



Adoption Rights Alliance
REGAINING IDENTITIES, HISTORIES AND RIGHTS FOR ADOPTED PEOPLE

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Tracing Handbook for Natural Parents

Introduction

You may be surprised to hear that adopted people's human rights are being breached by both church and state in Ireland today. Unlike any other members of Irish society, adopted people have to endure an unjustifiably arduous ordeal just to get their birth certificates. Incredibly, they are denied access to their files and are even excluded from the Freedom of Information Act.

Legal adoption was first introduced in Ireland in 1952, with the first legally adopted people reaching the age of 18 in 1970. During the past 60 years, eight Adoption Acts and an amendment to the Constitution have been brought forward, all without even a single piece of legislation to grant information rights or statutory based information and tracing services to Irish adopted people.

In the meantime, adopted people are at the mercy of adoption agencies, many of whom are at best inefficient and at worst dishonest. It is therefore not surprising that many people will choose to trace for themselves, usually with far greater success than many adoption agencies, despite having less information.

We understand also that natural parents are discriminated against in a similar fashion. Therefore we have put together this Handbook to assist you, the natural parent in searching for the (now adult) child you lost to adoption.

We encourage you to read this Tracing Handbook carefully and contact us if you have any questions.

The information we provide is free of charge. However we are all volunteers and do not receive funding of any kind.

If you would like to make a donation to help cover our expenses you can send a cheque to:

Adoption Rights Alliance
The Mill House,
Millview Road,
Malahide,
Co. Dublin

Reunion or Information?

If you are reading this document you may have decided you want to trace your son/daughter or you might be in the process of deciding whether you want to trace or not. Many people feel they just want information to begin with and then wish to take time to consider any further action. Whatever situation you are in, the decisions are yours to make in your own time.

In a moment, we will be discussing the merits of tracing for yourself as opposed to asking an agency to trace for you. One of the main advantages to tracing for yourself is the fact that in most cases you can get as far as knowing your son/daughter's identity without having to approach him/her or his/her adoptive family. Many people will do their research first and then decide whether they are ready for reunion or not, as it is a safe way of approaching things gradually. Whatever you decide, take your time and make a choice that you are comfortable with.

Support

You are embarking on an exciting journey, one that can be both exciting and stressful and it is unwise to go it alone. We advise that you avail of as much support as possible through family, friends and support groups listed in **Section 3, Next Steps**.

Emotional Preparation

We also advise that you emotionally prepare yourself for your trace as much as possible by reading books such as *The Primal Wound* by Nancy Verrier, which will provide you with an excellent insight into what it is like being adopted. Additional reading material, including books written by natural mothers can be found in the reading list in the Appendices.

Agency Trace or Own Trace?

As you embark on your trace, you have a choice. Do you want your adoption agency to trace for you, or do you wish to do your own trace? There are pros and cons to each option and we will set some of these out below to help you make your decision.

Agency Trace	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Agency has identifying information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × No control over your trace × Long waiting lists × Agency dictates the pace × Often inappropriate handling of tracing & reunion process × Agency may have shut down × Slow progress using an agency to trace × Not as healthy for others to trace for you × Identifying information and no reunion is not an option × Agency will contact adoptive parents rather than the (adult) adopted person

Own Trace	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You have control over your trace ✓ You control the pace ✓ First contact is when you want it and how you want it ✓ You can take a break if needed without fear of going to the back of a waiting list ✓ Usually quicker than an agency trace ✓ Healthier to do your own trace ✓ Possible to obtain identifying information without reuniting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × No access to identifying information × Agencies sometimes withholding information

Using Your Adoption Agency To Trace

If you have decided to use your adoption agency to trace, or if you need to contact your adoption agency for any reason, here are some guidelines to help you through the process. These guidelines are relevant to anyone dealing with an agency. We would also encourage you to continue reading this Tracing Handbook, regardless of what choice you have made.

