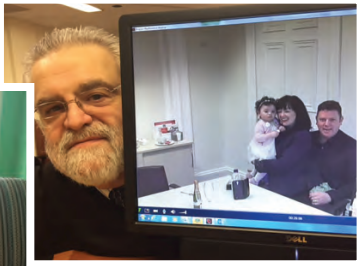
ADOPTION IS PERSONAL…

Adoption ARC Keeps it That Way!

- *You have a choice in how you create your family.*
- *There are so many crucial differences in what choice you make.*
- *What is the most personal thing you will ever do?*
- *Trust THE RIGHT agency to assist you with bringing your baby home to you.*



Adoption ARC

Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware Licensed

HAGUE ACCREDITED SINCE 2008

FOUNDER

Tara E. Gutterman, Esquire, is Adoption ARC's Founder. She served as the former Executive Director from 1994 to 2009. In 2009, Ms. Gutterman shifted her professional focus, and she became solely committed to her law practice, where she represents adoptive parents, birth parents, and does teaching and consultation. Ms. Gutterman founded the angecy in 1994.

She began her career as an attorney with the City of Philadelphia Law Department, where she handled hundreds of child abuse and neglect cases. She also handled many termination-of-parental-rights hearings. Later, she worked for a private, non-profit agency in Philadelphia, encountering the range of issues she now confronts at Adoption ARC, while specializing in termination-of-parental-rights hearings and adoption finaliz tions.

Ms. Gutterman is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, the Pennsylvania Bar Association, and the Philadelphia Bar Association. She is a 1988 graduate of Bryn Mawr College and a 1991 graduate of Temple University School of Law, and she is licensed to practice law in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Ms. Gutterman is also one of the leading experts on the Hague Treaty. She has trained hundreds of professionals, including fellow attorneys as well as judges on the Hague Process.

In 1996, Tara was a received a grant and honorable mention for her work from the national "Do Something, Inc" Foundation. This group is one of the largest global organizations for young people that works to impact social change in every cause, from poverty to violence to the environment.

In 1996, She made headlines when she helped to change local foster care policy by fig ting for and receiving custody of an abandoned baby and having him adopted in six months proving that early permanency is possible for children.

In 1998, she changed Pennsylvania case law by enabling special needs children who are adopted by United States families to receive a state mandated adoption subsidy to assist in caring for the children.

In 2008, Ms. Gutterman was nominated and confi med by her congressman to be named a National Angel in Adoption". In 2015, she was elected to her high school's "Wall of Fame" for Professional Achievement. You will meet Tara in person each year at the Irish "Meet and Greet".

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

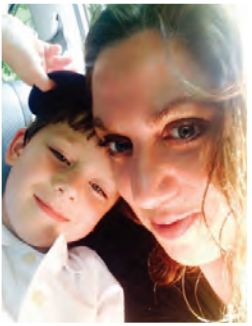
Merle Gutterman, M.Ed.MS is Adoption ARC's Executive Director. She has worked informally with Adoption ARC since its inception in March, 1994. Merle even designed the first Adoption ARC brochures and continues to help design the newsletters and other marketing materials. Merle received her Master of Education degree in Counseling Psychology in 2007 from Temple University and her Master of Science degree in Technical and Science Communication from Drexel University in 1996.

For more than eight years, Merle worked in the technical communication fiel . She began her career as a junior level technical writer and worked her way up to a senior level technical writer where she supervised a team of writers. Merle also taught college level writing/composition classes at National University, a nontraditional college for working adults in Southern California.

In 2005, Merle returned to graduate school for Counseling Psychology. Merle interned at Calcutta House, a residential facility in North Philadelphia for people who are homeless and have HIV. Merle provided one-on-one and group counseling to the residents. She also helped organize events for the residents. In 2007, Merle worked for a social service agency in Manhattan called Project Renewal. She provided vocational counseling for people with severe mental health disorders. In September 2008, Merle began working full-time for Adoption ARC as a birth parent counselor and administrative supervisor. While at Adoption ARC, she was able to combine her counseling and administrative skills together to grow with the agency. In 2009, Merle took over as the agency's Executive Director devoting much time and energy to staff development and training as well and tightening policies and procedure.

Merle is a member of the American Counseling Association. She has volunteered her time with various nonprofi organizatons in Philadelphia, New York and San Diego. She looks forward to continuing the good work and high level of qualiy service that Adoption ARC has provided to all of its clients for the past 21 years.

SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISOR



Laura Hoffman, LCSW brings over 25 years of clinical and administrative social work experience to Adoption ARC. She began working with Adoption ARC in August 2009. Laura received her Master of Social Work degree from Temple University in 1994. She received her license and clinical license shortly thereafter.

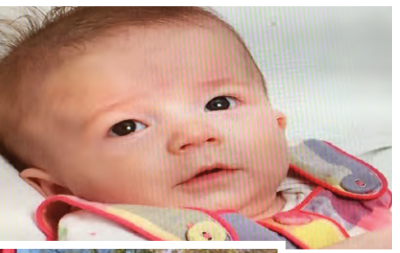
Laura brings her vast experiences working with children and youth to Adoption ARC. She spent several years working in Washington, DC as a social worker and a social work supervisor in the public child welfare system.

She also worked in the managed behavioral health care industry as a supervisor and a clinical program manager, providing clinical supervision and administrative oversight to a large team of clinicians.

Laura continues to run her own small private practice where she provides psychotherapy to adults. She also provides clinical supervision to newly graduated master level social workers seeking to obtain their clinical license.

Laura's creative energy, strong work ethic and comprehensive knowledge base pertaining to social services will continue to offer Adoption ARC leadership and excellence in the field of p ivate adoption.

Laura is a proud adoptive mother of a seven and a half year old son, Benji through Adoption ARC.



Adoption ARC

ADOPTION FACTS

Two Kinds of Matches… Intended and Last Minute

Because ARC is a licensed agency with an excellent reputation in our states of license, we often get calls from hospitals of birth mother who have just delivered a baby and want to make a plan "last minute". These birth mothers receive all of the ARC services, just on an emergency basis.

Pre-Birth Matches: Many birth families require some financial support during the pregnancy. In this scenario, you may be matched before birth and have on-going contact through the pregnancy.

What happens if the Birth Parents do not follow through with the match?

ARC is aware of other service providers that demand the full adoption fee to be paid prior to the birth and all money is lost if the placement does not occur. This may happen one to two times before a successful placement with other service providers.

DO NOT BE FOOLED! GET THE FACTS ABOUT WHAT YOUR REAL COSTS ARE!

You do not pay for a service which ARC has not performed. ARC does not bill for a full placement fee before the placement occurs.

You only will re-pay a counseling fee as ARC is a strict fee- for-service agency.

Get the facts about what your actual costs are:

ALL ARC fees are disclosed up-front. With other service providers, there is no way to know how much the other non Hague attorneys, social workers and agencies will charge for their services. This is a cost passed onto you but not disclosed up-front.

Adoption ARC families who adopt a second time come back to ARC almost 100% of the time!

Adoption ARC POLICIES

WE BELIEVE IN THE SANCTITY OF THE ADOPTION TRIAD:

YOU, THE CHILD AND THE BIRTH PARENT

An emotionally healthy child will know that his or her birth parent is treated with respect and that you as the adoptive parent chose to work to ensure that you picked an agency to provide this respect.

ARC Birth Parent Counselors meet face-to-face with every birth parent whom we serve. ARC provides individual counseling before, during and after the adoption placement. ARC provides 24/7 availability for Birth Parents, including Labor and Delivery Support and Support Groups for Birth Parents

ARC coordinates the contact between you and the birth parents via photos and letters.

Adoption ARC can provide counseling and referrals to the Adoptive Parents which can continue forever *(Throughout your child's life and diffe ent developmental stages)*

You can always turn to ARC's social work team for advice and assistance

ARC IS FIRST IN ADOPTION EDUCATION AND IN LEGAL PRACTICE

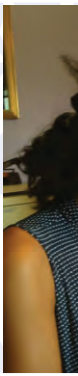
Adoption ARC is the longest US running agency authorized to provide services through our partner, HHMA in Ireland. As such, we have many years of experience in working with birth mothers, adoptive parents and adoptees. We feel a duty to provide knowledge to all Adoptive Parents which is why our "Meet and Greet" in Ireland is always open to all adoptive parents.

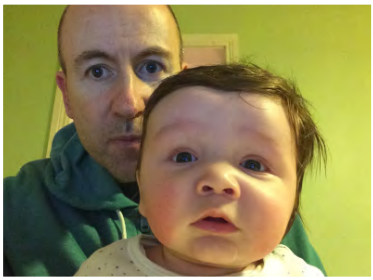
Some if our brave birth moms came together with us to make a movie which we gratefully show at classes. We give many sessions and consultations locally and internationally on open adoption and transracial adoption.

