



Tom

Sarah

Job Description:

Current Stay-at-Home Dad and Home Builder

National Marketing Director for a Health Care Consulting Firm (works from home)

Education:

Bachelor's Degree in Construction Technology & MBA

Bachelor's Degree in Marketing & MBA

Favorites:

Childhood Memory
Building with My Lego's

Childhood Memory
Camping and Canoeing with My Family

Hobbies

Computers, Cars, Woodworking, Photography, Jewelry Making & Baking

Hobbies

Entertaining in Our Home, Decorating, Music, Photography, Games/Puzzles

TV Show

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, The West Wing

TV Show

LOST, Glee, Top Chef, The Soup

Cartoon

Peanuts, The Simpsons

Cartoon

Shrek, CARS

Performer/Band

The Eagles, Joe Walsh

Performer/Band

Norah Jones, Daughtry

Children:

Will (age 2)

Thank you for reading our profile. We're Tom and Sarah and we're excited to grow our family through a second adoption. We always knew we wanted a family. But, *becoming* parents has blessed us with a joy we never imagined. We both grew up with siblings and believe the fun, love, support, and even good-natured rivalry they provide are an important part of growing up and being a family. We know you love your baby very much and we admire your courage and commitment to considering an adoption plan. After reviewing our profile, we hope you agree that we can provide the loving family and happy home you've dreamed of for your child.

Adopting Will and Our Thoughts on Openness

Families come together in many different ways and we are thankful that adoption continues to shape ours. Meeting Will's birth family and becoming his parents has been the most fulfilling experience of our lives. Will is an active and happy toddler with a giggle that melts our hearts. He uses his big blue eyes to study the world and the people around him and takes great pleasure in learning a new skill - big or small. He's currently obsessed with cars and trucks of all shapes and sizes, finger painting and play-doh, Sesame Street and Pixar movies, all kinds of music, jumping, climbing and sliding down slides, giving high-fives and bear hugs, and reading bedtime stories.

We will never forget the August afternoon when we got the call - Jen chose us to parent her child. A week later, we met Jen, her boyfriend, her mother and her social worker at a restaurant in their hometown. The conversation moved quickly from nervous small talk to common hobbies, favorite TV shows and our mutual love of dogs. We shared pictures and told family stories, talked about Jen's pregnancy and our interaction over the remaining weeks and at the hospital. As we left lunch, we gave Jen an email address and phone number she could use to contact us at anytime. Five weeks later, we waited anxiously at the hospital with Jen's family, met and held Will within hours of his birth, and spent the next three days bonding with Jen, Will, and other members of his extended birth family. In that short time, we formed an unpredictable and unexpected connection - one that allowed them to truly know us and see our immediate love for their baby; one that allowed us to understand Will's history (including where he got his nose and why he'll probably love jazz) and see the love his birth family would always have for him. We've been fortunate to maintain this bond with Jen and her extended family through emails, monthly letters and photos, birthday and holiday gifts for Will, and annual reunion picnics.

We share these details with you now, not to create a "carbon copy," but to paint a picture of what your relationship with us and your child could look like and describe the valuable connections we believe openness can create. Every child enters the world and joins their family in their own unique way. The experience you choose for yourself and your child will be the right one for you and we respect that.

Our House and Neighborhood

OHIO

We hand-picked our neighborhood eleven years ago, when Tom built our first home. Situated on a cul-de-sac, our wooded lot includes a fenced backyard, a small fish pond with a waterfall, and plenty of room for a future swing set or jungle gym. Our two-story home is family friendly with 4 bedrooms, a large eat-in kitchen for family dinners and kitchen "experiments," and a comfortable family room with plenty of space for toys, slumber parties and family movie nights. Last year, we added a piano where Sarah practices past skills and Will enjoys "tickling (well pounding) the ivories." Tom has the workshop of his dreams in our basement, one he plans to share with Will and another "little helper" the way his dad did with him. And, we just finished a large play room for the kids. Outside, our yard is perfect for playing hide-n-seek, sledding in the snow, catching lightning bugs, and jumping in the fall leaves.



Our Home

Our street is always filled with kids' games and laughter. It's a close knit neighborhood where neighbors stop to chat while walking their dogs or riding bikes, keep an eye on each other's kids, and help out during tough times. We're very close with one of the families with three daughters who love to babysit for Will. And their youngest son sees himself as Will's "best friend," frequently sharing toys, books and his love of all things Spider-man. Our favorite neighborhood tradition is our Halloween Block Party. Families gather in our cul-de-sac with candy, picnic dinners, and lawn chairs around the fire-pit. Tom displays his latest jack-o-lantern creations and I bring my famous toffee squares. The evening doesn't end until the kids run-off their sugar highs. Two years ago, this party served as Will's "official" introduction and, if you select us, our neighbors will welcome your child with the same open arms.