Guidelines for Dealing with Adoption Agencies

- ✓ Always communicate **in writing** using **Registered (Signed For) Post**.
- ✓ **Do not** give the agency a contact number. If you absolutely have to contact the agency by phone (e.g. to arrange an appointment), we advise that you use a private number (this can be done from any Irish landline by placing 141 before the number to be dialled).
- ✓ Remember, you are a client of the agency and you should expect to be treated respectfully.
- ✓ If you are seeking **information only** make this clear **in writing** to your agency, telling the agency **not** to make contact with your son/daughter **or his/her adoptive parents**.
- ✓ If you are told that you have been placed on a waiting list, ask how long the wait is and ask to be kept regularly informed of your place in the queue.
- ✓ If you feel your agency is treating you unfairly, please visit www.adoptionrightsalliance.com where you can make a complaint against your agency.
- ✓ Keep track of your paperwork in a folder or file and keep a copy of any correspondence sent to the agency.
- ✓ If you wish, copy your correspondence to Adoption Rights Alliance, clearly stating that you have done so at the end of the letter.

PLEASE NOTE YOUR ADOPTION AGENCY MAY HAVE CLOSED.

Check for your agency in the Links section of our website and if you discover your agency has been closed, you should be able to locate the relevant agency/HSE to contact there. If you feel you are being treated unfairly, please visit www.adoptionrightsalliance.com.

Tracing For Yourself

If you have decided to trace for yourself, Adoption Rights Alliance's Tracing Handbooks will show you the steps you should take. The method is completely legal and makes use of the Civil Registration system, which is used by genealogists when compiling family trees. It is essential to follow each step very carefully and ask questions if you are unsure of what you are doing.

The first step on the journey is obtaining your son/daughter's birth and adoption certificates and this guide will show you how to achieve this.

Do I Have The Right To Contact My Son/Daughter?

Many natural mothers were forced to swear oaths and sign forms promising to never try to find their children. These demands were insisted upon by church run adoption agencies who were determined to uphold an unnatural, closed secret adoption system. We would encourage you to act responsibly and sensitively, but you are doing nothing wrong by initiating a trace.

Key Points To Remember

- Read this document thoroughly
- Prepare yourself emotionally for your trace
- Avail of support
- Decide whether you want to trace for yourself or ask your agency to trace for you
- Take your time making decisions

1. Obtaining Non-identifying Information

Before you go about obtaining your son/daughter's adoption certificate you will need your non-identifying information, which will help you locate the certificate later on.

A Note About Non-Identifying Information

Some adoption agencies have been known to get non-identifying information wrong, so you should allow for this when you are tracing. **If you are unsure of anything, contact Adoption Rights Alliance for further advice.**

If you know what adoption agency dealt with your adoption

Verify the current address of the agency using the list of names and addresses on our website and contact them asking them for non-identifying information. There is a sample list of questions below to guide you. You also need to write to the Adoption Authority asking them for the date of the Adoption Order for your son/daughter. This is an extremely important piece of information to help you in your trace. There is a sample letter below that will help you – just amend it to suit your situation.

If you don't know the agency

Write to the Adoption Authority asking them for the name of the agency. The sample letter below will guide you in what to say.

Note: Natural fathers who are tracing should amend the letter below to reflect their situation. Sometimes the Adoption Authority and the adoption agency will stipulate that the natural mother must be involved. If at all possible, we recommend that you contact your son/daughter's natural mother as the Adoption Authority and adoption agency are more likely to cooperate with her.

Sample Letter to the Adoption Authority:

Information and Tracing Unit
Adoption Authority
Shelbourne House
Shelbourne Rd
Dublin 4

To Whom It May Concern:

I request that you forward me the details of the adoption agency that arranged my son/daughter's adoption of this person. The details are:

Name of child: Patrick Murphy
Date of Birth: 12th April 1974
Name of natural mother: Mary Murphy
Address at time of birth: 13 Main Avenue, Swords, Co. Dublin
Name of natural father: Michael Jones
Address at time of birth: 21 Sandy Drive, Dublin.
My Current Address is: 16 Main Street, Mullingar.

