

Stepparent Adoption in PA

By: Noelle Nelson

Children can often be the light of our lives and bring a smile to our faces even on our worst days. When marrying into a family with children, you may find that your love for your spouse's children will grow until you feel as if they were your own. Some stepparents find they want to take the additional step and formally adopt their stepchild, especially when one of the biological parents is unavailable or absent from the child's life. The decision of whether or not to adopt a child can be a complex one, but here are several advantages to consider:

1. Adopting your stepchild may foster the child's self-confidence, as well as strengthen his or her self-esteem. Your commitment to them reaffirms that they are loved, particularly if another parent is absent and you are fulfilling the absent parent's role in their life. It may also serve to strengthen your bond, while the feeling of permanency may help to bolster your stepchild's sense of worth they need to excel in life.
2. Adopting your stepchild allows you to help make important life decisions on their behalf. Not only may you help to guide their future by making decisions about schooling, religion, and other important social and educational matters, but you may also serve to make important medical decisions.
3. In the unfortunate event that anything may happen to your partner, such as divorce, mental impairment, or death, adoption guarantees that you maintain your parental rights. Visitation rights remain an option in the case of divorce, while in the case of death or medical emergency, the child is permitted to remain under your care. In the event of your own passing, it also provides the child with financial security in the form of inheritance.

Deciding to adopt is a very important decision not only in your life, but in the life of your stepchild. Be sure to take a lot of time to discuss and consider the issue with your partner and your family. It is especially important to have this discussion with children who are in their teenage years, as they must consent to the adoption.

In order to fully comprehend the responsibilities and pros and cons of adoption, it is recommended to meet with a family law attorney. At Notaro & Associates, P.C., we have great attorneys who are well-versed in adoption law. Having successfully helped many families with their adoptions in the past, our attorneys are willing to sit down with you to discuss your case in great detail. No matter the situation, they will help you to figure out the best fit for your family!

*(For more information on this topic or any topic in divorce, custody, mediation, child support, collaborative law, PFA matters, alimony, or other family law matters, visit www.Pittsburgh-Divorce-Lawyer.com or contact **Notaro & Associates, PC** at 412-281-1988 for a free phone consultation with an attorney. You can also schedule online by clicking [here](#).)*

