



Josh

MacKenize

Job Description:

Assistant Retail Store Director

Paralegal Specializing in Real Estate

Education:

Attended 1 Year of College, Studied to Be a Math Teacher

Associate's Degree in Paralegal Studies

Favorites:

Childhood Memory
Riding Horses

Childhood Memory
Cookouts at Grandparents' Pond

Family Activity
Camping

Family Activity
Going to the Beach

Musical Group
Smashing Pumpkins

Musical Group
Rascal Flatts

Quality About My Spouse
Selflessness

Quality About My Spouse
Fabulous Father

Sport to Play
Golf

Sport to Play
Kickball

Children:

Owen (1 1/2)

You have a baby that no doubt you love very much. There is no way for anyone to truly understand the painful, difficult and courageous decision you are about to make for yourself and your baby. May you find peace in the decision you make. Owen's birth mother is an angel here on earth, always watching over us. If you should choose us as parents, please know that you will have touched our lives forever just as she did! We will pray for you and always thank God for bringing you into our lives.

How Adoption Has Affected Us Personally

On September 28, 2007, the word adoption was no longer just a "word"; it became "real." An eight pound, eight ounce tiny baby boy was brought into the hospital room by the doctor and several nurses. For MacKenize, the tears came rolling down her face uncontrollably, and the room began to spin and become blurry.

A thoughtful, kind nurse hurriedly pushed a chair underneath MacKenize before she passed out. Her hands were too shaky to embrace the scared little boy who had just left the safety of his mother's womb. However, Josh's strong, steady and fatherly hands were there to snuggle and love the newborn baby longing for the touch of his parents. In the room right next to us was a woman not shaky and uncertain but with unbelievable strength. An incredible woman with the strength to let her son go and be placed in our arms. In these few minutes after the birth of this special child, we realized adoption was not just a word but a blessing that had made us a family!

What We'll Tell the Child About Adoption

There are a lot of uncertainties when it comes to a child's emotions. Each child will react differently to their adoption story. However, there is one certainty in our family and that certainty is honesty. We will be open and honest with your child, sharing all that we may know about you and your family. We believe in our hearts that keeping the truth from a child about their adoption would only end up hurting them. Children at a very young age may not fully understand adoption, but they deserve a chance to hear the true story. We will encourage them to express their feelings and support them in any way we can. Since birth, we have read books to Owen that are specifically written for adopted children. We are beginning to tell Owen of his adoption through a book of pictures we made for him. We want him to know what his birth mother looks like and to establish at a young age a sense of normalcy for him with the concept of adoption. All of the letters we have written Owen's birth mother over the past year and a half, we will some day share with him. Our hope is that this will help him understand she knew of all his achievements and milestones; she will always remain a part of his life. Our number one priority is to make sure Owen's life and any future child's life is one with a sense of belonging, with love by not just one family but two, and with respect of any emotion they may encounter because of their adoption.

Our House and Neighborhood



When we were first married, we lived in town. However, we knew that when we started a family we would like our children to grow up in the country; so, we moved to our three bedroom ranch home in a rural area of Ohio. We truly enjoy the wooded, quiet ten acres that surround our home. Our home is filled with Owen's laughter, playing and dancing. Even with tons of baby toys, there is still plenty of room for Lita and Lasso's dog toys. We have a barn on our property that we would like to have horses and sheep in someday, but the barn is perfect for any animals your child may want. Our country living provides roads with little traffic perfect for bike riding, horseback riding or leisurely walks. Off the roads, we take advantage of the open fields for four-wheeling, sledding and snowmobiling.



Home Sweet Home

Our House and Neighborhood, continued



MacKenize with Her Sisters Strolling Around the County Fair

MacKenize's Family: MacKenize is the middle of three girls. Her parents live on a family farm only a mile away. MacKenize and Josh enjoy putting Owen in his wagon and taking after dinner walks up to gramma and pappy's house. Her dad and all his daughters have a special passion for sheep; he still maintains a flock of about fifty. MacKenize's mom has an interest of her own, horses. She has two horses that she loves sharing with the grandchildren. Owen has only sat on the horses; he is not quite big enough to ride yet. Her older sister lives with her husband and three daughters in a quaint, small town an hour away. MacKenize's younger sister, husband, and three children live about twenty minutes away. MacKenize and her sisters are inseparable. They spend endless hours shopping, cooking, playing with the kids and just hanging out. MacKenize also is lucky to have a wonderful set of active, healthy grandparents who live within fifteen minutes. MacKenize and Josh visit with them almost every Sunday after church and enjoy lunch together. Her grandma brings out her famous potato salad, grandpa grills the perfect meat and every meal is finished off with a special dessert.

Josh's Family: Josh's parents also live within a half mile. Josh and MacKenize truly can do the classic saying of "borrow a cup of sugar from your neighbor." Josh's sister lives an hour away. She leads a very active life but always makes special time to spend with her only nephew. She spoils him with trendy clothes and the newest toys. Josh's grandma lives one road over, and traditional holiday meals are enjoyed with her and the extended family. Josh and MacKenize's families get together every year for Memorial Day camping. Everyone, including close friends, spend the entire weekend in their tent or camper at MacKenize's parents' farm. This is a fun time for both families and friends to bond, enjoy campfire food, fish, and get back to the simple pleasures in life without cell phones and cable television.