I would also like to request the date of the Adoption Order for my son/daughter's adoption.

I would be grateful if you could give this matter your attention at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully

Mary Ryan (nee Murphy)

Sample Questions

Below is a sample list of questions to ask your adoption agency. You should amend the list to suit your own needs. If you have already traced (either successfully or unsuccessfully) and see questions you wish you had asked at the time, there's no reason why you shouldn't ask them now.

General:

- What is my son/daughter's adoptive first name?
- Does my son/daughter know he/she is adopted?
- Has my son/daughter ever made contact with your agency and what did that contact entail?
- Did my son/daughter leave any message or address for me to contact him/her?
- What ages were my son/daughter's adoptive parents at the time of the adoption?
- What part of the country did my son/daughter's adoptive parents come from?
- What were my son/daughter's adoptive parents' occupations?
- Are my son/daughter's adoptive parents living or deceased?
- How many adoptive siblings does my son/daughter have – are they brothers or sisters?
- What was the last contact between the adoption agency and the adoptive parents?
- What does the agency know about the current status of the adoptive parents – are they living or dead?
- What does the agency know about my son/daughter? – Is he/she married? – Going to college? What education level? - Living in Ireland or abroad?
- What are my son/daughter's interests and hobbies?
- What help will the agency offer my son/daughter if he/she gets in touch?
- Will the agency inform my son/daughter that I am seeking contact?
- Was my son/daughter removed from Ireland for adoption?
- Does my son/daughter have any knowledge of their natural family history, medical or otherwise?

IMPORTANT! COMMUNICATE IN WRITING AND USE REGISTERED POST

It is advisable to use **Registered Post** in all correspondence with the Adoption Authority and your adoption agency. We advise that you **do not provide a contact phone number** as you may be contacted at an inappropriate time. We recommend that you obtain any information **in writing** and that all information provided by an agency should be checked thoroughly.

Key Points To Remember

- If you know your agency, write and ask for non-identifying information
- If you don't know your agency, write to the Adoption Authority
- Write to the Adoption Authority to get the date of the Adoption Order
- Communicate only in writing and via Registered Post

2. Obtaining The Birth/Adoption Certificates

2.1 Visiting The General Registrar's Office

To obtain your son/daughter's birth and adoption certificates, you need to visit the Research Room in the General Registrar's Office. The Research Room is located at 3rd Floor, Block 7, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, though as you will see from the map below, it is often easier to access via The Irish Life Mall on Talbot Street.



General Registrar's Office at Roscommon

The General Registrar's Office decentralised to Roscommon in 2005 and you can also search the Index to the Adopted Children's Register there if you live closer. Please note however that the Registers of Births, Deaths and Marriages are not available for public inspection in Roscommon. You can however order certificates if you have the details with you. The address, contact details and map are below:

General Register Office, Government
Offices,
Convent Road, Roscommon.
Tel: +353 (0) 90 6632900
LoCall: 1890 252076
Fax: +353 (0) 90 6632999
Fax: +353 (0) 90 6632988



Checklist BEFORE Visiting the Research Room/Roscommon:

- ✓ Read this Tracing Handbook thoroughly
- ✓ Bring a copy of this Tracing Handbook with you to the Research Room
- ✓ Bring pens, a notepad and ruler (you might find the ruler useful when checking the books)
- ✓ Contact the General Registrar's Office to ensure the Index to the Adopted Children's Register will be available to you on the day that you visit.

