

HONG KONG

ADOPTION INFORMATION GUIDE



Department for Community Development
Government of Western Australia

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This guide focuses on the process of adopting a child from Hong Kong. It gives an overview of the various steps you will need to go through and outlines documentation requirements.

This guide does not prepare you for parenting an adopted child. It does not discuss issues like attachment, cultural continuity and open adoption.

Applicants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these adoption issues by reading adoption literature and contacting adoption services listed in this guide for further information

All information contained in this guide is prepared and published in good faith and is subject to change.

All information regarding adoption procedures, travel, visa etc should be viewed as a **guide** and is subject to change.

Please feel free to inform the program manager for Hong Kong of any ideas, changes, new information or corrections that may assist in making this guide concise and more informative for the community.

Produced by

Adoption Service, Department for Community Development

March 2006

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GLOSSARY

AAC - Adoption Applications Committee – a board of people with expertise in the area of adoptions which meets once a month. The AAC considers applicant’s suitability to adopt. The Adoption Assessment Report is submitted to the AAC and is used to make a decision about an applicant’s suitability.

(The) Adoption Act or The Act – The Western Australian Adoption Act, 1994 (WA legislation)

Allocation – Child offered to Prospective Adoptive Parents for the purpose of adoption prior to placement.

ARCS – Adoption Research and Counselling Service is a non-government adoption organisation. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

AS – Adoption Service. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

Assessment – all adoption applicants need to be assessed by AS prior to being approved to adopt a child either locally or from overseas.

Adoption Assessment Report – A report, which the assessor has written based on client interviews, referee reports, medical and police checks etc. This report is submitted to the AAC.

ASFC – Adoption Support for Families and Children is a non-government adoption organisation. Adoption Service is the only approved organisation in WA authorised to arrange adoptions both overseas and locally.

Authentication – Documents to be officially sealed and bound by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, prior to sending overseas.

DCD – Department for Community Development

CEO – Chief Executive Officer of Department for Community Development

DIMIA – Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Australia.

FCS 32 - Financial Statement Form – to be filled in by prospective adoptive parents for the adoption assessment report and homestudy, assessment updates and Hon Judge report.

Form 40CH – Immigration Sponsorship of your adopted child. You need to lodge this with DIMIA together with Form 47CH in order to obtain your adopted child’s visa clearance.

Form 47CH – Application for Migration to Australia. You need to lodge this DIMIA together with Form 40CH in order to obtain your adopted child’s visa clearance.

Hague Convention – Hague Convention for Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. This is a convention to prevent the trafficking and sale of children by

putting in place an agreement of minimum standards for intercountry adoption. Australia signed the Convention on 25 August 1998 and it was later ratified on 1 December 1998.

Hague country – Those countries that have signed and ratified the Hague Convention.

HAS – Health Assessment Service of DIMIA – which approves or rejects the Child’s Medicals for immigration purposes. This will determine if the Child is cleared for entry into Australia or not.

HK – Hong Kong

Homestudy – A package of documents that provides an overview of the applicants’ circumstances. It is used to be able to match a child according to their needs. The package includes your assessment report.

Intercountry Adoption – Adoption of children from overseas countries.

ISS – International Social Services (an international non-profit making organisation providing a variety of social services).

ISS Australia Branch – The ISS Australia branch provides assistance to Australian families wishing to adopt children from Hong Kong. This service is provided in conjunction with ISS Hong Kong Branch.

ISS Hong Kong Branch – This is a non-profit making organisation which provides a multitude of social services. This includes arranging overseas adoption for Hong Kong children who are under the guardianship of the Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong.

Notarisation – Documents to be stamped and signed by a recognised Notary Public (solicitor) in Australia.

Notary Public – also commonly called Public Notary, is usually a practitioner/solicitor appointed by the Full Court as a practising public notary in WA, Australia.

PAP – Prospective Adoptive Parent

Placement – Child is officially placed into the care of the Prospective Adoptive Parents.

Program Manager – The appointed Social Worker from Adoption Service who liaises with the particular overseas country on intercountry adoptions; who provides support to applicants with that country and who supervises the placements of adopted children from that country.

SWD HK – Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong. This is the equivalent department to Department of Community Development in Western Australia where children available for adoption are wards of the Director of Social Welfare in Hong Kong.

VAC – Visa Application Charge. This is the fee that you will need to pay at the Department of Multicultural, Immigration and Indigenous Affairs. This is currently \$1305 and it is non-refundable.



INTRODUCTION

Ho ma!

This guide is to help you understand the processes, which occur from the time that you are considering adopting a child through to the completion of the adoption process.

Your program manager at Adoption Service will support you through the process and answer any questions that may arise along the way. Adoption Service is immediately advised of any changes to the Hong Kong adoption process and will advise prospective adoptive applicants.

Adoption is a long and detailed process.

There are basically **six** stages:

- 1. Enquiry**
- 2. Education program**
- 3. Application, Assessment and Approval**
- 4. Homestudy, Waiting and matching**
- 5. Application for Adoption Order**

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist' for the details associated with each stage.

This guide will explain specific details of any changes to the standard process that relate to a Hong Kong Adoption. It will also give you rough time lines for each stage. Also, there are some pages at the back of the guide which have been left blank for your own notes. You may find it helpful to highlight or put post-it notes on important pages.

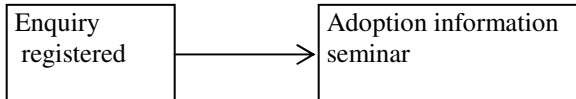
While every effort is being made to ensure information is as thorough and as accurate as possible at the time of publication, please be aware that there are frequent changes in various aspects of the process and that updates will be made from time to time.

The program manager would like your feedback, especially any additional information, corrections and constructive suggestions that can be included in a future edition.

