



RACHAEL & JORDAN

Hello,

While we'll never know what you're going through, please know that our hearts are with you. After reading this book, we hope you'll see what's in our hearts and understand more about who we are.

For us, this journey began more than a decade ago when, even as high school sweethearts, we knew we wanted to have kids. At the time, we could only dream that we'd share that experience.

Though there have been unexpected twists and turns with failed attempts at fertility treatment, it's not surprising that we've ended up here. The decision to build our family through adoption was one we came to easily.

After reading and hearing the stories of birth parents, we cannot fathom what your journey has been like. We admire the strength it takes even to consider this path, and we pray you find the wisdom you seek when making your decision.

We want you to know that we're nervous, too! But we'll be excited for the opportunity to get to know you and hope to become friends, family and take this journey together.

Thank you for considering us.

Love,
Rachael & Jordan

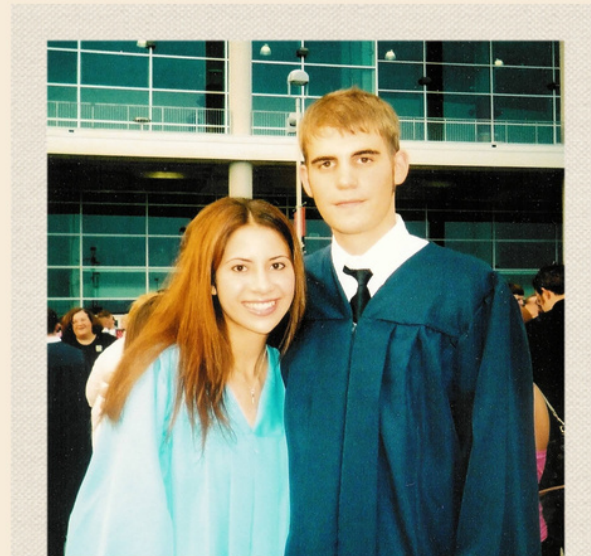
OUR STORY



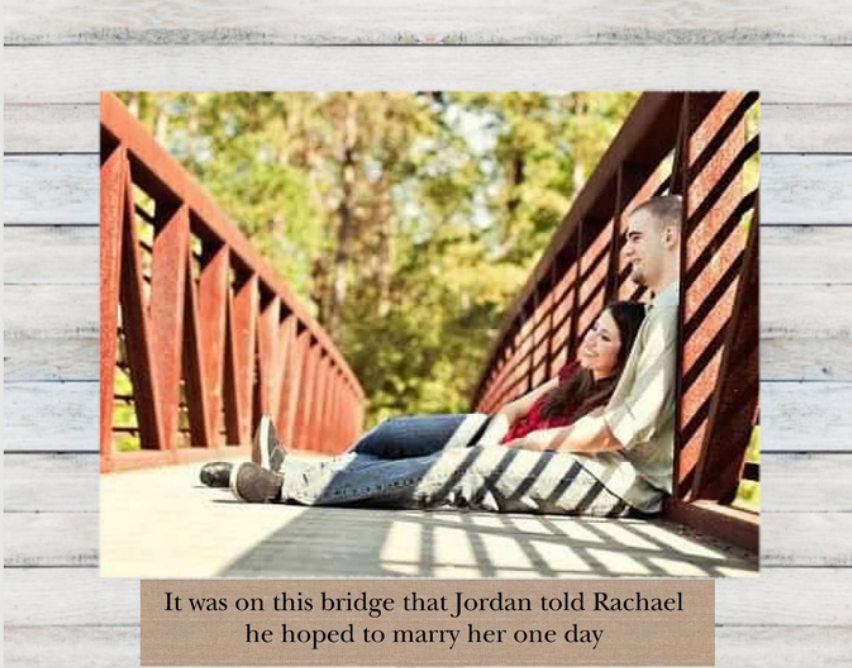
About to go to homecoming our senior year of high school

We have a lot of history together, having been with each other for nearly half our lives. We also took history together, which was where we met during our junior year of high school.

We spent the summer of 2004 going to movies and concerts. We cherished our time playing video games and laughing together. It didn't take long for us to fall in love...