Our House and Neighborhood, continued



Our Dogs Alex & Abby

Our local school system is in the top 10% of Ohio public schools. We're within a mile of the elementary school and three miles from the middle and high schools. Our township boasts 10 parks, two within a mile of our home, with playgrounds, sports fields, picnic areas, walking/hiking/biking trails, a nature center, and a water-park. Our Presbyterian church is less than five miles away. Sunday school, children's choir and youth fellowship played an important role in my life and we hope to provide the same spiritual foundation for Will and for your child.

Our Extended Families

Tom's Family: My older brother is one of my best friends. He lives about 30 minutes away with his wife, 8-year-old step-son and new baby. He is an IT contractor and we enjoy many of the same hobbies, including computer games and remote control cars and helicopters. My sister-in-law is a cardiac care nurse, and our nephew loves playing "big brother" to Will. He loves to read him books and tell him everything he knows about Harry Potter. He even drew a set of flash cards to help Will learn his numbers and letters when he gets older.

Although my parents divorced when I was a teenager, both have been happily re-married for more than 20 years. My mom and step-dad live about an hour away in an old home they restored. Mom works part-time and enjoys gardening, photography and acting in local plays. My step-dad works for a local retailer and sings in a competitive barbershop chorus. My dad and step-mom recently returned to Ohio to retire closer to family and spend time with their growing brood of grandchildren. They live less than 10 minutes away and are very active grandparents. I'm incredibly close to my dad, a retired engineer who taught me everything I know about cooking, woodworking, and jewelry making. My step-mom is a retired accountant and an avid gardener. Both love animals and volunteer at a local animal shelter. My step-sister is an engineer and lives in Virginia with our 11-year old nephew. Despite the distance, we see them once or twice a year.

Sarah's Family: I cherish the supportive and loving friendship I share with my younger brother and sister-in-law. He is a talented writer and musician, leads his own band and teaches guitar. She attends grad school where she studies China's culture and economy. Although they live in Nashville, we talk weekly by phone and email and our home is a favorite hang-out for them (and the band) whenever they're in town. My brother loves being an uncle and is not ashamed to tell us that he's coming to town for a "Will fix." I just love seeing Will's eyes light up when he and his uncle play guitar.

My mom died unexpectedly in 1999. She was one of my biggest champions and a great source of comfort and advice. As a speech therapist and teacher, she taught me valuable lessons about young children and their development. I miss her deeply, but know her motherly wisdom helps guide me every day. My parents were married 32

years. But, my dad found happiness a second time, marrying a minister from our family's church. A semi-retired financial consultant, he's active in church and Boy Scouts. They live about an hour away, but they love to travel, including RV trips to visit family and friends, vacations in Hilton Head, and church trips to places like Alaska and Greece. My three step-siblings and seven step-nieces and nephews helped make them the wonderful grandparents they are today.

Our families love animals, with 6 dogs and 4 cats between us. We proudly claim 2 of those dogs - Alex and Abby - who love rope bones, tummy rubs and meal-time at the foot of Will's booster seat.



Will Loves His Activity Board Under Our Kitchen Island

One of Our Passions

We love cooking. We host family dinners for the holidays and other celebrations. And, when dinners become sleepovers, our guests dream of Tom's Belgian waffles for breakfast. We throw an annual Christmas party for 40+ friends, family and neighbors and take pride in preparing everything ourselves - from Tom's famous crab cakes to my ever popular coconut cake. One of our favorite gatherings is our monthly dinner club with 10 of our closest friends. Sarah organized the first one seven years ago, and we've been rotating from house to house ever since.

While our passion for cooking is often about the food, it's also about everything that surrounds a good meal, like welcoming friends and family into our home, making them comfortable and sharing a special evening. It's about stories - old and new - and laughter so strong it brings tears to your eyes. It's about the discussions that continue over dishes and left-overs and our guests sinking into comfy couches and chairs for a card game, movie or post-dinner nap.

We've loved including Will in these dinner parties, and we've gone out of our way to make our kitchen a fun and safe environment for our "little helper" - even building an activity board with spinning shapes and letters onto the back of our island. Whether your child is more interested in helping us cook or pretending the pots and pans are musical instruments, we hope our kitchen becomes a source of many happy memories.