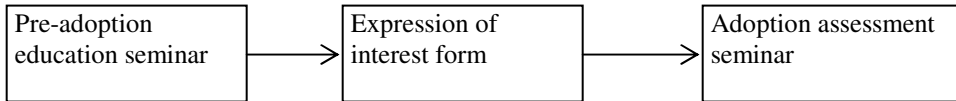
FLOWCHART

PROCEDURE FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

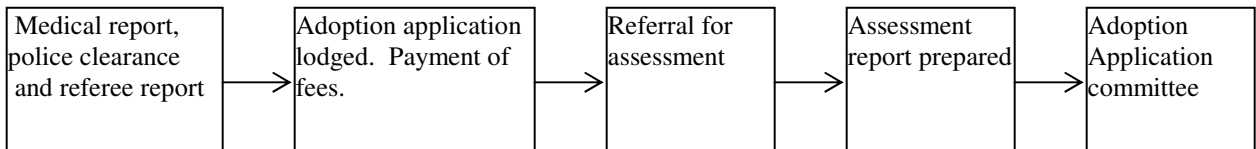
Stage 1: Enquiry



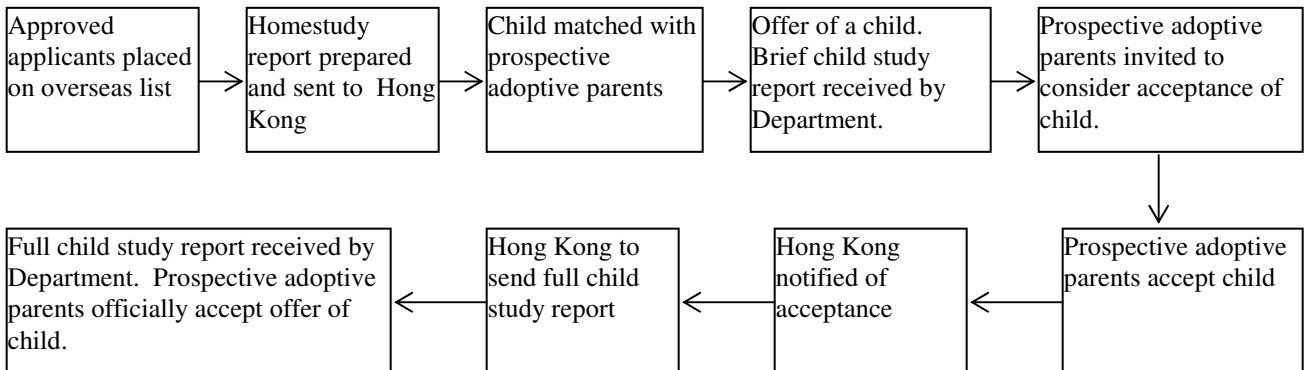
Stage 2: Education Program



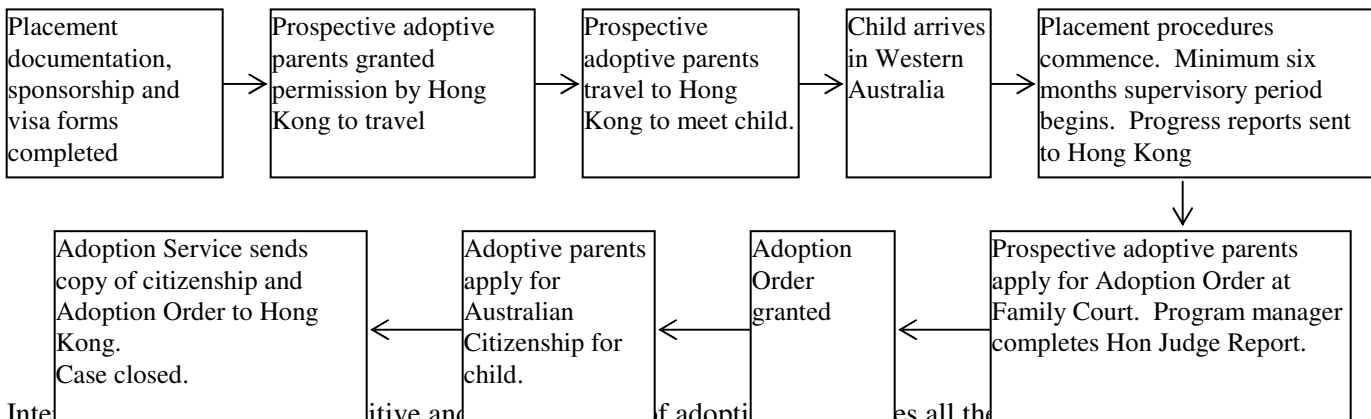
Stage 3: Assessment



Stage 4: Approval



Stage 5: Placement and supervision



International and domestic adoptions involve a range of legal issues relating to domestic adoptions as well as a range of other issues. Moreover, it involves Australian immigration law and policy; the laws and policies of the overseas countries; and obligations under international conventions.

Because the children are being placed internationally, and almost always interracially, issues relating to cultural heritage arise. Also, some children have "special needs" because they are older and/or have disabilities. Many of the children, including babies, are likely to be physically and/or emotionally vulnerable because of early physical and/or emotional deprivation.

Intercountry adoption has frequently been associated with intense controversy. At one end of the spectrum, there is the view that it is a form of exploitation of Third World countries by First World countries and should be discontinued. It can be argued that intercountry adoption does not provide a solution to the domestic issues leading to adoption. This situation benefits first world countries where there is a high demand for babies. At the other end of the spectrum, there is the view that intercountry adoption is a humanitarian act, towards both individual children and the sending countries, and thus is a form of overseas aid; that in first world countries there are high numbers of people wanting to adopt children and it should be encouraged to develop and expand. There are numerous intermediate positions.

HISTORY OF INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

The concept of intercountry adoption has its origins in the aftermath of the two World Wars, but particularly after World War II, when the disruption of families in war-torn countries resulted in large numbers of abandoned and orphaned children. Children from Germany, Greece and the Baltic States were sent by religious organisations for adoption in other European countries and in the USA. From 1953 large numbers of orphaned or abandoned children from the Korean war were adopted overseas. In Australia, however, intercountry adoption is a relatively recent practice: prior to 1975 there were few intercountry adoptions. It only became a recognised avenue of adoption following the airlift in 1975 of Vietnamese war orphans to Western nations: the 292 children who came to Australia were adopted by Australian families.

Since then, adoption of children from Asia and Latin America has become well established in Australia, but for reasons which have diversified from this early reaction to a specific crisis.

Intercountry adoption has endured as a response to the needs of children orphaned, abandoned or relinquished because of military conflict, poverty or stigmas attaching to illegitimacy, disablement or mixed race.

But another momentum has, since the 1970s, overtaken the original impetus for intercountry adoption. Economic, demographic, cultural and political changes in Australia in the last twenty years have resulted in fewer unwanted births, less pressure to relinquish ex-nuptial children for adoption and later discovery of infertility due to couples delaying starting a family. The two-fold effect of these factors is a marked decrease in the availability of Australian-born children for adoption and many couples finding themselves too old to adopt locally born babies. As a result, increasing numbers have turned to intercountry adoption to begin or extend their families.

It can be seen, then, that intercountry adoption is a shifting, evolving phenomenon, responding to both domestic and international forces.

For the latest Australian Statistics on Intercountry Adoption, log onto the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website to view the 2002/2003 Adoption Australia Report (<http://www.aihw.gov.au>)

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES (ISS)

ISS is an international non-government organisation with its General Secretariat in Geneva. Through its global network including Branches and correspondents, ISS gives help to individuals and families with personal or social problems, which require intercountry cooperation. The service objective has no political, racial, religious or nationality bias.

In 1914, in Stockholm and in 1920, in Chambéry, that the Young Women's Christian Association (YMCA) became concerned with the deplorable predicaments confronting women and children in their attempts to join their husbands who had migrated to the Americas, which resulted in the formation of International Migration Service (IMS) to guide and assist migrants. In 1924, IMS became an independent agency under Swiss law and the headquarters was transferred to Geneva. IMS eventually became ISS. With continued migration and movement of families, ISS has established itself in nearly every country in Western Europe and throughout most of the countries in the southern hemisphere.

ISS is involved with casework and the primary functions are:

- To coordinate efforts of agencies within a particular country and those abroad in order to find a solution to a presenting social or socio-legal problem with an international dimension and, in this regard,
- To interpret unfamiliar rules, regulation, culture and customs and
- To facilitate communication through qualified, multilingual and multicultural staff in resolving these problems.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES, HONG KONG BRANCH

In 1985, ISS was established in Hong Kong as a headquarters delegate which then became ISS Hong Kong Branch in 1972. ISS HK is a non-profit making organisation providing a variety of social services to the local community of Hong Kong. Some of the services include:

- Intercountry Adoption Program
- Intercountry Casework Program
- Post-migration services for new arrivals in Hong Kong
- Pre-migration counseling program
- Migrants program
- Foster care program
- Small group home program
- School of social work program
- Services to prepare mainlanders for settlement in Hong Kong.

ISS Hong Kong is working with six countries (United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and Singapore) in arranging overseas adoption.

The Adoption Unit finds suitable and permanent homes for children who have lost their parents through death or desertion and for illegitimate children whose parents are unable to maintain them. For children with special needs, suitable local adoptive homes are difficult to find and overseas families adopt some of them. The Adoption Unit also helps in adoption through private arrangement such as step-parents or relative adoption.

Statistics on Hong Kong Adoption Service in 2002/2003.