General Information/Tips For Your Visit To The Research Room/Roscommon

- ✓ Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9.30am – 4.30pm (open during lunch).
- ✓ Bring sufficient money to cover you for the day.
- ✓ When you pay for a General Search, you can request as many books as you wish for the same fee for that day. However, you will still have to pay for photocopies of certificates individually.
- ✓ To order your son/daughter's Adoption Certificate you will have to write to the General Registrar's Office in Roscommon, so do not expect to be able to get it on the same day as going to the Research Room.
- ✓ When you pay for a Five Year Search, you will receive books for five **consecutive** years (e.g. 1973 – 1977), though when searching for your birth certificate you will only need the book for your year of birth (unless you were born late in the year, in which case see the section below about searching the registers).
- ✓ Only five photocopies of certificates per person per day are allowed, though they will post out any surplus requests to you if you wish.
- ✓ Bring a friend or relative if they are available to help look through the registers and avail of double the amount of photocopies.
- ✓ Do not hesitate to ask Research Room staff for help.

Please note: Fees have increased:

General Search: €20

Adopted Children's Register Search: €20

Five Year Search: €2

Photocopies: €4

Full Certificates: €8 with references, €10 without

Birth Certificates and Adoption Certificates Explained

Every person who is born has his or her birth entered in the Register of Births, from which **birth certificates** are generated. Adopted people's births are registered in their original identity, however when they were adopted, they were entered into the Adopted Children's Register in their new adoptive identity. The document used by adopted people as a birth certificate in everyday life is in fact an "**Extract from the Adopted Children's Register**". The term "*original birth certificate*" is incorrect, because each person has only one birth certificate.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ BEFORE SEARCHING THE REGISTERS!

- **Take your time** looking through the books
- Search **all** of the books, and **keep going to the end** even if you think you have found your entry after ten minutes
- For the Register of Live Births, make sure you **check all four quarters** for registrations before 1966
- Even if you have somehow obtained your son/daughter's full adoptive name prior to visiting the Research Room, make sure you check the books thoroughly, as it is impossible to guarantee that the information is correct.
- You will be asked to fill out a form in the Research Room requesting the books, which are now available for you to retrieve from the shelves yourself.
- If your child was born late in the year (November or December), you should request the book for the year after your birth as well, because it was common for these births to be registered at the beginning of the following year.
- Check the back of the books for **hand written late registrations**.

2.2 Your Son/Daughter's Birth Certificate

Even if you think you are sure of your son/daughter's date of birth, we strongly recommend that you obtain his/her birth cert (the photocopy from the register will suffice) when you are at the Research Room. Believe it or not, some natural mothers have gotten the date wrong and this is not a bad reflection on them, it is a manifestation of how traumatic the experience has been.

The other reason that it is extremely important for you to obtain your son/daughter's birth certificate is to ensure that his/her adoption was legal. If you are unable to locate the birth certificate, check the late registrations at the back of the book. If you still can't locate the certificate, get in touch with us for further advice.

To search for your son/daughter's birth certificate you need to search through the birth register for his/her year of birth. If he/she was born late in the year, it's wise to check the book for the following year as sometimes births later in the year were registered in the following year. If your son/daughter was born before 1966 be sure to check **all four quarters** in each book. Remember, you are searching under your maiden name.

Note: If you are searching in Roscommon you will not be able to search the registers so you should order the birth certificate there by filling in the details required. The application form is available for download from our website www.adoptionrightsalliance.com

2.3 Your Son/Daughter's Adoption Certificate

Your son/daughter uses an "Extract from the Adopted Children's Register" as his/her "birth certificate" and this is the document you are looking for. You need to search through the Index to the Adopted Children's Register for all adopted children for your son/daughter's date of birth.

The Index to the Adopted Children's Register is made up of two books. The first book goes up to 1970 or thereabouts and the second has adoptions from 1970 onwards. If your son/daughter was born in 1969-70, you will have to look at both books. Otherwise, just ask for the book that applies to you.

It is absolutely essential that you search through the registers with great care. As the entries are listed alphabetically, each and every page of the book must be checked from A to Z.

