

Bringing home baby

Young couples are choosing to adopt children. And not because they can't have biological ones

UNTIL recently, most couples resorted to adoption only when they were unable to have a biological baby. But that's no longer the case. Adoption was the first choice for Suman and Karthik, who took home a girl baby on their fifth wedding anniversary. "One of the things Karthik and I wanted to do after five years of marriage was to adopt a child, regardless of whether we already had a biological one," says Suman, programme manager in an IT company.

Savitha Satish, technical writer in an IT firm, adopted a baby girl recently. "I've always wanted to adopt a baby. Since we live in a joint family, my husband and I wanted everyone to be okay with the idea. I have a lovely baby girl now and everybody is happy with our decision," says Savitha.

Aloma Lobo, chairperson of the Adoption Co-ordinating Agency of Karnataka and former chairperson of CARA (Govt of India), sees greater awareness about adoption. "People feel that adopting a child is another way to build your family. There's no longer any stigma attached to the decision and people wanting to adopt understand that children come from families like ours," she says. She hopes that with a more mature attitude to adoption, children with special needs will also find families this way.

But bringing home a child has to be a deeply felt need, says chartered accountant David Pais, who has adopted a baby girl. "It's either in you to adopt or it isn't. My wife Deepika and I

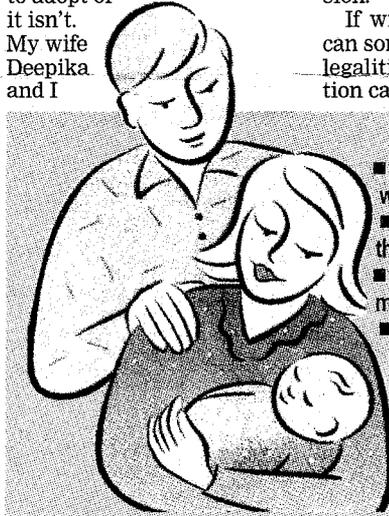
adopted our first baby and had two biological children thereafter," he says, adding that the support of the family is also vital to the decision.

If winning over families can sometimes take time, the legalities involved in adoption can frequently be time-

consuming and complicated. "Some agencies can be very difficult and the procedure is long," says Savitha, adding that it can even put off prospective adoptive parents.

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ADOPTION: THE FACTS

- Every year, around 110 babies are adopted in the city, of which 75 per cent are girls.
- The features of the adoptive child are matched to that of the parents.
- The composite age of the adopting couple should not be more than 90 years.
- Financial stability and evidence that the couple will remain husband and wife are important.
- Single women can adopt both boys and girls.
- Single men are allowed to adopt only boys.
- Same sex couples aren't allowed to adopt as per law.

Anand, director Shishu Mandir

(Call 32970700 or 9342673812 for more details on adoption)