- Adoption by local families 119
- Adoption by overseas families 23
- Private arranged adoption (eg: relative) 44

Children available for adoption as at 31 January 2004.

Characteristics of children:

- Healthy 1
 - Of relatively complicated family background
Eg: abandoned, drug dependent parents 17
 - Children aged 5 or above 10
 - With health issues 15
 - Disabled 55
- Total 98

CHAPTER ONE

CRITERIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicants interested in adopting a child from an overseas country, in first instance must meet all the requirements of the Western Australian Adoption Act 1994. Adoption of a child from Hong Kong can only be arranged by Department for Community Development, Adoption Service.

1. The Adoption Act 1994 – criteria for adoption applicants

- Applicant(s) must be over 18 or more years of age;
- is a resident or domiciled in Western Australia;
- if married to, or in a defacto relationship with another person, for at least three years, applies as a joint applicant with that person;
- one applicant must be an Australian citizen. The other applicant's citizenship must give the same rights as adopted persons as non-adopted person in relation to entry into, residence, education and medical care in that country.

[Section 38 & 39]

2. To be considered 'suitable to adopt', each applicant must show that he / she:

- is physically and mentally able to care for and support a child until the child attains 18 years of age;
- is of good repute;
- is applying jointly, has a stable marriage or defacto relationship with the other applicant;
- shows a desire and ability to provide a suitable family environment for the child;
- has not been found guilty:-
 - (i) in the 5 years before the date of assessment, of an offence punishable at the time of the finding by imprisonment,
 - (ii) At any time, of an offence punishable at the time of the finding by life imprisonment, strict security life imprisonment or life imprisonment for 20 years or more, or
 - (iii) At any time, of any offence involving an assault or sexual offence against a child (committed when the applicant was 18 or more years of age).

[Section 40]

3. When a child is considered for placement, the prospective adoptive parent:

- Must be approved as suitable adoptive applicant;
- is not more than 45 years than the child if he or she is the youngest applicants and the older applicants must not be more than 50 years older than the child in the case where they have not adopted a child before;
- if female, not be pregnant at the time of placement
- be not undertaking treatment for infertility
- have finalized the adoption of any other adopted child in the family;
- meet, as far as is practicable, the wishes of the birth parents;
- where there are other children in the adoptive home then:-
 - (i) the adoptee is to be the youngest in the adoptive family,
 - (ii) the youngest child in the family must be 12 or more months older than the adoptee,

- (iii) each of the children has been in the family for at least 2 years
[Section 52 and Regulation 41]

Please note that the age differential is different for second and subsequent adoptions.

HONG KONG'S CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

Applicants must meet the requirements of the *Western Australian Adoption Act* and in addition the requirements of the Hong Kong criteria to be eligible to adopt a child from Hong Kong.

Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must be married for a minimum of 3 years. If it is the second marriage for either one spouse, they must be married for a minimum of 5 years. • If the couple has lived together in a de facto relationship before they married, this time spent living together may count for the required minimum of either 3 or 5 years married to each other. • Couples with two or more divorces are generally not considered. • Accept applications from single applicants who are able to demonstrate special parenting skills. • Same sex couples are not considered.
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age is 25 years old. • Maximum age of applicant is 45 years, although, special consideration may be given to those over 45 years and under 55 years who are capable and willing to consider older or special needs children.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that both applicants be of sound health, both physically and mentally.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is preferred that the breadwinner is male. • Priority is given to Chinese couples, then to couples where one spouse is Chinese and finally to non-Chinese couples. • Priority is also given to childless couples, than to families with one child. However, for children with special needs, parenting experience is also sought and families with up to five children can be considered in those instances. Other criteria may also be waived, for children with special needs.
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants should be accepting of all religions. • Jehovah Witnesses should provide a statement that they will agree to blood transfusion for the child if needed.

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require at least 12 years of formal education
Type of child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged 6 months and older. • Generally male child.
Waiting time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the homestudy has been received by ISS HK, it will take approximately 3 to 12 months before an offer of a child is made by Hong Kong. • From the acceptance of the offer of a child to traveling to Hong Kong, it will take between 3 to 6 months.
Travel Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both applicants are required to travel. • Other children may travel. • Expected to stay at least 5-10 working days.

ISS HK state that applicants must have genuine motivation in adoption and are mature enough to make a life long commitment to take up parental responsibilities for a child adopted from another country/culture. They must also have adequate ability and resources to parent an adoptive child and provide the child with a stable/permanent home.

CHILDREN REQUIRING AN ADOPTIVE PLACEMENT

- **Older children** – ages 3 or above with no complications in health or background.
- **Children having some kinds of special needs** – most ages between 1 to 6 years old such as :
 - Health problems, some of which are minor or correctable ones
 - record of delayed development, but some are gradually catching up, and/or
 - unfavourable background such as having a parent with drug dependence, mental illness or mental hardship.
- **Male** – majority of the children requiring an adoptive placement are males.

*Please note that although Hong Kong may classify some children as special needs, they may not have a disability as people in Hong Kong have exceptionally high expectation from children.

ISS Hong Kong provide a comparatively detail child study report on offer of the child including photographs. Often the relinquishing parent will provide consent and the court documents are also sent. Good information regarding the health status, social background and context for adoption is provided. Prior to placement, the children are cared for in good quality foster care, often with a large family. WA has had little experience with past adoption in Hong Kong.

CHAPTER TWO

APPLICATION PROCESS

SUMMARY OF STAGES, DOCUMENTS AND COST

1. Enquiry

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

2. Education program

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

3. Application, Assessment and Approval

Please refer to the 'Adoption Procedure Checklist'.

4. Homestudy, Waiting and Matching

	Process	Cost Subject to change
Information Officer	Once you have been approved, the Information Officer will send you a letter outlining the homestudy requirements for Hong Kong.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Once you have completed all the forms and collated the information, please contact the Information Officer to arrange a time to submit your paperwork.	Nil
Information Officer	Once all the documents have been collated as per Hong Kong's requirements, the Information Officer will send the documents to ISS Hong Kong.	ISS HK registration fee of US\$100
Program manager	Follows progress of the case with ISS HK	Nil
ISS HK	Will contact program manager once they have scrutinized the homestudy and will request additional information from the prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Program manager	Will contact the prospective adoptive parents and make an appointment to answer Hong Kong's additional questions	Nil
Program manager	Will provide ISS HK with the answers to the additional information in writing.	Nil
ISS HK	Offer of a child.	Nil
Program manager	Based on the information provided by ISS HK, the program manager will conduct a Departmental case review of the allocated child. This is to ensure that prospective adoptive parents are eligible to adopt by checking that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couples are within age criteria • Able to meet the needs and care for the 	Nil

	<p>allocated child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical, police and adoption assessment are all current and up to date (all need to be updated every two years) 	
Team Leader	Endorses recommendation of program manager to accept the allocation of the child	Nil
Adoptions Manager	Manager approves the allocation of the child.	Nil
Program manager	Prospective adoptive parents are notified of the allocation and an interview is arranged to peruse all the details of the child provided by ISS HK. A photo of the child may be given to the prospective adoptive parents.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Couples will discuss the child offered. If you choose to accept the offer of the child, please inform program manager who will notify ISS HK to write up and forward the full child study report. Acceptance can only occur once you are viewed the full child study report.	Nil
Program manager	Contact ISS HK informing them that prospective adoptive parents are interested and would like a full child study report. This can take up to two months to arrive.	Nil
Program manager	When the full child study report has been received from ISS HK, program manager will provide prospective adoptive parents with the full child study report, acceptance documents and immigration papers.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Complete acceptance information and immigration forms and return to program manager	Processing fee to ISS HK = US\$500 DIMA sponsorship fee is AUS\$1305 Courier costs varies.
Program manager	Program manager to courier forms to Hong Kong.	Costs covered by prospective adoptive parents.

