

Good Morning, I'm Angela Boblitt, an adoptive parent, and Director of the Ohio Adoption agency Choosing Hope Adoptions.

Just a little over 6 years ago my husband and I we would be bringing home our second child through adoption. A 6 week old baby girl with Down syndrome – she would come home in 48 hours and we found ourselves \$14k short of the funds needed for her adoption.

Our immediate options were to ask family and friends to donate to our adoption costs or put the balance on a high interest credit card. The reality of our situation was that \$14k stood between us and our ability to bring home one of Ohio's most vulnerable children. We had put our yes on the table but the need for immediate funds was a stumbling block.

Having had funds available to us like what would be available through the Family Forward Linked Deposit program would have alleviated our panic to finding funding to bring home our daughter Lucy. And it may have allowed us to consider adopting again.

Today as the Founder and Director of Choosing Hope Adoptions I have had the honor of walking alongside dozens of adoptive parents in their journey to bringing home a child. While the costs of adopting through Choosing Hope is significantly less than the national average we still routinely see hopeful adoptive parents struggle to come up with the funds needed to adopt. Everyday we receive emails from prospective adoptive parents inquiring on the adoption process. 8 out of 10 times the questions these hopeful adoptive parents lead with isn't how to start the process....but how much it will cost.

They recognize that it is likely the cost of adopting a child is likely what stands between them building their family or not.

We are dedicated to helping families successfully navigate the adoption journey. This is why we're proud to support Family Forward, legislation that will ease the financial burdens families face in the adoption process. Access to these funds will allow more families to lead with a yes for at risk children.