High school graduation in 2005



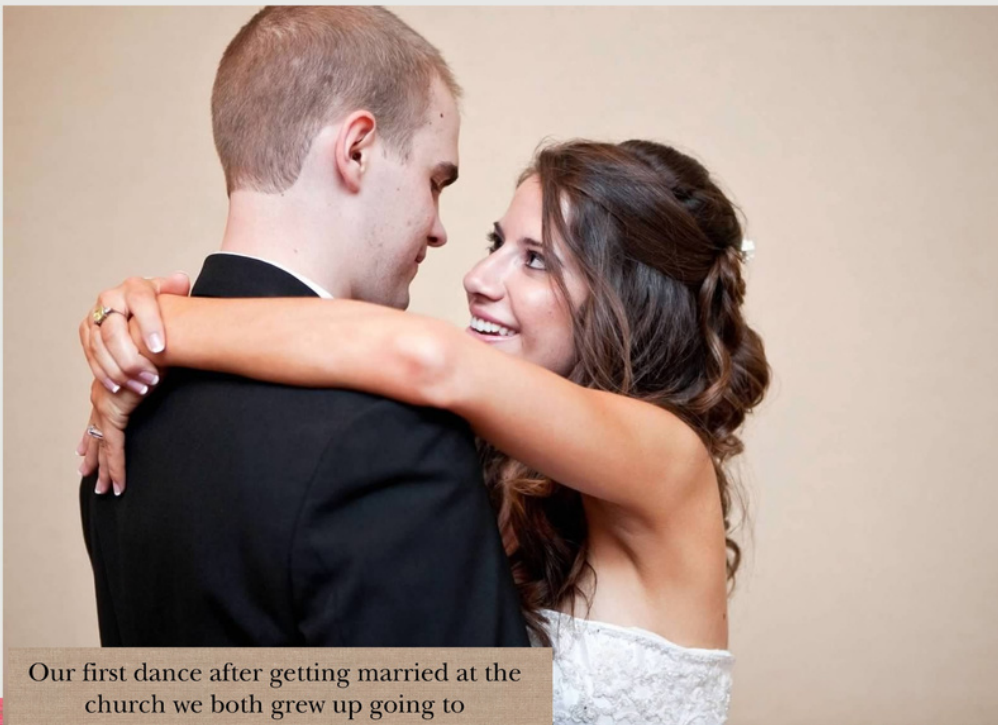
It was on this bridge that Jordan told Rachael he hoped to marry her one day

We were so excited to start our lives together and call Austin home



...Fast forward to 2009 when we graduated and got engaged. On May 22, 2010, we began our lives together as a married couple. Since then, we've grown closer as we've supported each other through life's ups and downs. We are best friends who love each other and each other's family and friends deeply.

Our relationship has taught us that, while it's not always easy, loving someone else more than you love yourself is one of life's greatest experiences. And we hope to care for and guide our child with that same love.



Our first dance after getting married at the church we both grew up going to



RACHAEL'S...

Perfect day: Waking up to pancakes, eggs, bacon and sweet coffee, followed by a hike with the dogs at a place where they can get their paws wet. We'll recover with some lunch and relaxing so that we're energized to end the day with an evening of BBQing with close friends.

Favorite music: The Eagles - they bring back memories of road trips with my family.

Favorite sports team: Oklahoma Sooners

Favorite game: Guesstures

Favorite holiday tradition: Baking pumpkin chocolate chip cookies, watching Halloween movies and carving pumpkins with friends.

Favorite books: The Harry Potter series, The Giver, graphic novels

Favorite quote: "Be kinder than necessary because everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle." - J.M. Barry





Rachael meeting Quad, the son of one of her best friends, for the first time

FUN FACTS ABOUT RACHAEL

I'm really good at making up silly stories.

I'm terrible at whistling.

For fun I like to eat popcorn and M&Ms while watching a movie.

Most people don't know that I had five wisdom teeth removed.

If I could snap my fingers and be anything, I would become a Michelin-star chef.

I realized I was no longer cool when my mom started dressing more hip than me.



JORDAN'S...

Perfect day: A day at the beach with family and friends, starting with some breakfast tacos and coffee. I love relaxing by the ocean, boogie boarding in the waves and visiting with loved ones. It's great to end the day at a restaurant with a view of the sunset, followed by games back at the vacation rental.

Favorite music: Indie pop, hip hop & country

Favorite sports team: Houston Rockets

Favorite game: Wing It

Favorite holiday tradition: Drinking hot cocoa while looking at Christmas lights.

Favorite books: The Chronicles of the Unhewn Throne trilogy... or anything science fiction or fantasy

Favorite quote: "Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten." - Neil Gaiman





Jordan and Oscar relaxing on the weekend

FUN FACTS ABOUT JORDAN

I'm really good at laser tag.