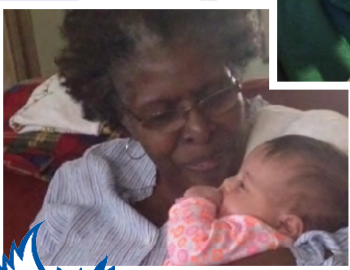
All of our staff is constantly educating ourselves on adoption and ethnic and cultural issues and history. Last year we visited the Civil Rights Museum in Atlanta, Georgia. There, we observed a beautiful mural depicting the cry for justice and equality all over the world.

In 2013, ARC produced a movie with birthmother's great assitance called "A Lifelong Journey". In 2016, we will produce another film with birth parents who have placed their children internationally.

My Goodness
My
GUINNESS







Adoption ARC

HAGUE PROCESS

What is the legal procedure after the birth of the baby and the legal paperwork has been signed?

During this very exciting time, we will guide you through every step along with our partner, Helping Hands Mediation Agency of Cork, (HHMA) Ireland.

Would you like to move forward with this Match?

The first thing we will do at Adoption ARC is contact you via email and copy HHMA on this email to keep them informed. In fact, we copy HHMA on every email that we send to you, so that they can help you through this process as well. They are very familiar with it.

In this email, we will include all the information that we have about your child. We will send you the redacted medical discharge history (if it is available), the redacted self-reported background packet and medical history of birth parent(s), photos of the baby and any pertinent health information. If there is drug exposure, we will inform you. If there are any medical issues, we will inform you.

Adoption ARC is a full disclosure agency. Any information that we have regarding your potential child, we will pass along to you.

Once you have all the information, we will give you some time to tell us if you accept the match.

We have accepted the match, can we come over now?

The Irish- US agreement allows for the birth family to have 6 weeks from the signing of the surrender to revoke their consent to the adoption. Adoptive Parents may come to the United States during this legal risk period to have temporary/ conditional placement which is closely monitored by Adoption ARC.

What Happens After we Arrive in the United States:

We will plan a time for you to meet at our office to take temporary custody of your son or daughter. Please bring lots of cameras, video recorders and tissues for this very special moment.

We will be close contact and visit you during the next several weeks. You must stay in the state in which the baby was born during this period of time and within a 15 minute drive to the agency.

Take this time to bond with your baby and really enjoy him or her. You can also explore the lovely Philadelphia area. We will tell you the best places to go to soak up our culture.

How Can We Obtain A US Passport so that our child may travel home to Ireland with us?

While waiting for the court order, you will have passport photos taken of your baby. You may also wish or need a doctor's visit. We would suggest using the practice, Society Hill Pediatrics (215-545-8188). If you have an emergency, you should take your child to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (215-590-1000), which has an emergency room.

Should we be doing Anything for the Adoption Process while we are Waiting:

Your job is to be parents, that's it. You may take the baby for medical appointments if required and learn his or her special personality. If you would like, as the baby gets closer to 6 weeks old, please get his or her passport photos done in anticipation of the Passport. If you need immediate medical attention, we suggest Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (215-590-1000) in Philadelphia and in New Jersey, CHOP Voorhees (856-325-3000). In Delaware, we recommend Nemours/DuPont Hospital for Children (302-651-4000)

What Is the Proposal?

After this the mandated six weeks passes, (Adoption ARC) must compose a social summary and attach legal documentation as well as a photo of the baby, fee disclosure (Article 16) which is sent to Helping Hands Mediation Agency, INC. , our Irish partner, who acts as an arm of the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI) to review and send their recommendation regarding the placement and onto the AAI for approval. Oral approval is usually given in 10 business days. This approval is manifested in the Article 17 approval. Adoption ARC may now do full placement with you and you will sign all legal agency paperwork. You will have your first official post p ement visit.

The Irish Ministry has Approved the Proposal, Now what?

After the approval is given, the Ministry issues an Article 17 letter , which is attached to the Hague Petition. The Hague Petition must be filed in state Court in the United States and a hearing will ensue in which testimony is taken. The Court will order findings of facts which state that the adoption is in compliance with the Hague Treaty.

The Court Order will also mandate that you and the agency may apply for a US Passport for the baby in the name that you have chosen for him or her.

