

# Mark, Leo & Zoe

“Because of the restrictions on same-sex adoption in Virginia, I was forced to pursue an adoption as a single man. However, my partner Mark and I have gone through this process together. We are already parenting our beautiful daughter Zoe together and are planning to make Mark a legal guardian once the adoption is finalized. As a same-sex couple we are used to encountering legal obstacles, such as the lack of recognition of our relationship or marriage benefits. Still, we have never hesitated in wanting to create a family together. We both see our relationship as a dream come true. If it were not for the generosity of Helpusadopt.org, the dream we are living with our daughter probably would have never happened.

When we researched adoption grants, we found that most of them would only accept applications from heterosexual couples. To afford our adoption, we spent our savings, and tightened our budget. Leo took on a slightly higher paying, but much less rewarding position to help pay expenses. When choosing an agency, our options were again limited because we are a same-sex couple.

We consider ourselves a financially responsible couple. We have incurred low debt and prefer to live a simple life. We believe that friends and family are the source of our happiness. We also both have a passion for our professions. We love making a difference in other people’s lives. The generous grant from Helpusadopt.org has already made a big difference in our lives and the life of our child.

Though the journey to adoption has been very challenging, we are simply elated to have our daughter home. As I write this, I watch her sleep, mouth wide open, swinging in her swing. It has been a most rewarding journey and I’m proud to be known in our community as “the gay dads”. Because of Helpusadopt.org’s generous gift, we have not only gained a dear member of our family, our family has grown to include the awesome birth mother and birth grandmother in Atlanta and our community has embraced us as a new family.”