5. Placement and supervision

	Process	Cost Subject to change
ISS HK	The Social Worker from ISS HK will organise the following in preparation for the child to travel:	Nil

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain final clearance from Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong. • Take child to panel doctor for medical clearance. They will forward the medical forms to HAS in Sydney. • Organise passport and migration visa. <p>This process can take up to six months. Program manager will be in regular contact with ISS HK and will be able to obtain a rough idea of when PAP's are able to travel.</p>	
HAS	To clear immigration medicals. Medicals will be faxed back to the Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong.	Nil
Program manager	Contact HAS and obtain a copy of the cleared medical. Program manager will forward this information to prospective adoptive parents.	Nil
ISS HK	Will contact program manager notifying that prospective adoptive parents are able to travel. Will advise as to the best location for accommodation in Hong Kong.	Nil
Program manager	Inform prospective adoptive parents that they are able to travel.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Organise itinerary and forward to copy to program manager	Nil
Program manager	Forward copy of itinerary to ISS HK.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	To sign undertaking and provide results of pregnancy test (blood test) one week before travel. To sign placement conditions.	Doctors fee
Program manager	To prepare travel papers for prospective adoptive parents	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents	Travel to Hong Kong (min 5-10 working days). The Social Worker in charge of the case will either meet you at the airport or at your hotel.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and Social Worker from ISS HK	You will meet your child (with foster carer if the child is being fostered). There will be several meetings over the week. Depending on the child, you may be able to have him/her in your hotel room after a couple of days.	Nil
Prospective adoptive parents and child	Upon arrival in Perth, visit program manager within one week after return. Please bring along the child's passport and other adoption papers. Prospective adoptive parents and program manager will arrange a time for the first placement supervision visit in the home.	Nil
Program manager	Will forward each supervision report to	Nil

	Social Worker from ISS HK	
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6. Application for Adoption Order

	Process	Cost Subject to change
Prospective adoptive parents	Following the first visit, applicants may wish to engage a solicitor to lodge an application for the adoption order. After 6 visits, your program manager will be busy preparing the Hon Judge report to support the adoption order.	Solicitor = AUD\$800+
Solicitor or prospective adoptive parents	Lodges application for Adoption Order	Covered in solicitors fee
Family Court of Western Australia	Grants Adoption Order	Nil
Adoptive parents	Applies for child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship (obtain from program manger to DIMIA). Supplies notarised copy to program manager.	At the expense of the adoptive parents
Program manager	Send notarised copy of Adoption Order and Certificate of Australian Citizenship to ISS HK.	Nil
Program manager	Close case	Nil

SUMMARY OF COSTS

(Approximate costs. Subject to change.)

Education Seminars	\$470
Police Clearance	\$70
Medical	varies
Application	\$750 per couple
Assessment	\$1,000
Registration of home study dossier	US\$100
Acceptance Fee	US\$500
Courier of acceptance documents	\$150
Immigration fees	\$1305
Air fares (two adults return, one child one way)	approx \$2,500
Accommodation	Varies
Travel expenses	Varies
Medical report (female applicant not pregnant)	Varies
Adoption Order Fee (only if applied for by Solicitor)	approx \$800
Total	approx \$8,000

CHAPTER THREE

HOMESTUDY

Adoption Service will prepare your homestudy **after** the Adoption Application Committee (AAC) has approved you as suitable to be adoptive parents. After you have been approved, you will receive a congratulatory letter from the Information Officer informing you of what needs to be included as part of your homestudy. Please feel free to ask your program manager if you have any questions or queries. E-mail is an efficient way of communicating with your program manager.

UNDERTAKING FOR INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION APPLICANTS

Adoption Service asks all prospective adoptive parents to sign an agreement that all contact with the overseas authority will be made by Adoption Service only, on your behalf. It is also an agreement stating that you will be responsible for all financial costs associated with your adopted child (including courier costs of documents) and that you will not travel before approval from Adoption Service.

The purpose of the undertaking is to make sure that the adoption process runs smoothly and that the Western Australian intercountry adoption process complies with international agreements and conventions.

Adoption Service will give the undertaking to you. Please sign this and return it as soon as possible. Your program manager will personally make all contact with ISS HK regarding your adoption application. Adoption Service has the sole authority to act on your behalf for all arrangements and negotiations.

It is important that you do not have direct contact with the Hong Kong authorities or go through a third party. It can be open to misinterpretation and can be seen as making a private adoption arrangement. This could jeopardise your allocation and reputation of the program. It will cause unnecessary delays and confusion for all parties involved.

The program manager will make every effort to contact you at least once a month. Please contact your program manager whenever you need to.

HOMESTUDY DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

(Please photocopy all documents for your records)

To complete the Hong Kong homestudy, you are required to supply Adoption Service with the following documents:

❑ Photographs (standard size, 5x7)

Current photos are required, including some full length frontal shots and some clear close up shots.

2 x applicant one

2 x applicant two

2 x child/ren (if applicable)

2 x family

2 x family home

Please glue these on white A4 size paper with a maximum of two photos on each sheet. Do not staple the sheets together.

❑ Family Report

Provided by Adoption Service.

Regarding the financial information on this form, please ensure that the information is the same as recorded on FCS32 and your assessment report. If it is different, please explain the difference and attach this to the Family Report form.

❑ Copy of Marriage Certificate

❑ Undertaking for Medical Report together with Medical Report

Provided by Adoption Service (one per applicant).

These forms are standard forms for ISS HK. This is different to the previous medicals you completed for Adoption Service.

❑ Child Preference Form

Provided by Adoption Service

❑ Passport Pages

Please provide copies of the passport pages containing your identifying information.

❑ Academic Qualification

Please provide copies of your highest academic qualification.

❑ Fees

Please obtain BANK CHEQUE/DRAFT for the following:

US\$100 (registration fee) made payable to **International Social Services – Hong Kong Branch**

Once Adoption Service has received your photos and forms for ISS HK, the Information Officer will include other supporting documents required by Hong Kong (such as Assessment Report and letters). This will be couriered to ISS Australia for scrutiny. The account of the courier will be forwarded to you.

CHAPTER FOUR

OFFER OF A CHILD

Once your homestudy is couriered to Hong Kong, ISS HK will match a child to you on the basis of the homestudy documents. Matching is done on the basis of the best interest of the prospective adoptive child and the birth parent's wishes where possible.

ISS will screen the homestudy and send them to the Adoption Unit of Social Welfare Department. The Social Welfare Department will also screen the information and inform ISS if supplementary information is needed. ISS will contact Adoption Service with the supplementary information needed. After this information is supplied, ISS will forward this information to SWD for the approval of the application.

ISS will begin the matching process. The waiting time for a child from Hong Kong is approximately 3 to 12 months.

OFFER OF A CHILD

Once prospective adoptive parents are identified by Hong Kong for a particular child, some information will be forward to the program manager from a Social Worker in Hong Kong. The information may be very brief. If additional questions need to be asked, then the program manager will liaise with the Social Worker until sufficient information is gathered.

The child study report will have information regarding the child's medical status, background information on parents and social history. A photo or two is usually included in the report.

CASE REVIEW

Once Adoption Service has sufficient information on the prospective adoptive child, Adoption Service will prepare a case review, which the Team Leader and Manager endorse. The case review sets out the formal allocation process. This is in line with the placement criteria of the WA Adoption Act 1994.

Once the case review has been endorsed, you will receive a phone call from Adoption Service congratulating you on the offer of a child! You will be invited into the office to receive the child's information and maybe even a photo of the child.