Once, the Hague/ Passport Order is issued, Tara Gutterman will make an appointment to accompany you to the passport office to obtain your child's passport. You will need to bring the following with you:

1. The baby
2. Baby's passport Photos
3 Your Passports
4. Flight Itinerary showing the baby's return date. (It must be within 2 weeks of the passport appointment.)
5. Your passports as identific tion
6. You will be given a time (on that day) to return to pick up the passport. You will receive a temporary passport good for one year. After you make the adoption final (via video), you may go to the US Embassy with the new birth certific te and adoption judgment to extend the passport for 5 years.
7 You may travel home at this time.
8 You may need an apostille on the court order giving you guardianship. Tara Gutterman, Esquire will arrange this for you.

While at home, you will have the Home Study Agency follow the post placement outline and submit the reports to us when officiall translated. At the end of the process, your agency will work on a final report with Adoption ARC social work supervisor, Laura Hoffman, LCSW (laurazie@hotmail.com). Once that is completed and all baby's medical reports are in and your certific tes of Garda clearances have been updated, you will be ready to make your adoption final via video onference.

For the video hearing, you will be contacted by a Court Liaison when they are ready to list your case and you will arrange a "trial video test" prior to the hearing.

At the final hearing, your attorney will be at the court with the Judge and Judge's staff. You will see her via video and she will ask you questions. At the end, the Judge will grant the adoption. Your officia judgment and new birth certific te will be sent at the later date.

Once the adoption is made final and you have received the final order and amended birth certific te, you may go to the US Embassy to extend your child's passport for fi e years.

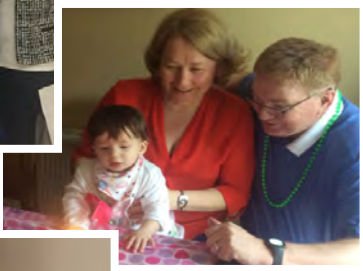
Soon, you will begin to tell your child his or her adoption story. Remember to tell him or her that your love was so strong that you traveled across a continent to become his/her parent.

IRISH ADOPTIONS

ARC has a European Adoptive Parent on the Board and has done so since 2007.

ARC values our European clients and we need you to have input directly into our process.

Our Board helps to oversee our agency and we have an accountant, a medical professional, former birth parent counselor and two adoptive parents to guide us.

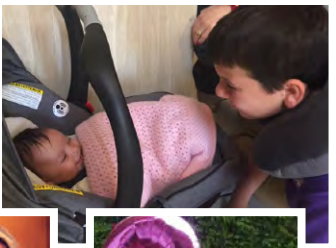


BE PART OF THE LARGEST *ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPPORT GROUP* IN EUROPE

Each year, ARC gathers in Europe in several locations and in the US with families to get together, share experiences and just re unite. Once you are an ARC family, you are with us for life.

ARC WILL TREAT YOU LIKE FAMILY - *ALWAYS*

We treat you with Philadelphia (American) hospitality while you are with us in the United States and when you come back to visit. Sometimes, it's lunch in the office, lunch out, a BBQ, Christmas when you are away from home, Thanksgiving, Halloween or the 4th of July. American traditions are part of your experience with Adoption ARC.



We are also happy to show you the large part that the Irish have played in the Philadelphia culture. The Irish Memorial to An Gorta Mor is a national monument, was opened to the public on October 25, 2003. The Memorial stands prominently at the southeast corner of Front and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia. The Irish Memorial is dedicated to the memory of more than one million innocent men, women and children who perished during the years 1845 to 1850 and to the millions of Irish immigrants who found here in the United States of America the freedom, liberty *and prosperity denied to their ancestors in Ireland. To mark the sesquicentennial of The Irish Starvation, civic leaders, government, private foundations and the community at large worked together on a $3 million project to plan and construct The Irish Memorial Monument at a park setting at Front and Chestnut Streets in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

Adoption **ARC** a nonprofit agency, that ensure that all profits go back into the agency to assist with the needs of birth parents and children. To date, ARC has placed about 175 infants into Europe and NEVER had a disrupted placement.

With a nonprofit Hague Accredited Agency- You know that you are working with Adoption ARC. Adoption ARC does not work with other non-Accredited attorneys, agencies or facilitators to make an adoption match. This can be scary and potentially UNETHICAL. For example, A Hague licensed attorney or agency may work with unaccredited bodies, without an agency, thus, depriving, birthparents of vital, necessary counseling.

ARC counselors work directly with the birth families pre-post and during the adoption placement. Tara Gutterman,Esquire is available to do all your legal work directly.

Call Us Anytime…

You can call ARC and Tara Gutterman or email us and you will get a response within 24 hours. We welcome your calls and we ENJOY working with adoptive families directly. YOU WILL GET TO KNOW US AND WE WILL GET TO KNOW YOU. This is why we have had such success in matching our adoptive families.

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