A Boy's Best Friend
An Adoption Story

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# How to use this book to talk to your children:

## Adoptive Parents

Children in the early elementary ages often ask, "why?" and are developing their self esteem. It is important that they know they are supported and loved so that when confronted with questions from their peers and others, they do not have feelings of inadequacy. Also, children at this age are egocentric. It is hard for them to understand the feelings and points of view of others. Therefore, let your child lead the conversation and answer their questions from their point of view. Do not give more information than what they are asking for.

When reading this book to your child you can discuss the similarities or differences between this book and their own adoption story. If your child asks, let he or she know that there are different types of adoption and that no type is better than the other. Communication is most important, so always be open and honest with your child when they are asking about their adoption story.

## Other Parents or Teachers

Your child or someone you know may have heard about adoption in any part of their daily life such as in school, on TV, in a book, etc., and may be wondering what it is and what it means. When approaching the topic of adoption, let the child lead the conversation and you should answer their questions in their point of view. This book tells the story of an open adoption. If your child wants to discuss other types of adoption then explain to them that there is no better or worse kind of adoption and it all depends on the situation at hand. If they ask, discuss with your child about open and closed adoption and what the differences are. Help your child realize the similarities and differences between this book's story of a dog's adoption and a child's adoption. Informing children of adoption and the different types of adoption will make for better informed children and will teach them to be supportive of others.
A young boy named Billy lived out in the country with his mom, dad, sister, and dog, Jackson. Jackson was Billy's best friend.
Jackson and Billy did everything together. Jackson would wake Billy up every morning before school and they would go on a walk down the street and back. At night, Jackson would lay next to Billy's bed while he slept.
Billy’s favorite thing to do with Jackson was to play baseball in the field behind his house. Billy would hit the ball and Jackson would chase after it. Every time, Jackson would bring the baseball back to Billy.
One Afternoon, Billy’s mom and dad told him and his sister that they would be moving. Their new home would be downtown in a big city. Billy was very excited because he had never been to a city before.
Billy's grandparents came to stay with Billy and his sister while their parents went to the city to look for an apartment. Billy's parents searched the city for a new home that would be perfect for their family. The city was big and loud and the streets were full of people and cars.
When Billy's parents returned, they brought with them many pictures of the city. They told Billy and his sister of the many different places they saw and people they met. They also told the kids where they would be living. After dinner, Billy's parents wanted to talk to him.
"Billy, we are going to need to find a new home for Jackson when we move to the city," Billy's dad said softly.
"We looked for apartments that would allow pets but none allowed dogs as big as Jackson. We are really sorry," said Billy's mom.
Billy was very sad that he would have to leave his best friend.
"Who will take care of Jackson?" Billy asked, scared for his beloved dog.
"We will look for a family to adopt Jackson, one that will love him like we do," replied his father.
Billy ran to his room where Jackson was sleeping on the floor. He hugged Jackson and didn't want to let him go. Billy and Jackson were best friends and Billy loved his dog.
The next day, Billy's mom helped Billy put Jackson up for adoption. They wrote out a description and taped a picture of Jackson to it. They put the ad in an envelope and mailed it to the town's newspaper.

Jackson is a 4 year old Rottweiler. He is very energetic and loves to play in the yard. Jackson loves children and is looking for a new family to love him as much as his family does now. Call 555-4702 if you are interested in adopting this happy dog!
"Mom, how will I know that Jackson will get to go on walks or play baseball with his new family?" asked Billy. "We will meet with each family that wishes to adopt Jackson and hopefully you will feel that one of the families will take good care of Jackson," said his mother, comforting Billy.
Later, Billy took Jackson for a walk. Billy told Jackson all about how his new family would be very nice to him and make sure he was fed every day. He talked about how Jackson would play baseball with them and make sure there are no monsters under their beds while they slept, too.

Billy promised Jackson that they would find him a new family that would do all of this.
Billy's mom set up many meetings with families that wanted to adopt Jackson. Some families were older and some families had little babies. Billy went to all the meetings and asked each family if they would play baseball with Jackson. Jackson even met the families, too!
Billy did not want to give Jackson to one of these families but he knew that someone else could take better care of Jackson than Billy could in the city because the city did not have big fields for Jackson to play in.
Finally, they met a family that Billy knew was perfect for Jackson. There was a little boy that was younger than Billy and an older sister. The family lived on a farm so there was a lot of room for Jackson to run and play. This family promised they would take good care of Jackson. They would take him for walks, play baseball, and love him all the time.
Billy hugged Jackson and said goodbye to him. He waved as Jackson and his new family drove away to Jackson's new home. Jackson would now get to play baseball and run around the countryside with his new family for the rest of his life. Billy knew this was best and would always love Jackson even though he couldn't be with him anymore.