I'm terrible at doing cartwheels.

For fun I like to play games.

Most people don't know that I've never been stung by anything.

If I could snap my fingers and be anything, I would become a professional poker player.

I realized I was no longer cool when I had no idea who Lil Nas X was, despite his record No. 1 song on the Billboard Top 100 chart.

WHY RACHAEL LOVES JORDAN

Ever since I met Jordan during junior year of high school, I knew there was something special about him. His love for others shined through his actions. There are so many reasons to love Jordan, but I will focus on two that stand out.

Jordan is a born nurturer. He will go out of his way to make people feel loved – whether it's cooking a meal for a friend's baby shower, making me a care basket while I'm sick, or helping his friend rehab his broken leg, he never hesitates to help people and does so joyously.

Seeking to understand the world and sharing that knowledge with others is one of Jordan's greatest strengths. He's always reading, listening to podcasts or researching the answer to a question most of us wouldn't think twice about. Because he spends so much time learning and reflecting, and his genuine care for others, Jordan is a great person to call for advice - he will patiently talk through any problems or questions you have.

I know these traits will make him the best dad ever. His nurturing attitude will show our kid(s) what it means to be loved and how to love others. Our child will know that their dad is there for them and involved in their lives. They will also benefit from his love of learning. His natural curiosity will be contagious. I can see them reading, going to museums and exploring together.



Jordan enjoying some snacks at Pinewood Social during a trip to Nashville



Rachael enjoying a frozen coffee treat while on vacation in South Padre Island



Rachael, her brother, Nathan, and Jordan's sister, Kristin, dancing at Rachael and Jordan's wedding

WHY JORDAN LOVES RACHAEL

It's incredibly challenging to sum up your feelings for your best friend and the love of your life in a few sentences - so I'll focus on the things that stand out most about Rachael, which is her heart and her warmth.

Consider yourself lucky once you've won over Rachael's heart. In return, she will love you fiercely. Her nurture and care will support you in the most difficult or painful moments. This is never more evident than when she talks about or interacts with the students in her classroom - someone overhearing the conversation would probably think she's talking to her own children. In Rachael's mind and heart, she is.

Rachael has a warm presence about her (which is a bit ironic, because she frequently feels physically cold). Her smile and laughter warm your heart. Her chipper attitude and silly antics brighten your day. Being around her automatically puts you at ease.

And these traits are what make her an incredible friend and ensure she will be an amazing mom. I've never met someone with such a gift for connecting with kids and with such love and loyalty for family.



Dressing up for the storybook character parade with coworkers. The kids loved it!

OUR CAREERS

Rachael knew she wanted to be a teacher when she was five years old, and most of the jobs she's had have been in childcare. After getting a master's degree in education she taught at an elementary school for eight years. She has experience working with children ranging from age one to seven. Though her passion is teaching kindergarten, Rachael plans to spend a few years as a stay-at-home mom and is excited to help teach our child a love for learning.



