

SEARCH CHECKLIST

06/10

- Keep a three-ring binder with all of your research, the people you have called, resources you have used, documents you have consulted, phone calls you have made and so on. Note the dates carefully. Keep all documents in plastic sleeves in the binder. It becomes a “diary” of your search. You just won’t remember everything you discover while searching!
- Familiarize yourself with your public library holdings, i.e., directories, phone books, etc. Find out what resources are available. Photocopy all documents twice. One copy is your working copy and the other copy is for your Parent Finder’s file. Place the original documents in a safe place and NEVER give or send them to anyone. A lost document can add years to a search.
- Register with any Parent Finders group or a similar group in your area. Find out when there are meetings and plan to attend as many as possible. It is here that you will receive emotional support and information to help you with your search. Your membership places you on Parent Finders’ nation-wide registry.
- If you are an adoptee, speak with your adoptive family and ask them for any information they may have or can remember concerning your adoption. Remember, anything your family can tell you will be of help.
 - What city you were born in? What hospital?
 - What Children’s Aid Society (CAS) handled the adoption? In what city?
 - If a lawyer or doctor were used, what names?
 - Were your adoptive family given verbal or written information about your birth family
- Birth parents are entitled to have copies of anything they signed at the time of the adoption. Request these from the CAS involved. Such forms will not assist you in locating your child, but they will give you a better understanding of the process you went through.. Birth parents should also request background information about the adoptive family, from the CAS.
- Birth parents should also find out whether their child’s adoption was finalized in the same area as the placement or elsewhere. You may be searching in the wrong place. Listen carefully. Sometimes people will reveal information in verbal leads but not written ones.
- Sometimes it is a good idea to hire professional search help. **Parent Finders** can recommend people. This will cost you money. The amount will depend on the amount of work required. These searches can be VERY time-consuming and few professionals work for “free”, so be prepared Allow for at least 20+ hours of research. It may be that the person cannot be found, especially if the only information available is a name like “Bill” who drove a truck, or “Jane Smith” who planned to travel in Australia after the birth. A search cannot be done with only that much information! Some people are never found.