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Ben

Debbie

Job Description:

Partner at Management Consulting Company

Stay-at-Home Mother

Education:

B.S. Business, Major Economics and Minor Decision Sciences. University and Departmental Honors

Human Resources Degree (South Africa), Graphics Specialist

Favorites:

Hobby

Playing Nerf Basketball with Son, Cooking

Hobby

Reading, Exercising

Family Activity

Weekend Dinner with Family

Family Activity

Taking Our Son Swimming

Thing to Cook

Italian - Homemade Sauce and Meatballs

Thing to Cook

Homemade Pizza

T.V. Show

The Office

T.V. Show

Brothers and Sisters; Modern Family

Sports Team

Cleveland Cavaliers

Sports Team

Cleveland Cavaliers

Children:

Samuel (age 5)

What We Love Most About Being Parents

We have a 5-year-old son, Samuel. We absolutely love him dearly. He is a bright, energetic, fun, and enthusiastic child. He brings us so much joy. We love doing activities together as a family whether that is going out to a park, museum or the zoo, or just staying at home and playing together. We would love to see our son in his potential new role of big brother. We understand the importance of sibling relationships, and knowing how caring our son is, we know it will be easy for him to build a strong life-long bond with his new sibling.

For us, it is important to teach our children how to become successful individuals by providing guidance, explaining to them the appropriate way of conducting their actions, and supporting them to grow into well-rounded, lovable individuals. Most of all, though, we relish in the opportunity to watch Samuel explore, learn, grow. Everyday it seems he draws a new conclusion or tests a new insight, endlessly exploring interesting questions with innocence and excitement. As adults, who can get wrapped up in the day-to-day race of work and 'to-dos', coming home to such curiosity and hope is very refreshing.

Two of Our Most Memorable Moments

Our first most memorable moment is the day we got married. A group of family and friends traveled to South Africa to be at our wedding. Our wedding day was a perfectly sunny, warm day. We got married outside, in the wine country. It was a small and intimate wedding. After our wedding, a group of us went on safari for a few days. Everybody had a wonderful action packed, fun-filled trip.

Our second most memorable moment was the day our son was born. He was born in Chicago via c-section after a complicated pregnancy and a grueling, stressful 24 hours of labor. After nearly a day of what we thought was going to be a normal delivery, Sam's oxygen levels started to drop dramatically causing concern for the Doctors; they then immediately decided to do a c-section. Within 5 minutes of that decision, we were holding our newborn son. We were both in shock! The moment he was placed in our arms, we both looked at him with such loving adoration, our hearts were already filled with pride and joy.

Our House and Neighborhood



We built our dream house when we moved to Ohio. We have plenty of space inside and outside. We have four bedrooms, with a large open kitchen/hearth room, family room, office and sunroom, with 4 1/2 bathrooms. We also have a spacious finished basement, used as a kids' play room. Outside we have a patio and a large yard, which we use extensively in the summer. When the weather is nice, we often have family, friends and/or neighbors kids over so that we can BBQ and all enjoy the outdoors.

We live in a wonderful neighborhood in Ohio. Our development is filled with homes on 1.5 to 2 acre lots in a wooded, rolling landscape. The land is the former horse trail land of a long-standing prominent family in the area and subsequently developed into a beautiful neighborhood of just over 100 homes about 5 years ago. It has a swimming pool, tennis courts and a clubhouse. There are some fabulous parks within walking distance, including the Metroparks.



Our Home



Our Kitchen

Our House and Neighborhood, continued

We are lucky enough to have two fun-filled zoos within 30 minutes of our house. We spend a lot of our time outside (from Spring through Fall) so this is important to us. We often take walks on the walking trails in our neighborhood. One of Samuel's favorite things to do is stop at one of the nearby streams and ponds and throw rocks into the water. Our public and private schools in the area are extremely highly rated - always in the top 5. Samuel attends a very high quality private school close to our house, which includes early childhood programs and then K-8th grade. He is currently in pre-school, and will continue to attend the same private school for his elementary education. There are a lot of young kids in our neighborhood that attend the same school that Samuel attends.

Our Extended Families

Ben moved to Chicago from Ohio after college and lived there for 10 years. We got married in 2003 and then were blessed with our son, Samuel the following year. We moved from Chicago to Ohio almost 3 years ago. We did not have family in Chicago; given that all of Debbie's family lives abroad, we decided it was best for our family to live closer to Ben's family in Ohio. We get together with our extended family members at least once a week and often more than that. Our son, Samuel, spends a lot of time with his grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. We both have fond memories of growing up with our families nearby and as a result, this is very important for us to provide for our children. In the summer we usually BBQ and play all kinds of traditional fun, summer games (e.g., soccer, football, bean bag toss, etc.). We have a large, beautifully landscaped yard and live in a very friendly neighborhood with many kids around who often play in our backyard with Samuel. Our extended family supports our desire to adopt. Four of Ben's first cousins were adopted, as infants - a set of twins to one aunt and uncle; and 2 other individual adoptions to another aunt and uncle.



Ben's Brother's Wedding with Ben's Extended Family

Ben is a middle child. He has two brothers. His older brother is married and has a son; they live in Minneapolis. Ben's younger brother is married and they have a 1-year-old daughter with another on the way. They live less than 20 minutes from us and we spend a lot of time with them. Our son loves playing with his baby cousin and is so proud of her. Our extended family comes to our house, including Ben's parents every Friday night for dinner and we all go to Ben's parents' house on Sunday night for dinner. Family is at the center of our life.



