



MIKE  
TARA  
HUNTER

*created with love*

 *Dear Expectant Mother,*

We would like to begin by extending to you our admiration and respect. The loving decision you are making at this difficult time in your life requires an extraordinary amount of courage. May God bless you for your merciful decision to bring your baby into the world. We cannot fathom the difficulty of your decision. But we can tell you, unequivocally, it is a decision made on the foundation of a lot of love! There is no doubt that the greatest gift one person can give to another is the gift of a child. Please know our love and prayers go out to you and your baby.

We are very thankful to you for taking the time to learn about us, and it is with heart-felt excitement that we offer you this glimpse into our lives. We hope this letter will convey our sincere desire to raise a loving, fun, educated, close family and that by reading this letter you will consider us as your baby's parents.

Becoming parents of a second child will be such a gift to our family. We have visions of cradling a tiny baby in our arms, telling the little one about all the adventures that are yet to come. There will be tender caresses, sweet singing and tiny tickles; we have dreams of two little voices and the pitter-patter of four feet resounding through the house. We see Hunter teaching his sibling the art of properly dunking Oreo cookies in milk and how to give great bear hugs. We look forward to more new beginnings—the first word we hear, the first steps taken, first holidays, and most importantly, another precious child in our family.

Our greatest wish for you is that you have a peaceful heart after you make your decision, knowing that your baby would be a cherished member of our family. As adoptive parents, we know we are making a lifetime commitment, a commitment not only to your baby, but also to you. We will be certain your child knows how important he or she is to you and will grow up knowing what a loving and difficult decision it was to put their needs above your own by choosing adoption. We hope we can go through this journey with you, and turn this miracle of life into joy for all of us.

Best Wishes,

*Mike, Tara and Hunter*





## *Our Story*

Our names are Mike and Tara. We met in college nearly 16 years ago and developed an instantaneous companionship. From the beginning, we knew that we were soul mates and meant to spend the rest of our lives together. It is safe to say that we are, without a doubt, each other's biggest fans. Together we have climbed mountains, walked through dark valleys, shared our dreams and planned a bright future together. Happily married for nine years now, we attribute the success of our relationship to the qualities we value most in a marriage: love, friendship, affection, communication and mutual respect. We lean on each other, support each other's goals and share our dreams.

Our path to parenthood through adoption was one of the greatest accomplishments we have experienced as a couple. We were denied the opportunity to have our own biological children when Tara underwent a hysterectomy in 2002. We never allowed that experience, though difficult, to falter our dream of becoming parents. Instead, it led us on an amazing journey! In 2004, through the help of a wonderful young woman, our dream was realized with the birth of our son, Hunter.



## *A little about Mommy and Daddy*

Individually we each have unique qualities that we believe have been wonderful complements to each other as parents. We work tirelessly to balance one another, placing strong value on family, higher education, morals, and self-discovery.

Tara is decidedly devoted—whether to family, love or life. She is a compassionate, sensitive and nurturing woman and mom. Her heart is kind; her spirit is gentle. She enjoys exercise, photography, cooking, reading, and decorating our home.

Her accomplishments have been achieved through determination and perseverance. Tara received a Bachelor's Degree in Biology and went on to graduate school to earn her Master's Degree in Physical Therapy. However, her first two attempts for acceptance into graduate school were not successful. Her ability to maintain hope in the face of adversity and to encourage accomplishment as opposed to complacency are qualities that she embodied while working toward her goal of becoming a physical therapist. She hopes that her children learn the importance of setting goals and following one's aspirations through her example. As a Physical Therapist, she receives great satisfaction from helping others recover from debilitating injuries and illnesses.



Mike is a considerate, caring and charismatic man. He is unconditionally loyal and honest with a great sense of humor. He has a jovial, fun-loving personality, with a laugh as big as his stature. He is humble about his accomplishments, preferring to let the light shine on others—even when the limelight is deservedly his! Mike also has a Bachelor's Degree in Biology. He has a strong work ethic and has worked as a researcher in a medical laboratory for the past twelve years. Teaching our children humility and fortitude will be effortless for him. Mike enjoys lifting weights, working on cars, gardening, football, and the challenges of home repairs.

Although we both work full-time, our first priority is always our family. As an active couple, we savor our free time, cherish our family, and enjoy activities such as shopping, biking, traveling and entertaining friends. Having a child has not slowed us down; it has just made it a lot more fun! Building traditions for lifelong childhood memories is an extremely important gift for us to give our children and we have discovered greater fulfillment in these experiences and ourselves since we have been able to share them with Hunter. We look forward to expanding that joy to include another child.