Based on the limited information provided by ISS HK, the prospective adoptive parents need to consider whether they would like to accept the possible offer of a child. Once the prospective adoptive parents have indicated to the program manager that they would like to proceed with the offer of the child, the program manage will inform ISS HK to forward the FULL child study report.

CHILD STUDY REPORT

Hong Kong provides a very extensive and comprehensive child study report. This document can be 15 pages long. Information provided includes:

- background of the child
- past and current living environment
- the child's physical appearances (including a history of the child's weight, length and head circumference)
- fine and gross motor skills
- speech, vision and hearing development
- behaviour and personality
- relationships with others
- daily routine
- health and immunization record
- photos.

The full child study report may take up to 4 months to prepare and receive from ISS HK.

This information will be forwarded to the prospective adoptive parents immediately and based on this information, the prospective adoptive parents may choose to formally accept the offer of the child.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMMIGRATION & ACCEPTANCE

At a meeting with your program manager, you will be given the full child study report as well as some immigration forms to complete. These are 40CH and 47CH.

You will also be asked to sign a consent form for HAS, allowing Adoption Service to obtain the medical forms once the child has been cleared for a visa. The cleared and up-to-date medical will be forwarded to you.

IMMIGRATION

Please note the overall process of your child's entry to Australia will be referred to as the 'immigration process' and the legal documentation to be granted is the 'adoption visa'. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) undertakes the role of assessing and deciding applications for visas in accordance with the requirements of the Migration Regulations. DIMIA refers to the migration of a child to Australia as 'sponsorship'.

Please refer to the Booklet 2: Child Migration from DIMIA for further information on child migration. This will cost \$10 at DIMIA (City Central, 411 Wellington St, Perth – ph: 131 881) or free off the website: www.immi.gov.au. Some migration information is also available from DIMIA's factsheet 36 which is also on the website:

www.immi.gov.au/migration/family/children/adoption.htm

NON-ACCEPTANCE / ACCEPTANCE

It is important that you inform your program manager as soon as possible if you choose not to accept the child allocated to you by Hong Kong. You will not be discriminated in regards to an offer of another child, but at the same time, you would need to be able to justify the decision eg: if the child's family had a history of mental illness and you feel that should the child develop a mental illness it would interfere with the bonding process between yourselves and the child. Not liking 'the look' of a particular child is not an adequate reason for non-acceptance.

To formally accept, you will need to provide the following documents to the program manager.

- ❑ A letter of acceptance for International Social Services, Hong Kong addressed to
The Director
International Social Services, Hong Kong Branch
6/F Southorn Centre
130 Hennessy Road
Wanchai
Hong Kong

This letter should be handwritten. It should include your intention for cultural continuity for the child and maintaining contact with Hong Kong (ISS HK, foster carers, birth parents etc). This letter needs to be notarised by a public notary.

- ❑ Statement of Acceptance for Adoption (x 3 originals)

This will be provided to you by Adoption Service.

All three copies will need to be completed and signed in the presence of a public notary. Please speak to your program manager as this may be able to be organized for you free of charge!

- ❑ Fee

Please obtain one BANK CHEQUE made out to **International Social Services Hong Kong Branch** for the sum of US\$500.

When the above documents are completed and notarized, please return them to Adoption Service, together with your bank cheque. Adoption Service will also include some documents as part of the formal acceptance process for Hong Kong. These include an undertaking by the Executive Director of Department for Community Development regarding acceptance of guardianship of the child. These documents will all be couriered to ISS HK and the account for this will be forwarded to you.

CHECKLIST

Once all the documents are gathered, please make an appointment with Adoption Service to go through the documents prior to couriering them off.

- ❑ Letter to Adoption Service of acceptance
- ❑ Handwritten letter of acceptance addressed to The Director of International Social Services Hong Kong Branch.
- ❑ 3 x notarized Statement of Acceptance for Adoption
- ❑ Bank Cheque of US\$500 made payable to International Social Services Hong Kong Branch.

All of the above need to be given to Adoption Service for the Adoption. This will be couriered to ISS HK on your behalf. The account for the courier will be forwarded to you.

- ❑ Form 40CH
- ❑ Form 47CH
- ❑ *Certified copy of full Child Study report and medical report (in lieu of child's birth certification)
- ❑ *Certified copy of information page of each prospective adoptive parent's passport (if you do not have current passport, then a certified birth certificate is required).
- ❑ *Certified copy of your marriage certificate (if applicable)
- ❑ Authorizing letter from Adoption Service addressed to the Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong.
- ❑ Original receipt of your visa application charge (AUS\$1305)

All the above needs to be given to Adoption Service to be couriered to the Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong.

* = Justice of the Peace.

CHILD'S PASSPORT AND ADOPTION VISA

Your child's Hong Kong passport will be organised by ISS HK and he or she will travel to Australia on this passport.

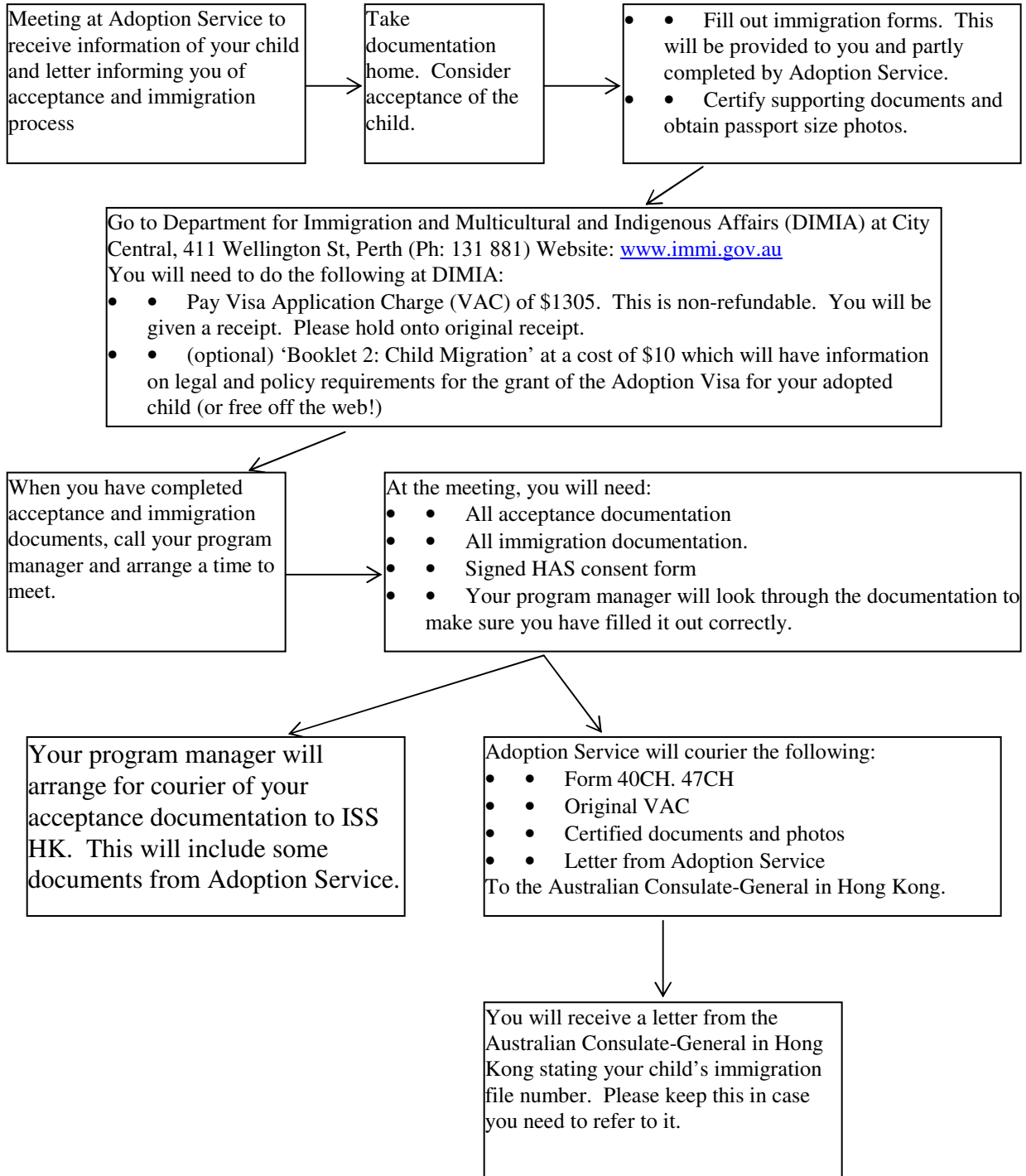
A visa label will be affixed to this child's passport as evidence of the child's visa clearance for entry to Australia.