Here is how the books are laid out:

Surname	First Name	Date of Birth	District	Vol	Page
Ryan	John	13-04-83	Dublin S	2	421
Ryan	Francis	1-12-72	Delvin	3	211
Ryan	Grainne	2-6-76	Dublin N	4	433
Ryan	Mary	22-10-78	Mullingar	5	321

As you go through the book, when you find a date of birth that matches (you can obviously ignore the male births if you are searching for a daughter, and vice versa), take note of the name and details for the entry, including the District, Volume and Page number. **Again, even if you think you have found a match keep going as it is possible for two people to be born on the same day and adopted under the same name.**

When you find a possible match, we advise that you take note of any adoptive siblings of your son/daughter. This may come in useful later and it is very easy to take note of them, as they will be listed alphabetically beside your son/daughter.

When you have finished checking the Index to the Adopted Children's Register you then need to fill out forms in order to order the Adoption Certificates. If you are in Roscommon you will be able to obtain the certificates on the same day, however if you are in the Research Room you will need to order the certificates from Roscommon. The application form is available for download from our website www.adoptionrightsalliance.com

When you are done you may have two or three certificates. The certificate containing the date of the Adoption Order given to you by the Adoption Authority is the one belonging to your son/daughter.

You may actually find that you only have one certificate and if the date of the Adoption Order matches with the date you have been given by the Adoption Authority, then this is the Adoption Certificate for your son/daughter. If the dates do not match you need to search again as these dates absolutely must match to get the right person. If you still come up with one certificate, it is possible the adoption was registered incorrectly and in this case you should alert both the Adoption Authority and the General Registrar's Office telling them you believe your son/daughter's adoption may have been registered incorrectly.

Please Note: Don't throw away extra photocopies, certificates and notes, as they might be useful to someone else. If you do not wish to store them yourself, post to Adoption Rights Alliance at The Mill House, Millview Road, Malahide, Co. Dublin, with a note saying they are extra photocopies you did not need.

Key Points to Remember

- Read this document thoroughly
- Take your time checking the books
- Make sure to check **all entries** in the Index to the
- When you obtain your birth certificate, take a step back and consider your next steps

3. Next Steps

Congratulations! You should now have your son/daughter's adoption certificate. This is a fantastic achievement and you should be proud of what you have done.

Obtaining your birth certificate is just one step of the journey and you should proceed with caution and use the information responsibly. The next steps you should take are outlined below and you should proceed with extreme caution.

Please Read Before Proceeding

- Please act responsibly and **do not proceed** without reading the rest of this Tracing Handbook.
- If you have access to the internet and if you haven't done so already, join ASNI, our sister group's online support group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/irishadoptionsupport>
- Please feel free to email us at tracing@adoptionrightsalliance.com for advice.

3.1 Your Son/Daughter's Present Whereabouts

After spending a lot of time searching you have almost reached your goal and it is difficult not to rush ahead with contact. **We strongly advise you to continue reading this document to the end.** In the next section we will explain how to go about making contact in an ethical and respectful way, so while you might have your son/daughter's address (at time of adoption) in front of you right now, please keep reading so that you are as prepared as possible for what can happen.

Your next step is to locate your son/daughter's present whereabouts and there are a number of search tools that are available that should help you further your trace.

3.2 Searching the Register of Marriages

Depending on your son/daughter's age he/she may or may not have married. If they are at an age where they may have married it is worth searching the Register of Marriages in the Research Room at the General Registrar's Office. The Register of Marriages is quite similar to searching the Register of Live Births. Marriages are registered in both the maiden and married names, so you should look for marriages in your son/daughter's maiden name from. Recent marriage certificates contain the bride and groom's dates of birth so you should be able to confirm which one is correct without much difficulty.

3.3 Check For Children From The Marriage

If you find that your son/daughter has married, your next step is to establish whether there were any children born to your natural mother from that marriage. This isn't difficult to do and can be completed easily using the method outlined below.