Rachael outside of her pond themed kindergarten classroom

Rachael with two of her former students she taught in kindergarten



About to leave for our field trip to Sweet Berry Farm with a coworker, Charity



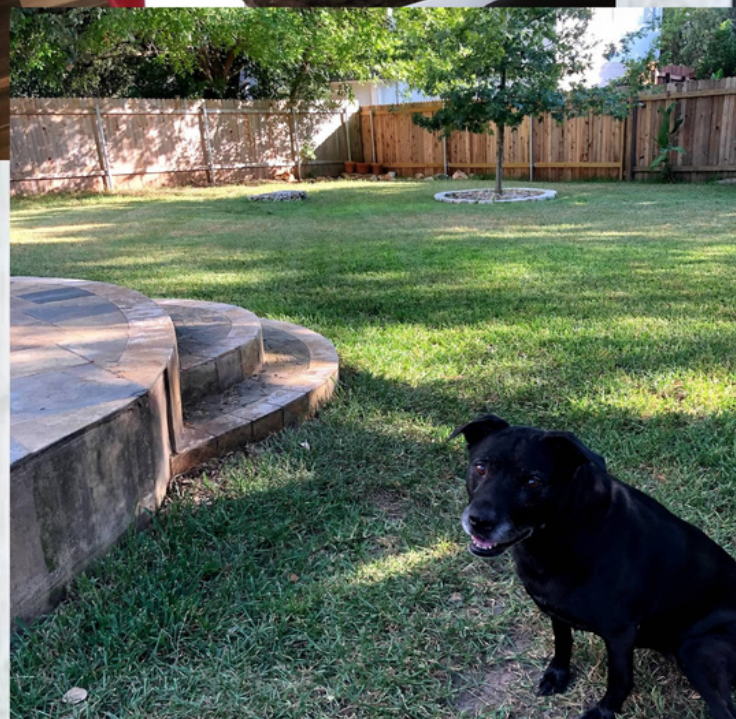
Jordan and his coworkers at SXSW event

Jordan loves a good story. His passion for writing and interest in business led him to a career in public relations and communications. For the past eight years, he's written press releases, created executive keynote presentations and worked with reporters to tell the story of Vrbo (formerly HomeAway). He's fortunate to work at a company that values family and gives employees plenty of time off.

Jordan's team dressed up as Lego superheroes for Halloween. Jordan is Lego Batman!



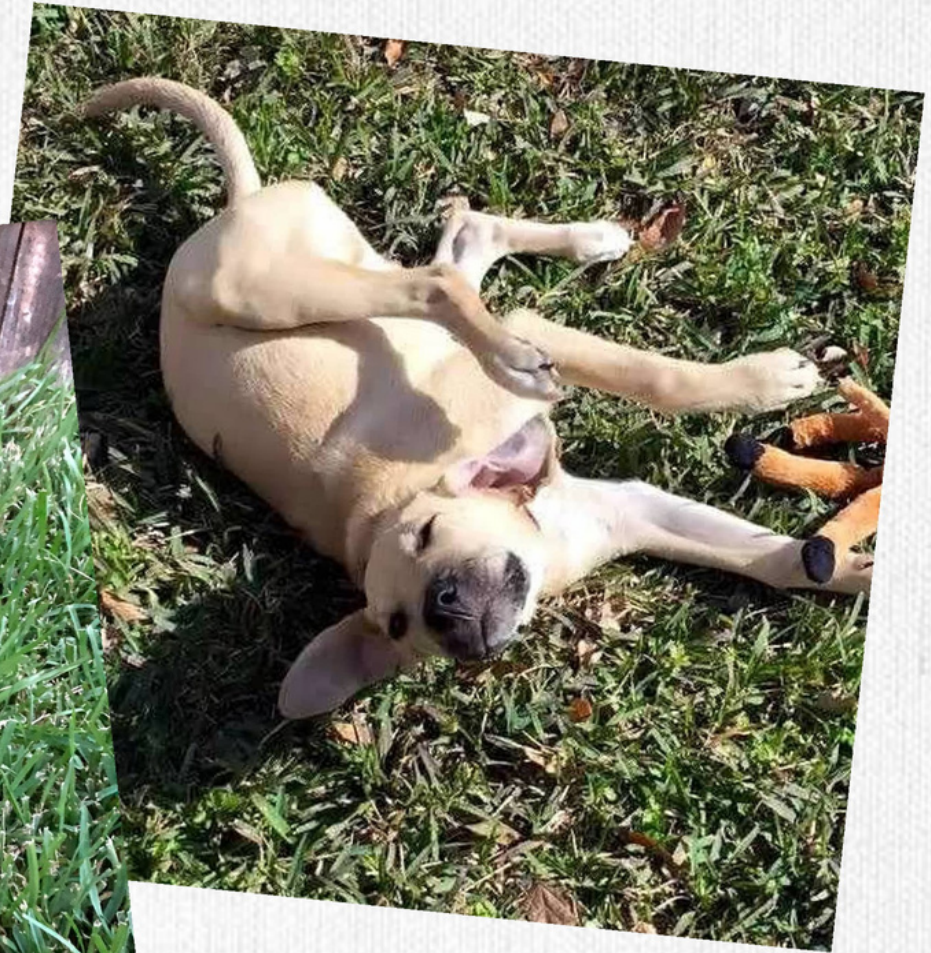
Celebrating Movember



home

We live in a 2,200 square foot home in Rattan Creek, a northwest Austin neighborhood with lots of parks, playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts and a public swimming pool. We spend most of our time in the kitchen and living room where we cook together, watch our favorite shows, read and play with the dogs.

Sadie (age 12) is a Labrador mix and the gentle soul of the house. She's calm and sweet and loves everybody. Her spunky side comes out when we're getting ready to go on a walk; in her excitement she does a happy dance for her leash. Jordan has had her since college and she has been such a joy in our lives.