When this has been sorted out, you will be notified by Adoption Service regarding when the child is ready to travel.

It is extremely important that you do not travel prior to approval being given by the department. The necessary paperwork (medical clearance and other documents from Hong Kong) needs to be completed. Please be assured that your program manager will keep in regular contact with ISS HK and there is a good working relationship between Adoption Service and ISS HK.

The visa permits the child to travel and enter Australia for a period of 5 years from the date of grant.

FLOWCHART



CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OF HONG KONG

The Social Welfare Department of Hong Kong is the equivalent body to The Department of Community Development in Western Australia. They work in partnership with ISS HK for the best interest of the child in finding suitable prospective adoptive parents, whether that be locally or overseas.

All placements of children with adoptive parents must comply with Hong Kong Government regulations

When a child becomes available for adoption, ISS HK will match the child to the most suitable prospective adoptive parents on their waiting list. It is not a case of first come, first serviced. Once the match has been made, ISS HK will forward the homestudy to the program manager (refer to chapter 4 of this guide).

Once the prospective adoptive parents have accepted the offer of the child, ISS HK will make a submission to the Social Welfare Department who will also need to approve the matching. Once this has been approved, the Social Welfare Department will apply to the Hong Kong Court for Consent of Adoption. With the Consent of Adoption, ISS will help prepare all the required documentation for the issuance of the child's visa and travelling to Australia.

The waiting time from acceptance to travelling is between 4 to 6 months due to the legal process that must take place during the time. ISS HK will work as efficiently as they can and will try and give an estimated time of departure of you, but always make tentative bookings as the legal process may take longer than predicted.

ISS HK are sympathetic towards the long waiting time and will send regular updates of the prospective adoptive child and photos via email. Your program manager will forward all the information gathered immediately to you, as they are aware that this time is an unsettling time for you.

Again, if there are any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact your program manager.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROCESS PRIOR TO TRAVEL

The time frame from the offer of the child to the travelling to pick up your child in Hong Kong can range from between 4 months to 6 months.

TRAVELLING ARRANGEMENTS

Once you have been given approval to travel by Adoption Service, you will need to give Adoption Service your travel itinerary. Please book your flights with your own travel agent. You will need to book a one-way flight for your child. Ensure that the child's name is the original Chinese name (as is in the child's passport). Your travel itinerary will be given to Hong Kong. The Department will then proceed to prepare the relevant escort/introduction letters for you to collect your adoptive child.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in Hong Kong is very expensive, so it is a good idea to do some research before making any bookings. Your travel agent or the internet is a good source of what specials deals and rates are offered during the time you plan to travel to Hong Kong. You may like to stay close to where your child is staying (whether that is in foster care or in a group home) so contact with him or her can be more frequent and less travelling is involved. Your program manager can ask the Social Worker in Hong Kong for some hotels close by. It is up to you to decide on where you would like to stay. Again, your accommodation details will be given to ISS HK so they can arrange to meet you at your hotel and also bring your prospective adoptive child to meet you.

TRAVEL VISA FOR APPLICANTS

If you are entering Hong Kong with an Australian passport, you will not need a visa for the purpose of adoption. It is best to double check with your travel agent. It is important to inform your travel agent that you are going to Hong Kong for the purpose of adoption.

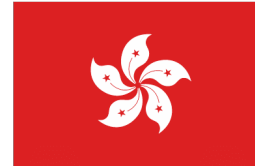
PLACEMENT CONDITIONS FOR OVERSEAS ADOPTION

The 'Placement Conditions for Overseas Adoption' list several conditions before the placement of your child is possible. The female prospective adoption parent will need to have a blood test stating that she is not pregnant at the time of placement OR a written confirmation from your GP that you have had a hysterectomy etc.



CHAPTER EIGHT

HONG KONG



FACTS IN BRIEF

Official name: Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HK SAR)

Area: 1092 sq km

Population: 7 million

Currency: Hong Kong dollar (\$1 = 100 cents)

Climate: October, November and most of December are the best months to visit Hong Kong with clear skies and sunny days. Although it is winter in Hong Kong, it is reasonably mild.



June to August, you will usually experience a combination of heat and rain which will test your endurance, but there is a lot of sunny days as it is the summer season.

* March-April and October –November are considered Hong Kong’s low tourist season with amazing discounts on hotel accommodation.

** Late January/early February is a difficult time to travel with Chinese New Year.

Religion: Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, Christian, Muslim, Hindu

Language: English and Chinese (Cantonese – 9 tones and Mandarin – 4 tones)

Public holidays: 1 Jan - New Year's Day

- Jan/Feb - Chinese New Year
- Mar/Apr - Easter
- early April - Ching Ming
- late April - Buddha's birthday
- 1 May - Labour Day
- Jun - Dragon Boat Festival
- 1 Jul - Hong Kong SAR Establishment Day
- 1 Oct - National Day
- early October - Mid-Autumn Festival
- late October - Cheung Yueng
- 25 Dec - Christmas Day
- 26 Dec - Boxing Day



CULTURAL INFORMATION FOR WHEN TRAVELLING TO HONG KONG

- Remember to dress respectfully (smart casual), particularly for meetings with adoption representatives. It is inappropriate to show midriff and cleavage at any time when in Hong Kong.
- Regardless of circumstances, ALWAYS be patient and respectful, as becoming frustrated with delays (and therefore people) does not help you in any way.
- Gifts do not have to be elaborate or expensive. It is a good idea to present your gifts at the beginning of your meeting as a sign of sincerity and best wishes. Always give gifts to the recipient with both hands.
- You may like to give gifts to your child's main carer (and family), your Social Worker at ISS HK or other staff members at ISS HK. This is entirely at your discretion. Always bring a spare gift or two. Check with your program manager on names of staff.
- For both receiving and giving gifts, both hands are used to hold onto the gift.
- When giving gifts of several items, be sure that they do not total four (in Cantonese, the number four sounds similar to the word for death, therefore an unlucky number). One gift is appropriate, it is the gesture not the number that is important.
- Acceptable gifts include native flower or animal books on Australia, chocolates, fresh flowers for drying, liquor, macadamia nuts (shelled) cookies (eg: short bread) or even honey. Note: food stuff may need to be declared at Hong Kong customs.
- Gifts should be wrapped.
- Card-giving: Avoid writing in red ink (it is believed to bring bad luck)

USEFUL TIPS FROM ADOPTIVE PARENTS

- Make extra copies of documents, passports, passport sized photos (for you and your child). You may never know when this may be needed.
- A few Cantonese words/phrases would be useful in establishing a quicker rapport with your child. Even babies/very young children can recognize their names and simple words. Ask your Social Worker from ISS HK to help you.
- Bring a few extra clothes for your child as he or she may not have a lot and washing may be difficult whilst staying in a hotel. Clothes are cheap in Hong Kong, but you may not feel like shopping with your child after you have met him or her!
- If you are adopting a baby under 12 months old, it is a good idea to bring a couple of baby dummies/pacifiers (age appropriate) as this may help him or her settle with you, especially if he or she is distressed whilst travelling back to Australia.