Say for example your son/daughter's maiden name was Smith and her married name is Brown. You are looking for children born with that combination of surnames – e.g. Brown/Murphy will not be a match. This is useful information to obtain because the youngest child's birth certificate will contain the most recent address for your son/daughter.

3.4 Church Records

If your son/daughter married within the Catholic Church, normally their **full** baptismal certificate will contain all of the relevant details. If you wish to obtain church records, contact the parish priest for the relevant area and request a full baptismal certificate. We advise that you say you are conducting genealogical research and do not mention adoption as many priests will take it upon themselves to interfere. If you are having difficulty in finding the details for the church in question, contact us on tracing@adoptionrightsalliance.com and we will do our best to assist you.

3.5 The Irish Phonebook

The Irish Phone Book is available to search online through <http://www.eircomphonebook.ie>. Please act responsibly with any information you obtain and we strongly advise that you **do not** pick up the phone and attempt to contact your son/daughter or his/her adoptive parents in this manner (see the section below).

3.6 Register of Electors

Another useful search tool is the Register of Electors, which is available from the relevant local library, Garda Station or County Council Offices.

Most Electoral Registers are also available online at <http://www.checktheregister.ie>

3.7 Search Engines

Search engines such as www.google.ie or www.yahoo.co.uk have proven to be very useful searching tools. When you visit a particular search engine just simply type in the name of the person you are looking for and see what results you come up with. Try to use different combinations when you are searching so that you can maximise the results, see the examples below:

“Jane Jones”

“Jones, Jane”

“janejones”

Jane Jones

“J Jones”

If you know that the person you are looking for lives in Ireland you can also ask the search engine to only find pages from Ireland.

4. How to Make Contact – Mediator or Not?

When you have your son/daughter’s present contact details, you are now in a position to make contact with her. Before you do so, we would strongly advise you to stop and think about what is appropriate for your particular situation.

Remember, your son/daughter will probably not be expecting you to get in touch. For this reason, we advise that you consider the possibility of using a mediator to get in contact with him/her. Using a mediator is sometimes the better option as the adopted person might initially have a negative reaction (mostly because of shock and surprise), which wouldn’t be pleasant for you to experience as the natural parent. A mediator can provide a good buffer and allow the adopted person an opportunity to get used to the idea before making a decision about whether he/she wants contact at this point or not. For advice about mediators contact Adoption Rights Alliance at tracing@adoptionrightsalliance.com

The decision whether to use a mediator or not is entirely yours to make, however if you have decided to make contact yourself **we urge you to proceed with caution and sensitivity.**

Please note! Before making any kind of contact double check your work to ensure you have definitely got the right details!

4.1 Phone, Visit or Letter?

Even if you know your son/daughter's phone number and know where he/she lives, we advise that you make contact **by letter or email only**. Phoning or arriving on a doorstep is not a helpful way of making contact because these methods will not give your son/daughter a chance to gather him/herself and get used to the idea that you are in contact. A letter or email is a safer method to use, because your son/daughter can read it over and make contact with you in his/her own time.

Though you might be eager to make contact with your son/daughter, bear in mind that while you know you have been tracing, your son/daughter doesn't and won't have had time to prepare him/herself.

Although you might have your son/daughter's address and phone number, you won't know what his/her family situation is or if he/she knows they are adopted; therefore discretion is of the utmost importance. A discreet letter that only your son/daughter will understand is the best method to use. Sample letters are provided in the next section to guide you.

Please note if you don't want to receive a phone call from your son/daughter in response to your letter, in case you are in work or somewhere you cannot talk, then it is advisable to only give your postal address and email address. Please also note that an email address may not be accessible to everyone, so you might want to offer a postal address regardless.

If you are making contact around the time of your son/daughter's birthday or Christmas, another method to use is sending a card, which might not be noticed too easily by others. Just remember to be discreet and ensure that only your son/daughter will understand the real meaning of the card.

