



**POLICY ON OPEN RECORDS
SPENCE-CHAPIN SERVICES TO FAMILIES AND CHILDREN**

Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children endorses a policy in support of increased access by adoptees and their birth parents to one another's identifying information. Spence-Chapin always strives to promote the best interests of the adoptee; in furtherance of this mission, the agency believes that access to identifying information is the adult adoptee's right and that this access furthers the interests of all members of the triad - adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents.

Adoptees age 18 and over are entitled to and should be able to choose any or all of the following methods for obtaining identifying information and should have access to counseling and support services:

- * Direct access to their original birth certificate;
- * Access to a state- licensed intermediary providing for search and consent;
- * Access to a passive registry.

Birth parents should be able to choose any and all of the following methods for obtaining identifying information and should have access to counseling and support services:

- * Direct access to the original birth certificate at any time;
- * Access to a state-licensed intermediary providing for search and consent any time after the the adoptee's 21st birthday;
- * Access to a passive registry any time after the adoptee's 18th birthday.

Adoptive parents should also have access to counseling and support services.

It should be noted that individuals adopted internationally are affected by the laws and customs of their country of birth, and whenever possible they should be able to make connections with their origins.