

## Adoption in the Media and Entertainment

Adoption takes on many different meanings, depending on how it's portrayed and perceived by people. Books, social media, and entertainment—including television, movies, songs, and news articles—all play a significant role in shaping our opinions and how adoption impacts our lives.

Unfortunately, mass media may not always provide a positive or accurate message about adoption. As an adoptive parent, you can use media to your advantage by talking through specific movies, books, social media posts, or news articles with your children. These tools can open up opportunities for meaningful conversations.

The following recommendations will help you begin thinking about adoption and media.

### Books

When children are toddlers or preschoolers, parents often turn to children's books that offer positive and uplifting stories about adoption. These storybooks offer gentle and often entertaining ways to highlight a family's love and explain the adoption journey.

If you have older children, consider revisiting some preschool-age books—or have them read those books to younger siblings. They often find comfort in these stories and may have missed out on them when they were younger.

Some books focus on diversity within families and help identify different roles of family members. This can be especially helpful for children whose birth relatives remain involved in their lives—it helps them feel like they're not alone in their experience.

### Television, Social Media, and Movies

As children grow, they begin to understand adoption more deeply in their lives. In addition to traditional media, today's kids and teens are frequently exposed to messages about adoption through social

media influencers, TikTok, YouTube videos, and other platforms. These can spark strong emotions—sometimes hopeful, sometimes confusing, or even hurtful.

TV shows, movies, and social media can provide excellent opportunities for open conversations.

However, stories in entertainment and online platforms are not always accurate and can sometimes carry negative or dramatized portrayals of adoption. Be as informed as possible about the content your child is engaging with, and consider previewing books, TV shows, movies, and even popular influencers' content ahead of time.

Even content that doesn't directly involve adoption might raise questions or stir emotions for your child. Watching or discussing these things together, when possible, can support your child and help



Continued on page 2

them feel safe exploring their thoughts with you.

### **Creating Space for Conversations**

You don't need to ask your child questions every time adoption is mentioned. Instead, focus on building a relationship where your child feels comfortable coming to you with questions or thoughts of their own. When you do ask questions, keep them open-ended and supportive.

Some children may not visibly react to a scene or storyline that concerns you. If that happens, you can gently bring it up later, perhaps while doing an everyday activity together. For example, "Hey, I was thinking about that scene in the movie—did anything about it stand out to you?" This approach invites reflection without pressure.

Here are a few questions you might ask older children after watching a movie or engaging with media that involves adoption:

- "Did you feel adoption was realistically portrayed?"
- "How did that scene make you feel?"
- "Have you ever seen something online that made you wonder about your own story?"

You can follow up by sharing parts of your child's adoption story and the positive ways it has shaped your family.

### **Educating the Greater Community**

Even if your child isn't personally upset by something they saw or heard, peers, extended family, or neighbors might be influenced by inaccurate or harmful portrayals. You might consider recommending books, movies, or even social media accounts that offer thoughtful and accurate adoption stories.

Regardless of the medium—books, social media, or entertainment—adoption stories

can be a great springboard for connection, learning, and understanding in your home and community.



## **Resources**

### *Additional Resources*

- [Explain Adoption To Children Easier With These Books](#)
- [Top 5 Best Movies about Adoption and Foster Care](#)
- [Books with Characters Who Are Adopted](#)