

Hello!

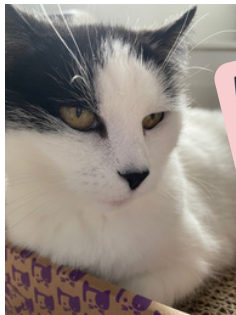
My name is Erin.



You have my heart.

At this moment, I think you and I share a dream: that you will find a family for your child and that your choice will put you at ease. I do not know what you are feeling, but I hope you you will share some of that with me in

whatever way you choose. If you choose me to parent your baby, we will be connected by heart forever, but I leave it to you to decide what contact you would like throughout our lives. Know that no matter what you choose right now, you will always be remembered, celebrated, and welcome in our home. Our stories will be woven together, even if our paths diverge. None of life's paths are easy, but may this one end in peace and joy for both of us.



My cats, Birdie & Iris, saved from the streets! Thanks cat distribution system.

My parents, Steve & Kathy. We went to a design-and-dine at a local flower farm.



I know that I cannot teach a child how to be themselves. I can only ensure that they see the scope and breadth of humanity: all types, sizes, shapes, colors, orientations, passions, careers, families, experiences, strengths, and weaknesses. My job as a parent will be to help them explore and see where they fit in or don't and be OK with that. No matter what, they will be welcome in my family, biological and chosen. Our love is large and filled with laughter.

Family is my center.



Brené Brown is one of my heroes and when I came across her Wholehearted Parenting Manifesto, I adopted it as my own, hoping that one day I would have a child to share it with.

"Above all else, I want you to know that you are **loved** and **lovable**. You will learn this from my words and actions; the lessons on love are in how I treat you and how I treat myself.

We will practice **courage** in our family by showing up, letting ourselves be seen, and honoring **vulnerability**. We'll share our stories of **struggle** and **strength**. There will always be room in our home for both.

I want you to feel **joy** so together we'll learn how to be vulnerable. Together we'll cry and face **fear** and **grief**. I will want to take away your pain, but instead **I will sit with you** and teach you how to feel it.

We will **laugh** and **sing** and **dance** and **create**. We will always have permission to be ourselves with each other, no matter what.

I will not teach or love or show you anything perfectly, but I will let you see me and I will always hold sacred **the gift of seeing you**, truly, deeply seeing you."

What kind of family life would we have?

We'll have a cozy life with fun side quests! We'll be among friends and family that love and accept us. We'll explore places in our own backyard and travel across the country. We'll celebrate birthdays with family and go to story time. We'll work and go to school. We'll pick strawberries to make a pie and jam and cut down our own Christmas tree. We'll have Sunday dinner with my mom and dad. It would be an extraordinary everyday life.

Some of my mom's side of the family celebrating my cousin's graduation!



Walking in the 4th of July parade with my friend Katherine!

My cousin Patrick helps me cook pizzas in the backyard oven.



Favorites!

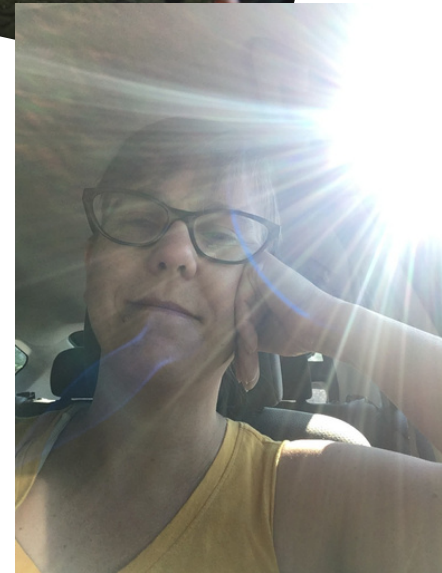
Food: I could eat pizza every day! My comfort food is toast. My dad makes AMAZING cinnamon bread.

Holiday: Thanksgiving: for the big family meal & the pie (pecan!).

Hobbies: Reading (sci-fi, fantasy, YA), cooking for people (I'm known for dessert!), Jazzercise (for the music, the friends I've made & stress relief!), exploring my city (I love art, food, and author events.).

Subject: Words have always been my favorite. I was an English major. I work as an editor & love poetry.

Me at age 8: my favorite activity then & now!



My home. One of the reasons I bought it is the front porch.



I love public art. This mural is at the top of my street.

My home and neighborhood

I live in a very walkable neighborhood, close to coffee shops, bakeries, restaurants, the library, and a Montessori school. I was a Montessori kid and LOVED it and want the same for my child. Everything we could want or need is close by. I love being at home. In the

winter, gathering people around the dining room table for a meal, sitting on the couch reading, baking something while the snow falls. In the summer, watching the world go by from the swing (it was my grandparents') on the front porch or in the backyard running through the sprinkler. I love the idea of making new memories with my child here, ordinary days or holidays, just us two or with all our family and friends.



I value...

Curiosity

not only in school, but in life. I stop and read roadside historical markers. I explore parts of town that I haven't spent much time in. If I hear about a talk by a poet that I like or a presentation on a topic I know nothing about, I go. I like museums. I will encourage my child to be curious by trying out activities, from sports to art to debate, by having a large, varied group of friends, and by exploring near and far. I cannot wait to see where we will go together!

Resilience

is knowing your limits, knowing where your safe space is, and knowing who has your back and then using these things to make you strong enough to face the world. Frequently, we downplay our own feelings (and kids' feelings!), but I think resilience starts with how you treat yourself. This is the other side of community—if I spend time caring for others, I have to spend time caring for myself, too. I'll teach my child to rest, to recharge, to take time to enjoy the things that make them happy.

Kindness

means working for justice, being empathetic and understanding, using our words to heal and not to harm, and sharing our wealth, our time, and our talents. Kindness can be robust and protective. My mom taught me this. I listen, I reach out my hand in friendship or to help, and I am confident that I can make a difference. My child and I will send birthday cards, pick out books for the holiday giving tree at the local bookstore, and make meals for neighbors and friends.

Community

We are responsible for each other and need to show up for each other. Community begins in our home, but extends in ever-widening circles to our family and our friends, colleagues and congregants, neighbors, citizens of the United States and the world. We'll invite people over to our home for dinner. We'll be a part of a Mama and Me group, my Jazzercise group, and the school community.



Thank you!

If you've made it this far, I hope you read or saw something that spoke to you. I am happy to answer any questions you might have about me, my family, or what my home is like. I'd like to get the chance to know you, too, if you'd agree. I didn't know life would bring me here and maybe this isn't where you expected to be either, but we can make it a good chapter, together.

Erin



My birthday! I still like having a party. I borrowed my cousin's Polaroid camera so I could take photos with everyone there to help me celebrate.