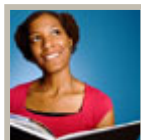


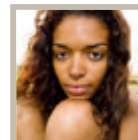
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Children in waiting

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The economic slump and a shortage of social workers are slowing down the number of adoptions.



By Carly Ritz
Pic: [iStockphoto.com](#)

With the decline in parents coming forward to adopt and a high volume of abused and abandoned children that come into the system on a weekly basis, adoption agencies have a problem on their hands.

"We are going to have a bottleneck dilemma" says Marihet Infantino who manages the Child Family Unit (CFU) at Jo'burg Child Welfare. "There are currently more children than we can cater for" she adds.

Since 2007, Johannesburg Child Welfare has seen a 40% drop in the number of families who approach them to adopt. Pam Wilson, who runs the adoption team, echoes Infantino's comment "We don't have enough families for the children waiting."

The Department of Social Development has also reported a decline in adoptions; 2 560 children were adopted at the end of 2007 with only 1 851 this year, a total decline in approximately 700 adoptions.

The current economic climate could be related to the decline, Wilson says. Families don't want to take on extra responsibilities at the moment as finances are

tight.

This trend is concerning as more children will be institutionalized and while they receive good care at the homes and places of safety they are at risk of being unable to form good bonds with others and may tend to have attachment issues later in their lives, says Infantino.

Nationally the shortage of social workers and high staff turnover is problematic. Social workers tend to move from welfare into the private sector to improve their situations which results in a continuous stream of new faces. This is unsettling for the children as they need to be able to form a relationship with their social worker which is not possible when they see a new face every few weeks.

Wilson says that the lack of social workers puts pressure on the entire adoption process for any agency.

For more information please contact: communications@jhbchildwelfare.org.za

Have you tried to adopt a child? What was the process like?



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Lies!

8/20/2009 8:42 AM

We were on a waiting list for more that 3 years.We were told by the Social Service department that there are no kids available for adoption, as their first priority is to try reconcile the kid with her/his biological parents.It is now 8 later.We adopted through a private adoption agency.The children that we were interested in when we were on the state's lists, are still in the children home.And if you ask them why, they answer that "they are trying to reconcile the child with his/her biological parents.AFTER 8 YEARS, these children are still institutionalised!Sad.On one hand they say that there are many children in need of good families, but on the other we are told that there are no children available.I phoned all over.Western Cape, Natal, Gauteng.And all gave the same reason why there are no children available.

Anonymous

8/11/2009 1:09 PM

I want to adopt as I cant have kids of my own but the process is a scary one. I've already gone through too many emotions trying to fall pregnant & I'm scared of starting all over again with adoption

Ilze

8/4/2009 2:56 PM

I have tried & tried & tried. We can not conceive after 10years and have good stable jobs. NO ONE has contacted us. If there is a website / mail address we have registered – not a word back. The Welfare system does not assist (the ones I have dealt with) we have opted for foster care – nothing empty promises. While there are 100000 of babies being abused & neglected & killed by unfit parents. The Child law does not protect the child – my opinion. We would like to be parents if not biological then adoptive – can not believe that there are so many in need – yet no one has called in 8months? We had a baby girl in foster care for 6days....within 5min the welfare collected her – after the mother changed her mind? The mother had no work, (could not read / write) no place to live, 4 other kids & an abusive husband? They did not even investigate the case? I pray that she is ok. How does the 'law' protect that little girl? (this is one of many cases)

Kaz

7/28/2009 3:48 PM

I too have tried numerous times to get information on how to proceed, nothing in internet helps and all the sites and numbers given don't work or no one answers phone, people who can't have children as well as some who can do want to adopt children for various reasons and should be given easier opportunity..... no one worries if a person can afford 10 children naturally or if they go to church or if they drink too much or if they divorced but try give a lonely homeless child a roof, food, love and ultimately a fair chance in this world and doors shut one after the other

leigh
7/28/2009 2:52 PM

Have tried on numerous occasions to get info regarding adopting a child and no one gets back to you, so its not that people do not want to, it's a case of poor management.

Divorced
7/28/2009 2:18 PM

I'm a 36 year old divorced woman & have always wanted my own biological child but since I just got divorced I would like to adopt a baby. I have good job & own my own home, my question is, would it be more difficult for me to adopt because I'm divorced?? Would that matter since there is currently a problem with the slowing of adoption. This has been in the limelight alot lately & I read some wise words that the importance is for these places of care to place children in good homes & suitable adoptive parents & not to look the suitable children for wanna be adoptive parents. Good point. When may I have one or more??

Sue
7/28/2009 9:37 AM

I have 2 adopted children and made enquiries to adopt 2 more. Whether it was Child Welfare or private agencies, they said we were too old. This was when I was 45 and my husband 46. I told them we would adopt an older child/children and not necessarily a baby if it was a problem with our age. They all stood firm - TOO OLD. My youngest child is only 7 and we are a very healthy active family with no health risks. We are now looking into private international adoption where age is not a factor. I think the SA childrens court needs to look at the age factor and raise the bar so as to enable older parents to adopt. There are thousands of older people out there who are more than able and cpabble of looking after children.

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Highlights

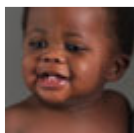


Protect baby and you



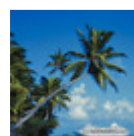
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