4.2 Sample Letters

Sample Letter No. 1

Dear [son/daughter's adoptive name],

This is [your (maiden) name], you might remember me from [place/city of birth], we used to know each other in the [decade/year of your birth]. I would like if we could make contact and catch up.

If you would like to contact me my details are as follows: [Your name and address]

Yours sincerely,

[your name]

Sample Letter No. 2

Dear [son/daughter's adoptive name],

This is [your (maiden) name], it must be [your son/daughter's age] since we saw each other last. It would be great if we could write and catch up on old times.

If you would like to contact me my details are as follows: [Your name and address]

Yours sincerely,

[your name]

5. After Making Contact

Once you have sent your letter, the waiting can be very difficult and you are likely to experience a wide range of emotions, ranging from frustration to fear. If you feel you shouldn't have sent the letter in the first place, don't worry as this is very normal. This section deals with possible scenarios that may occur and it is wise to read through them so that you can prepare yourself for what may be ahead.

5.1 You Receive a Positive Response

Most people who receive a positive response to a first contact letter are delighted with the news. Sometimes you can also experience fear at this point, mixed in with the happy emotions. This is perfectly normal so just take your time and move at a pace which is comfortable for you.

5.2 No Response Received

You should allow at least a month to six weeks for a response before considering trying to make contact again as you should allow your son/daughter time to absorb the news that you would like to contact him/her. Remember, you have had time to prepare yourself, but your son/daughter has not and this news is likely to come as a shock to her, so give him/her the time to let it sink in.

5.3 You Receive a Negative Response

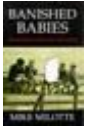
In some cases, adopted people do not want contact and this is undoubtedly a very difficult thing to have to deal with. If this is the response you receive, remember that the right thing to do is respect your son/daughter's decision. You should also be assured that you have by no means reached the end of the road and in many cases, all the adopted person needs is time. You should also bear in mind that many adopted people don't start tracing until their late 20's or until they have children of their own. If Adoption Rights Alliance can be of any help, contact us at tracing@adoptionrightsalliance.com

6. National Adoption Contact Preference Register

In addition to your trace it's also worth registering with the National Adoption Contact Preference Register (NACPR). Visit this link for further details: <http://www.aai.gov.ie/index.php/information-a-tracing/contact-preference-register.html> **Please Note:** Registering with the NACPR does not mean that the Adoption Authority will initiate a trace on your behalf.

Suggested Reading List

Background to Irish Adoption



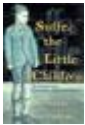
Banished Babies,
by Mike Millotte
Export of over 2000 Irish children to the United States in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's.



Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment
by James M. Smith
Excellent book documenting church/state collusion in incarcerating women in Magdalene Laundries, many of whom lost children to adoption.



Do Penance or Perish: Magdalen Asylums in Ireland,
by Frances Finnegan
The book focuses on the Magdalen Homes run by the Good Shepherd nuns in Ireland.



Suffer the Little Children: The inside Story of Ireland's Industrial Schools,
by Mary Raftery and Eoin O'Sullivan
A comprehensive look at the entire state/church child care system in Ireland.



The Light in the Window,
by June Goulding
The author worked as a midwife in the Bessboro', Cork mother-baby home attached to the Sacred Heart Adoption Agency.



A Woman To Blame – The Kerry Babies Case
by Nell McCafferty
Though not directly adoption related, this book provides an excellent window into the social circumstances and pressure faced by natural mothers.

The Adoption Experience



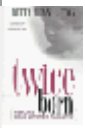
Adoption Reunion, Ecstasy or Agony?
by Evelyn Robinson (a natural mother)



Primal Wound: Understanding the Adopted Child,
by Nancy Verrier



Lost and Found: The Adoption Experience,
by Betty Jean Lifton



Twice Born: Memoirs of an Adopted Daughter,
by Betty Jean Lifton



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The Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution is Transforming America,
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Wake Up Little Susie: Single Pregnancy and Race Before Roe Versus Wade,
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