Our Extended Families



Owen's Baptism Day



All of the Family at Christmas Tree Farm



Daddy and Mommy Helping Me Hunt Easter Eggs

Family Traditions

Birthdays are extra special to our family; we cannot wait to have another birthday to celebrate.

Since our adoption of Owen, we have added a new tradition. On his first birthday, we took him back to the town he was born in. We visited the hospital and ate at the same restaurant we had dinner at when he was born. Every year, we will continue this tradition celebrating his hometown and the blessing he has been to us. We also have a big theme party with all the extended family and friends to spend time together and spoil the birthday boy. One of our family's favorite holidays is Easter. MacKenize's grandparents have always hosted the egg hunt. We rarely have missed a year of egg hunting; even as adults we did a three-legged hunt with our spouses. Now with seven children ages five and under, the adults do not have to participate and worry about spraining an ankle! Each year we look forward to Thanksgiving. Family time including an enormous meal, card playing, and non-stop chatter is held at each grandparents' homes. MacKenize's grandpa even built a table

large enough to seat everyone, which is twenty four people. At the beginning of December, MacKenize's family makes a trip to the local Christmas tree farm. It is always fun to see what kind of tree everyone picks out. The first year we were married the tree we picked out was so big it would not fit in the front door so we had to cut off almost half of it. Our families are excited to start new traditions and share in the old traditions with your child.



Hanging Out on Grandparents' Deck

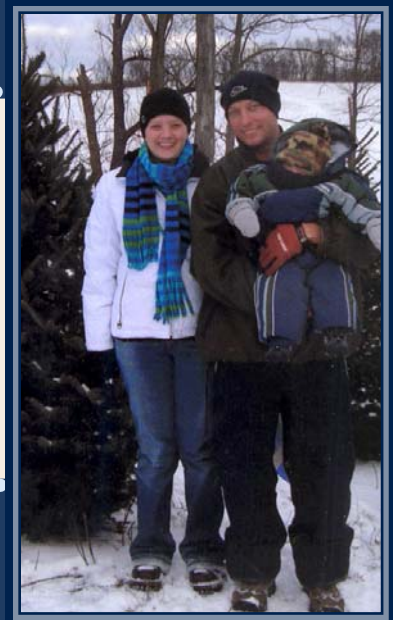


Posing for a Picture at Christmas Before the Gift Unwrapping Madness Began



I Love to Sit in My Rocking Chair and Read

Josh & Mackenzie



Picking Out the Family Christmas Tree



Family Christmas Pose with Our Dogs, Lita and Lasso



Smiling for the Camera at a Family Wedding

Dear Birthparent(s),

We have been through the experience and process of adoption already with our son, Owen. Every moment of anticipation and all of the unknown we are willing to experience a million times over again to expand our family. Owen is such a joy to us, and we long to be able to touch the life of another child.

We are high school sweethearts and have been married for nine years. In those years, we have been on our own personal roller coaster ride. The lowest point would have been enduring three, unsuccessful years of infertility. However, the highest, most thrilling point was when the phone rang and our social worker said a birth mother had chosen us! We have been on the greatest ride of our life ever since.

In the beginning of our marriage, we focused on our careers. Now our focus is definitely on our family. MacKenize only works three days a week, Monday through Wednesday. With Josh's flexible work schedule, he is able to be home on Tuesdays, which leaves two days for special time with grammie. We are a young couple and are ready to invest our time into building and nurturing a family.

The excitement, support and love from family, friends and our community after our adoption of Owen was overwhelming. Your child would be welcomed and embraced with this same enthusiasm. This child will be receiving hugs and kisses from every direction, from great grandparents all the way to the smallest cousin. We believe in our hearts there is no bond more special than that of siblings. We want nothing more in life than to be able to give this to Owen. Your child and Owen would grow up together sharing and knowing each other's adoption stories.

We had the amazing privilege to meet Owen's birth mother a couple of weeks before his birth. We were right there at his side from birth and continue to keep in contact with his birth mother through pictures and letters. The contact and openness you wish for your child we would completely honor and respect.

Having nieces, nephews, and Owen has given us much insight to children and how their love can change your life more than you can imagine. As they grow from an adorable baby that can only roll over, to a toddler that walks, all the way to a teenager that drives, we will be there every step of the way. We will rock them, hold their hand, teach them, or quietly stand by and watch them blossom into anything their heart desires. You and your baby have given us hope - hope that miracles do happen, twice!

You have a baby that no doubt you love very much. There is no way for anyone to truly understand the painful, difficult and courageous decision you are about to make for yourself and your baby. May you find peace in the decision you make. Owen's birth mother is an angel here on earth, always watching over us. If you should choose us as parents, please know that you will have touched our lives forever just as she did! We will pray for you and always thank God for bringing you into our lives.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you,

Josh and MacKenize