- You can baby feeding bottles in Hong Kong, but it may also be a good idea to bring some if you do not feel like shopping when you get there.
- Baby formula: It is a good idea to continue with the current formula used by the carer/group home and even buy an extra tin or two from Hong Kong to bring back with you. If you decide to do this, you must declare opened and unopened tins of baby formula when you arrive back in Perth. If formula tins are opened, it may be taken off you at customs. If you can, keep the tins sealed and unopened.
- Baby rug/blanket for the trip home. This is quite handy in the plane or you could ask the flight attendant for a spare blanket during the flight.
- A photo album to give to your child's carer or orphanage to show them where you live and where your adoption child will be growing up as well as photos of your family.
- You are able to use your credit card at most major stores and restaurants so if there is an emergency, you will not be caught out.
- Imodium – in case you get the dreaded tummy bug. Check with your GP.
- Baby Panadol/paracetamol – a sedative to calm your baby down during long flights etc. This is also useful if your child is teething as it will provide him or her with some relief. Bonjela is also great to smooth teething gums. Check with your GP.
- Gift wrapping paper – it is best to wrap your gifts when you get to Hong Kong to avoid creases. Don't forget sticky tape! You are able to buy these in Hong Kong, but this means you have to go looking for it.
- Passport – check that your passport is not going to expire in 6 months time, before you leave for Hong Kong. If it is, then it needs to be renewed. Passport renewal forms can be obtained at any Australian Post Office.
- A gift for your child. Don't forget to bring a gift for your child. A soft toy is usually popular with children.
- You can like to take a few emergency supplies with you like cup-a-soups, packet of biscuits, muesli bars etc. Hong Kong is quite western, there all these items can be found in a supermarket like Seven Eleven and Park'n Shop.
- Broad-spectrum antibiotics for yourself and your child – ask your GP about possible allergic reactions if taking for the first time.
- Antiseptic hand gel (from the baby section from the supermarket) is useful. This sanitises your hands without water!
- Always drink bottled water and brush your teeth with bottled water (to be on the safe side)

CHAPTER NINE

ARRIVAL IN HONG KONG

You will either be met at the airport by your Social Worker from ISS HK or a meeting will be arranged at your hotel after you have settled in. Some of the staff members at ISS HK are

Director of Intercountry Adoption and Foster Care Program Mrs Grace Ma
Assistance Director of Intercountry Adoption and Foster Care Program Mrs Rukiya Kwok

MEETING YOUR CHILD

Your Social Worker from ISS HK will arrange a time for you to meet your child as soon as possible and at the convenience of the foster carer. The first meeting will likely be at your hotel or at the carer's home.

If you are fortunate enough to be invited to the carer's home during the course of your visit, then it is important to take your shoes off before entering the home. The homes are very small in Hong Kong, it is a way of keeping the home environment clean. There are usually indoor slippers by the door for you. The foster mother may have prepared some food for you, it is polite to have some food that she has prepared, even if you are not sure what it is!

Some carers will give you a photo album of your child from the time he or she was placed with them.

MEETING WITH ISS AND SWD STAFF

During the course of the week, you will continue to meet with your social worker as she will support you and your child bond and help you with any practical issues in Hong Kong. You will also meet a representative from the Social Welfare Department. Most meetings will occur in the hotel and not at ISS or SWD.

If you need assistance in Hong Kong, please do not hesitate to talk to your social worker from ISS as they are keen to help in the transition for you and your child.

USEFUL CONTACT

Should you have any problems whilst overseas, you may contact us on:
(insert overseas code) followed by 618 9222 2555 during business hours

or if it is an emergency, please contact Crisis Care for after hours service on:
(insert overseas code) followed by 618 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008

Hong Kong time and Perth time are the same:

Australian Consulate-General
24th Floor, Harbour Centre
Harbour Centre
25 Harbour Road
Wanchai
Hong Kong
Phone: (852) 2827 8881
Fax: (852) 2585 4459



CHAPTER TEN

RETURN TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

LEGAL GUARDIAN

Your child's adoption has not been finalised yet. The Chief Executive Officer of the Department will be your child's legal guardian until the adoption is finalised through the granting of the Adoption Order by the Family Court of WA.

As the Chief Executive Officer is the child's legal guardian until the Adoption Order is granted, important decisions must be made in consultation with the program manager. Parents should consult with the program manager about 6 weeks before making any major or important decisions for the child. Important decisions include consent to travel out of WA or overseas, baptism, anaesthesia and other medical/dental treatment. Your program manager will seek approval via a written submission.

MEETING WITH PROGRAM MANGAER

When you have finally arrived in Perth, please contact with program manager within 3 days of your arrival to arrange a meeting at Adoption Service. At this meeting, the program manager will keep your child's passport and provide you with certified copies of this instead. The child's passport will be returned to you once the Adoption Order has been granted.

In turn, Adoption Service will provide you will the following documents and information:

- Letter for Centrelink – for Family Allowance and Parenting Payment from date of return to Western Australia. Obtain your forms from your nearest Centrelink office and lodge them immediately. You may be able to obtain the forms and from some Medicare branches.
- Letter for Medicare – please register your child with Medicare. This needs to be in the child's legal name (birth name). If you are a member of a private medical benefit fund, your child should also be added to your membership.
- Letter to adoptive parents re: State Child Development Centre (SCDC) – Liaise with SCDC, West Perth, for an appropriate paediatrics service or a full health check and developmental assessment.
- You will need to contact your local Infant/Child Health Nurse in your local community and ensure that the yellow book is kept up to date. For the purpose for adoption, your child will need to be seen, weighed and measured monthly.
- Letter for your solicitor – You may wish to seek legal representation to assist you in the Adoption Order application for Family Court. This should be done around the 4th month of placement.
- Child's Australian Citizenship – a copy is to be provided to Adoption Service for forwarding to Hong Kong. You are urged to apply for your child's citizenship (evidence) as soon as possible after you have been granted the adoption order. Form 119 – Evidence of Australian Citizenship is needed and can be given to you by your program manager.
- Child's Australian Passport – you can apply for the passport after you have received evidence of Australian citizenship for your child. Adoption Service does not need a copy of this, therefore, you can apply for your child's passport at your discretion after the Adoption Order has been granted.

POST PLACEMENT VISITS

Adoption Service will help and support you and your child adjust during the first six months of your placement. A Social Worker will conduct monthly visits to ensure that everything is going along nicely. This is in line with the Adoption Act 1994, section 139. A short progress report will be written up after each supervision of placement and forwarded to Hong Kong.

As with all parents, it will be expected that a new child will bring added pressures and many questions. It is not a poor reflection on parents to have concerns and questions and the program manager will appreciate the opportunity to provide assistance and referral options if required.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Hong Kong treats the provision of progress reports very seriously and the reports are a part of the Adoption Legislation of Hong Kong. Failure to provide a report to Hong Kong would jeopardise the program for future applicants.

The Department will send each report to Hong Kong. A number of photos should accompany each report.

HON JUDGE REPORT

This is a report written by your program manager towards the end of the supervision periods (minimum of 6 visits). It is sent to the Family Court of Western Australia to assist the Judge when determining your Adoption Order Application. The purpose of the post placement visits are to ensure that your program manager is satisfied with the placement of your child and that his or her interests are being met by you. The Hon Judge report recommends to the court whether the adoption order should be granted.

