present, making it difficult to assess development.
- Children who are clothed throughout the video are difficult to assess. It is difficult to assess nutrition, look at skin condition, or note other physical abnormalities if the child is clothed.
- Gross motor skills such as pulling up, crawling, walking, or gait abnormalities are difficult to assess if the child is held throughout the video.
- Children exposed to alcohol during pregnancy may have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). FAS is difficult to diagnose and characteristics of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome may not be obvious until the child is school age or older.
- A thorough assessment of development can not be done with just video. Further testing will need to be done once the child arrives in the United States.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION CENTER**

**Mary Allen Staat M.D., M.P.H.** is the Director of the International Adoption Center. Dr. Staat is board-certified in pediatrics, pediatric infectious diseases, and preventive medicine. She is Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, and faculty member of Children's Hospital Research Foundation, Division of Infectious Disease. Dr. Staat has a Masters in Public Health in International Health and has both personal and professional experience in international adoption.

**Kelly Hicks, R.N., M.S.N.,** is the IAC Nurse Coordinator and an education specialist with experience in the area of adoption education.

**Barbee Sjødahl, CPS** is the International Adoption Center Pre-Adoption (before the child comes home) Services Coordinator.

**Robin Gordon** is the International Adoption Center Post-Adoption Adoption (after the child comes home) Services Coordinator.

## **PRE-ADOPTION FEE SCHEDULE**

Pre-Adoption Services are generally not covered by insurance. Fees are per child, country-specific, and **non-refundable**. The fee schedule for pre-adoption consultation is attached.

**RELEASE**

I/We have read the International Adoption Center Pre-Adoption Consultation Form and fully understand the information contained herein. All of my/our questions concerning the **PROCESS AND ITS LIMITATIONS** have been answered to our satisfaction.

I/We realize that a brief medical history and/or video can, at best, only identify grossly obvious medical or developmental strengths or weaknesses in a child. In no way can they be used to accurately predict emotional, behavioral/cognitive abilities and future health to any degree of medical certainty. Therefore, I/We agree to indemnify and hold harmless Dr. Staat, The International Adoption Center, CCHMC, its agents, employees, volunteers and anyone who participated in the evaluation of the child, from any injury, damages, expense or costs of any nature or kind resulting from outcomes in this child which would not have been predicted from this limited medical history and/or video.

Parent: _____	Date: _____
Parent: _____	Date: _____

**Please fax your signed Release form to Barbee Sjödahl @ 513-636-6936 and call her at 513-636-2877 (option 2) with credit card payment, or mail your signed Release form with a check to:**

IAC at CCHMC  
3333 Burnet Avenue, MLC 7036  
Cincinnati, OH 45229-3039

<b>For International Adoption Center use:</b>	
<b>Witness:</b>	
_____	Date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Not present	