Debbie's Extended Family in Australia

Debbie too, is a middle child. She has an older brother who lives in Perth, Australia. He is married and has three daughters. Debbie's sister lives in Cape Town, South Africa. Her parents also live in Cape Town, South Africa. Her parents and siblings travel as often as they can to visit us in Ohio. Typically, between our trips abroad and their trips to Ohio, we are able to see Debbie's family twice a year. When they are not visiting, we keep in touch by regular phone calls, and by speaking and seeing each other using Skype on the computer. We all love Skype as it makes speaking to our family more real. Debbie's family are thrilled at our decision to adopt and are excited to make the trip to meet the new addition to our family soon.

Traveling



South Africa, Cape Town

We love to travel and explore the world. We often go on vacation to visit family in Australia and South Africa. Learning about other countries, other cultures, and traditions makes people more grounded, more tolerant and more open to new ideas. Last summer we went to England and South Africa, and in the winter we went to Hawaii. While we were in South Africa, we took Samuel on a safari to see the wild animals. It was a perfectly educational trip for him to learn about, and see the animals living in their true habitat, as well as extraordinarily fun for him (imagine what 4 year old would not be excited about being driven around in an open safari on vast savannahs viewing 'the big 5' animals). As a family we have traveled to South Africa twice, Australia, Paris, England, and numerous places within the USA. It is our family tradition to travel for vacation to a foreign country in the summer so that we can either tour or visit with extended family. While in the winter we enjoy going to a warm-weather resort such as Hawaii.



Paris with Samuel



Merry Christmas



Cappadocia, Turkey

**Ben
&
Debbie**



Visiting the Zoo



Chicago



Sam's First Soccer Game

Dear Birthparent(s),

It is an honor that you have chosen to read our letter to you. We hope that our profile and the information in this letter will help you understand what a wonderful life your child will have being a part of our family. We have been married for 6 years and have a 5-year-old son, Samuel. We would love to welcome your child into our family and our hearts. Your child will complete us as a family, and you should know that our son is thrilled at just the potential to be a big brother. The close, life-long bond that they will develop and the leadership that they can show each other, as siblings will be precious.

Debbie is a stay-at-home mom. Debbie provides a stable home with lots of love and attention; she is around to facilitate play-dates and to take Samuel to the many activities that he is involved in. She volunteers her time by being a room-parent at the private school where Samuel is in pre-school. As a partner in a private company, Ben has great schedule flexibility, often working Fridays from home and without strict vacation 'rules'. We are lucky enough to have the luxury of taking numerous vacations and trips each year.

What Debbie has to say about Ben as a Dad: Ben is an outstanding Dad. He is hands-on and always there for Sam. He always makes time to play, tell stories and read 'just one more book' before bed. He is kind, caring, compassionate and very generous. Ben and Samuel have a very special bond.

What Ben has to say about Debbie as a Mom: Debbie loves Sam more than anything in the world. She is a role model Mom. She is always there without hovering, focused on development without pushing and keeps Sam active with new opportunities, experiences and challenges all without being frenetic. She is selfless, always putting Sam's needs ahead of her own. In short, she is the best a Dad or Kid could ask for!

We have chosen adoption because we have unsuccessfully tried to conceive another child. In addition, Debbie's pregnancy with Samuel was extremely difficult (resulting in bed rest in the third trimester and an emergency C-Section). The combination of these factors has led us to the very exciting decision to adopt.

Your child will be a part of our family from the very first day. We provide Samuel with structure and routine. A few of these include: reading bed time stories every night before going to sleep, going out for bagels on a Saturday morning followed by a fun activity like going to the park, or the zoo or to the Children's Museum. We also regularly love to go swimming at our neighborhood swimming pool (in the summer), or at the indoor pool where we are members (in the winter).

We will be extremely encouraging and supportive with your child's dreams and aspirations for the future. We are big believers in "Big Plans". Samuel has a book (given to him by one of his Aunts, a writer who lives in NJ) called "Big Plans" and while comical and suitable for kids, the message is clear: "Dream Big." We will help your child grow into a successful, well-rounded person. We are very fortunate and financially very comfortable. We promise to provide your child with every opportunity to explore his/her aspirations and dreams. We will provide all the emotional support to become the best person he/she could possibly be. We also promise to educate your child with the best education, continuing through Post-Graduate or Professional, as he/she desires.

We can't wait to share our traditions with your child. Your child will be a part of our wonderful Thanksgiving meals that we share with family and friends, our fall trips that we take to the country to play outside, paint pumpkins, play in the hay, ride ponies, and eat all sorts of delicious goodies. We are excited to introduce your child to our extended family get-togethers, which take place all the time at our house. In the summer we are often outside enjoying ourselves in our large yard playing games, sports, riding bikes and being just plain silly. In the winter we will be inside (except for the occasional snowball fight or snowman), cooking a lovely hearty meal, and playing in our kids playroom. And as the short days draw to a close, we will be cuddling in front of our fire place, drinking hot chocolate and reading wonderful, funny, children's books that inspire years of reading.

We respect the decision you are making regarding adoption. If we are blessed to become adoptive parents your child will know what a courageous decision you have made to give him/her the best life possible. We are open to sending you letters and photographs, as we love to take lots of pictures to capture all the important moments. Your child will know and understand his/her adoption story from a young age.

Thanks for taking the time to read about us, and considering us.

Ben and Debbie