CHILD'S NEW NAME

Your child will have the same surname as you. You are required, under law, to retain the first name of the child as their first name. It is at your discretion to choose a middle name for your child. Please be aware that your child's Chinese name consists of two parts. These two parts should be maintained as the child's first name.

For example: Leung Chee Yun.

Leung is the child's family name/surname and Chee Yun is the child's first name.

After adoption, the child may be Chee Yun Ann Smith.

Chee Yun remains as the child's first name, Ann is the chosen middle name by you and followed by your surname, in this case, Smith.

Choosing a name for your child is very personal, with parent's feelings, tradition and grandparents affecting that choice. When naming an adopted child, the same influences exist together with the issues of culture, birth parents ideas and the age of the child. At times, our personal desires may need to take second place to the child's needs or desired to retain or choose a name tied to his or her self image and self esteem.

Choosing a first name or middle name from your child's country or maintaining the name given then by the children's home, organization or birth family, affirms your child's cultural and national heritage as an important part of him or her. It demonstrates to your child and to the world that his or her original cultural identity is a source of pride. It is an open acknowledgment of a positive kind of difference that will always be part of your child. It may be especially important as your child grows older, but having an Australian name as well may be just as important. Your child can then have the best of both worlds.

There are those who feel strongly that the name given to the child in the birth country should be retained as the first name. Others point out that there will be times when your child will want to have a simple familiar name to feel more like the other kids at school and for ease of pronunciation.

A birth country name combined with an Australian name gives the child the opportunity to affirm either sides of his or her cultural identity, depending on the child's mood and stage of development.

Many adoption workers and psychologists feel that if your child is age two or older, it is vitally important to call him or her by the name he or she is already accustomed to.

Although you may find that your child has a difficult name to pronounce it is important to check the actual pronunciation.

It is also very important to understand that a child's name is often much linked to their culture, time or place of birth or a special relative. It is also important to note that all names have a meaning.

For a list of names and its meaning, you can do your own research via the library or browse on the internet for a list of names from all cultures and its meaning.

RELEASE OF GUARDIANSHIP

The child is released from the guardianship of the Chief Executive Officer when the Adoption Order is granted and the child becomes the legal responsibility of the adoptive parents.

ADOPTION ORDER

Once the Adoption Order is granted, please provide Adoption Service with a certified copy of the Adoption Order. The child's original passport will also be returned to you so you are able to apply for your child's evidence of Australia citizenship.

CHILD'S AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP

You are urged to apply for your child's citizenship as soon as possible after the Adoption Order is granted.

You will need to complete form 119 – Evidence of Australian Citizenship (can be obtained from your program manager or DIMIA's website: www.immi.gov.au)

Once you have organized your child's evidence of Australian citizenship certificate, please provide Adoption Service with a certified copy of the certificate and this will be forwarded to Hong Kong as evidence that your child is an Australian citizen.

CASE CLOSED

Once the Department receives a certified copy of your child's Adoption Order and certified copy of your child's Certificate of Australian Citizenship, the Department will send this off to Hong Kong. Now, your case will be officially closed.

CHILD'S AUSTRALIAN PASSPORT

You can apply for your child's Australian passport once your child has evidence of being an Australian Citizen. You will need to show your child's Hong Kong passport for verification when lodging the application for the new passport.

You will need to complete the Australian Passport Form (obtained from Australia Post or Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade).

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH HONG KONG AND POST ADOPTION SERVICES

It is the responsibility of the adoptive parents to send periodic progress reports of their adopted child to Hong Kong once the Adoption Order has been granted and the Adoption finalised.

It would be great if you could remain in contact with ISS and if possible with the foster carer of your child. If you would like to send letters, photos or presents, please address all packages to ISS and they will forward anything onto the foster carers.

There are some guidelines should adoptees wish to access post adoption services. They are as follows:

- Reviewing of adoptee's file can be permitted to children as young as 13 years of age.
- Birth family contact
Adoptee must be at least 13 years of age with the exception of urgent medical inquiries. When adoptees under the age of 18 years request for "birth family contact", or research on their birth background, they must obtain a release form from their adoptive parents.

APPENDIX

PROGRAM MANAGER

It's the Department's program manager's responsibility to:

1. provide support to prospective adoptive parents during your adoptive journey to make the process as smooth as possible.
2. help prospective adoptive parents prepare the homestudy and acceptance documents for Hong Kong.
3. keep in contact with Hong Kong regarding your application
4. keep in contact with prospective adoptive parents and advise them of the progress of their application
5. provide up to date information if any changes occur
6. help prospective adoptive parents get ready for their child
7. offer any further helpful information concerning prospective adoptive parents trip to Hong Kong
8. provide support and supervise the placement of the child
9. provide the Hon Judge report for Family Court
10. help prospective adoptive parents to get citizenship for their adopted child
11. help prospective adoptive parents with post adoption services
12. inform prospective adoptive parents of adoption support groups and external services.

APPENDIX

USEFUL WEBSITES, BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- The Colour of Difference – Journeys in transracial Adoption. Edited by Sarah Armstrong and Petrina Slaytor.
Discusses issues around transracial adoption, themes arising through first person accounts and statistics on the scale of transracial adoption.
- <http://www.immi.gov.au>
The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs website. Contents all of DIMIA'S forms and booklets. Also has up-to date information in changes in migration legislation and policy which may be important for your adoption.
- <http://www.dfat.gov.au>
The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website
- <http://www.iss-ssi.org>
International Social Services' website.
- <http://www.isshk.org>
International Social Services Hong Kong's website.
- <http://www.iss.org.au>
International Social Services, Australia's website
- <http://www.info.gov.hk/swd>
Hong Kong's Social Welfare Departments' website.
- <http://www.comeunity.com>
Has some interesting articles on adopting from Hong Kong as well as some book reviews which you may want to buy to read further on the subject.
- <http://www.childrensdisabilities.info/parenting/spec-books.html>
This website contains books on parenting children with special needs.
- http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/urs_index0.stm?topic_id=280
http://www.cyh.com/cyh/parenttopics/urs_index0.stm?topic_id=326
These website are from Child and Youth Health. The first site specifically deals with adopted children and the age and stages of development. There are lots of useful hints to parents. The second site is specific to intercountry adoptions. These sites are extremely useful during the settling-in stage.
- <http://www.calib.com/naic/>
Although this is an American website, there are numerous interesting articles (especially if you go into 'Prospective and Adoptive Parents' and then into 'Transracial and

*Transcultural Adoption'. Just keep in mind that the procedures and laws are different!
Enjoy!*

- <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/hssb/cultdiv/cultdiv/chinese.htm>
Queensland Health website. It is a profile on Chinese people. This site is general and is not specific to adoptions, but does give an insight to what an older child might have experienced in their biological parents care and even in their group home.
- <http://www.emkpress.com>
Adoption Publishing Company – adoption themed materials for Infants to Young Adults from the perspective of the child. Helpful to all families formed through adoption. Deals with loss, belonging and collecting
- http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/north_east_asia/hong_kong/
Website for Lonely Planet travel guide for Hong Kong. Very useful otherwise, you can buy the book from any bookstore. The book contains more detailed information than the website.

There are several West Australian groups that have material posted on the web and these are listed below:

- <http://www.adoptionwa.org.au>
The Adoption Research and Counselling Service Inc website.
- <http://www.asfc.info/index.htm>
The Adoption Support for Families and Children Inc website.

That's probably enough for you to read! If you find other informative websites, please let the Intercountry team know.

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