## *All About Hunter, the big brother*

Hunter is a very busy six year old boy. He is in kindergarten and attends an excellent public school in our area. He loves dinosaurs, bugs, reading, playing football, fishing, and swimming, but his favorite activity is fun-loving horseplay with his daddy on the family room floor! Mom loves the sound of sweet giggles resonating throughout the house when they are playing! Hunter is an incredibly smart boy, with an unbelievable vocabulary and he amazes us with how fluently he communicates. Hunter is so excited to become a big brother. He often comments that a little brother will be able to help him tackle his daddy faster. When asked if he is blessed with a baby sister instead of a brother, he quietly contemplated the thought and stated, without hesitation, "I will protect her."



## *For Fun*

We love to vacation together as a family, whether it is a quick weekend to an amusement park, a long weekend camping outdoors, or our annual week-long trip to escape the normal stresses of everyday life. Throughout the year, we regularly attend local festivals, carnivals, picnics, swimming pools, our favorite zoos, Renaissance Fairs and the Science Center where we also meet up with our friends and family. Our favorite thing about all of these activities is just simply being together and having fun.



## Our Families

Both Mike and Tara had the great fortune of being raised in loving homes with solid family values. Tara's memories of childhood are that of happy times and busy schedules. She grew up with an older brother and younger sister, both of whom are married and have children of their own. Hunter loves playing with his five cousins! We rejoice in our rambunctious family gatherings to celebrate birthdays and holidays, our annual Easter egg hunt, trips to the State Fair, and going to Papa's farm for fun around the bonfire. Tara's parents still live in the home where she was raised and both of them are retired. We have been blessed that they are so close and play an incredibly active role in Hunter's life, and will do the same with another grandchild.



Mike grew up the oldest of three boys. His childhood was spent doing things that boys do best; playing football, riding bikes, and learning how to work on cars. He is very close to both of his brothers and Hunter has one cousin on Mike's side of the family. We also enjoy regular get-togethers with Mike's family to celebrate birthdays, our annual trip to the apple orchards, festive holiday celebrations, and impromptu weekend dinners.



We feel very blessed that all of our family lives close by as they bring us insurmountable joy and happiness. Our children will grow up knowing all of their aunts, uncles, cousins and especially grandparents. We have a tremendous outpouring of love and support from all of our friends and family. A second child will definitely be welcomed with many open arms and the greatest of love.

## Our Home



We have lived in our home for almost eight years, and chose it with children in mind. The room we have designated as the nursery is bright and cheerful, and warm sunshine fills it throughout the day. It is also right next to Hunter's room, and we can envision them creating a secret language all their own, tapping on the walls at hours of the night when they should be sleeping. We also have a toy room, designated the "kid zone", with a magnetic chalk board wall. We have a large enclosed backyard, with a swing-set, sandbox, large garden and enough space for a rollicking game of T-ball or tag!

Our neighborhood is safe and children-friendly. Our streets are quiet, perfect for riding bikes, and full of young families. We enjoy being within walking distance of three parks and a nature trail.

## Our Parenting Philosophy

Parenting has proven to be the best and most difficult of jobs. Both of us were nervous and anxious when Hunter was born. We had countless concerns for his social, emotional and mental growth. Yet, as a couple, we have become closer through parenthood. We have found more things in common, discovered more laughter and valued the alone time we get together more than ever before. Being parents has brought us our greatest joy and nothing has been as fulfilling, exhilarating...or exhausting. It has positively changed our lives.

We relish the little moments because we know that someday our little boy will grow up and we don't want to miss anything. We have vowed that nothing will ever be more important in our lives than nurturing our children's lives. We know we should dust more often, and perhaps we eat pizza more than we should, but we love spending time and playing with our child, so sometimes the chores just have to wait. We get a lot less sleep but all those waking hours are so much more fun!

As parents we always try to be fair, firm in our decisions, and most importantly, consistent in all that we do. That is not to say that we are perfect! We are learning together, and continue learning with each stage in Hunter's life. We try to set boundaries and teach responsibility through simple chores such as feeding the dog and picking up toys. As parents, we are realists who know that there are peaks and valleys, moments of frustration, tears for sadness but also for great joy. In our home, we have established balance, cooperation, teamwork, stern yet compassionate discipline, and most of all, love.

We also believe it is important to allow our children the opportunity to be kids. We spend countless hours playing games, reading books, riding our bikes, swinging in the backyard, catching bugs, watching movies, building tents in the living room, flying paper airplanes, and cooking together. When we discovered Hunter's love for airplanes and helicopters, we surprised him with a real life helicopter ride with his daddy; we cultivated his affection for dinosaurs by taking him to the Civic Center for the theatrical show, "Walking with Dinosaurs". It is experiences such as these that we can't wait to share with another child. We look forward to and believe it is our responsibility to offer our children many educational, sporting, music and other cultural activities to enrich their lives.

We will strive to raise our children to become individuals of honor and integrity who will make the world a better place. We will provide unconditional love, support, and protection so that they feel loved and secure, able to face the challenges that life brings. We will support them in the choices they make and help them fulfill their hopes and dreams. Our hope is through our guidance, our children grow up to be happy, successful, independent adults.