Members of Both Families Joined Us to Celebrate Will's Adoption



Will with His Cousins (Tom's side of the family)



A Walk on the Beach Along Sanibel Island



Enjoying an Afternoon in Wine Country



Playing in the Leaves

Tom & Sarah



Waiting for the City's Annual Fireworks Show



Enjoying Our Halloween Block Party



Italy Was Like Our 2nd Honeymoon

Dear Birthparent(s),

Thank you for reading our letter. We're Tom and Sarah and we're excited to grow our family through a second adoption. We always knew we wanted a family. But, *becoming* parents has blessed us with a joy we never imagined. We both grew up with siblings and believe the fun, love, support, and even good-natured rivalry they provide are an important part of growing up and being a family. We know you love your baby very much and we admire your courage and commitment to considering an adoption plan. After reviewing our profile, we hope you agree that we can provide the loving family and happy home you've dreamed of for your child.

We've been together for 23 years (happily married for 15) and we love being parents. Nearly five years ago, Sarah learned she could not carry a pregnancy. We spent months speaking with doctors and searching our hearts. And, we quickly realized that being parents - in whatever way God planned - was our true desire. Adoption was a natural path for us. In addition to our wonderful son, Will, we both have close friends and family members who are adopted or have adopted. So, not surprisingly, our friends and families are as excited as we are for the opportunity to add to our family and to love and nurture your child. We believe that families created by adoption are truly special and that their unique bonds should be honored. It's important to us that your child always knows his/her adoption story and the wonderful way we became a family. We want you and your child to know as much about each other as you're comfortable sharing, now and forever.

So, how would we describe each other? **Sarah about Tom:** I love his blue-green eyes, his quiet self-confidence, and the enthusiasm he brings to fatherhood. He loves learning and is very smart - always reading about politics and history and practicing (and usually mastering) a new hobby. I've always admired the respect he shows his mother and the old-fashioned manners she taught him, like opening doors for me wherever we go. He always finds simple ways to show his affection, whether cooking my favorite meal, holding my hand, or writing "I love you" on the refrigerator with Will's letters. One of his best qualities may be his patience. He definitely lives by the motto "don't sweat the small stuff." Let's just say that when he taught me to drive a stick-shift in our first year of dating, I broke his clutch and he didn't freak out.

Tom about Sarah: I love her smile, her laugh, her quick wit, and the way she puts our family first in the decisions she makes every day. She is a great writer and speaker. The toast she made at her brother's wedding had everyone laughing and crying. It was perfect - but that's her. Sarah loves to dance and sing. I catch her dancing while doing dishes or humming a song at the dinner table. She doesn't even realize she's doing it. And, she loves to decorate. Sometimes she over-thinks it, like painting five separate swatches on our kitchen wall before picking a color. But, the result is always beautiful. Even when she's not good at something she gives it a try. During a recent game of Frisbee golf, she kept a great sense of humor, despite the fact she couldn't throw it straight to save her life. She kept working on it - laughing all the way - and we had a great afternoon.

When Will was born, many parts of our lives changed, including our approach to our careers. After finishing grad school, Tom chose to delay his return to a full-time career to spend more time with Will and our next child. Helping Will learn and grow through imaginative play at home, daily errands, trips to the park, and a weekly Kindermusik class has meant the world to Tom. While we're thankful for the blessings and security that my career provides, I'm lucky to have a position that allows me to take an extended maternity leave (4-6 months) and then work from home with a flexible schedule. To have the freedom to share lunch with Will, take a "play" break or lay him down for his nap in the middle of my work day is a gift that I cherish. Will attends a great pre-school near our home 2-3 days per week where he has fun meeting new friends and learning new skills. Tom and I look forward to providing the same balanced environment for your child.

We promise to love your child unconditionally and do all we can to nurture his/her spirit, encourage his/her creativity and respect his/her individual beliefs and dreams. We believe reasonable discipline (including clear boundaries and consistent, age-appropriate consequences) is important for a child to feel safe and secure and to grow up with a clear understanding of right and wrong. We will raise your child in a home full of love and support, where accomplishments and ideas are openly praised, and the lines of communication are always open.

Ultimately, we hope to teach your child many of the important lessons our parents taught us: Always make time for your family. Honor your commitments. Be thankful for what you have and give generously to others. Keep an open mind. Respect others for who they are vs. where they come from or what they look like. Take pride in your work. Never stop learning. Believe in yourself. Follow your dreams. Have faith and trust in God's plan.

At our first adoption seminar, a birthmother shared a poem she received from her child's adoptive parents. The words immediately touched our hearts and have remained with us ever since. We share them with you now because we believe they capture the importance of your choice and the incredible bond that we'll share with you and your child for the rest of our lives. *How can the stars thank the sky for letting them shine? How can the moon thank the sun for giving it light? How can a bird thank the wind for helping it fly? If we knew these words, then we could thank you.*

With support and admiration,

Tom and Sarah