Oscar (age 4) is a Great Dane mix and is the silliest dog you'll ever meet. We didn't plan on having a second dog, but he wiggled his way into our lives. After fostering him for a couple weeks, his sweet, playful and goofy nature made the thought of saying goodbye to him too hard. His silly faces and yawns that sound like Chewbacca always make us smile.

We believe there are two variations of family: the kind you're born into and the kind you choose. We feel fortunate in how amazing all of our family are, be they selected for us or by us. The support and love we have is the foundation on which we hope to grow our family.

♥ WE ARE ♥ FAMILY



We love getting together with Jordan's family on the weekends for game nights, movies or BBQing



Enjoying beautiful Austin views with friends Celisse, Sean, Erin and Brandon



Having fun escaping from a puzzle room with friends Jae, Alex and Dan



Getting together with friends Casey and Elizabeth



Rachael's mom and grandma visiting Austin

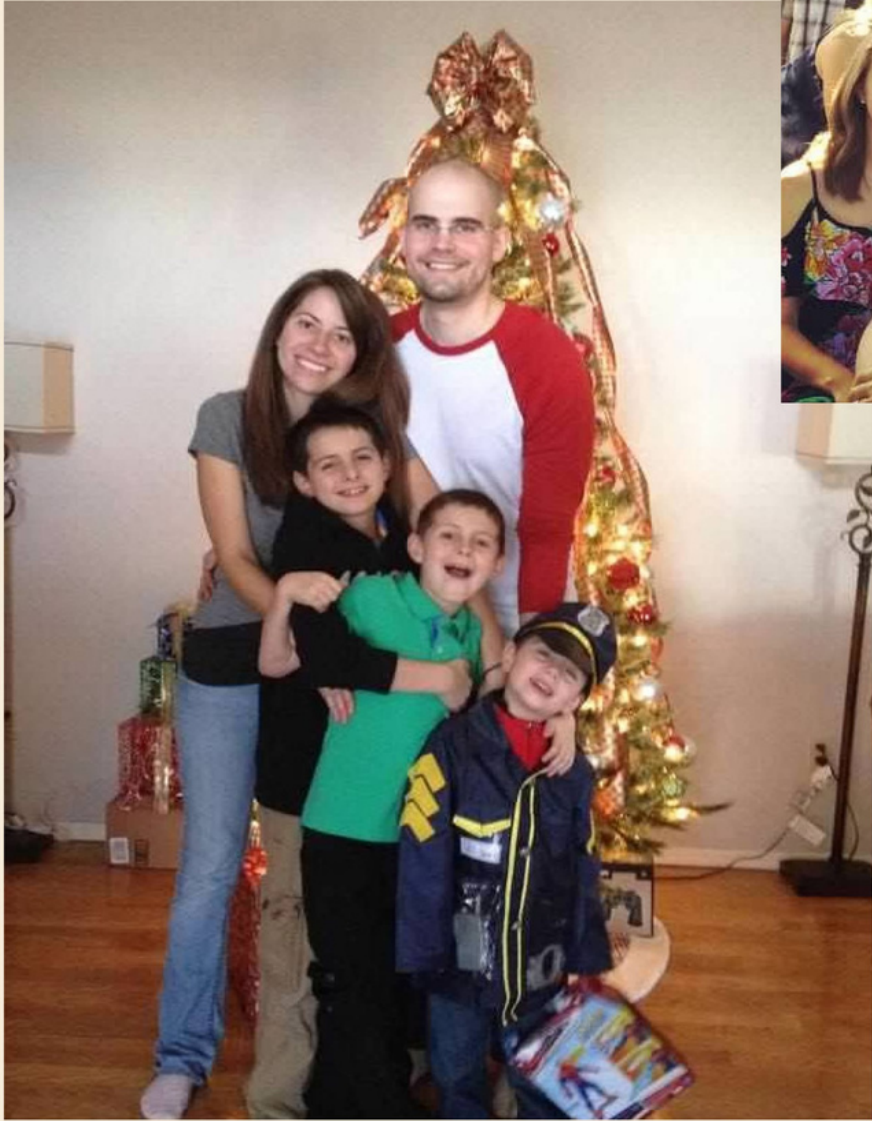


Visiting Rachael's family in Tulsa for Christmas. This year Rachael's mom made us matching shirts!





Getting together with coworkers and friends for Jennifer's birthday



Spending Christmas with Rachael's nephews



Visiting Heather, who Rachael has known since she was born, and her two kiddos for the holidays

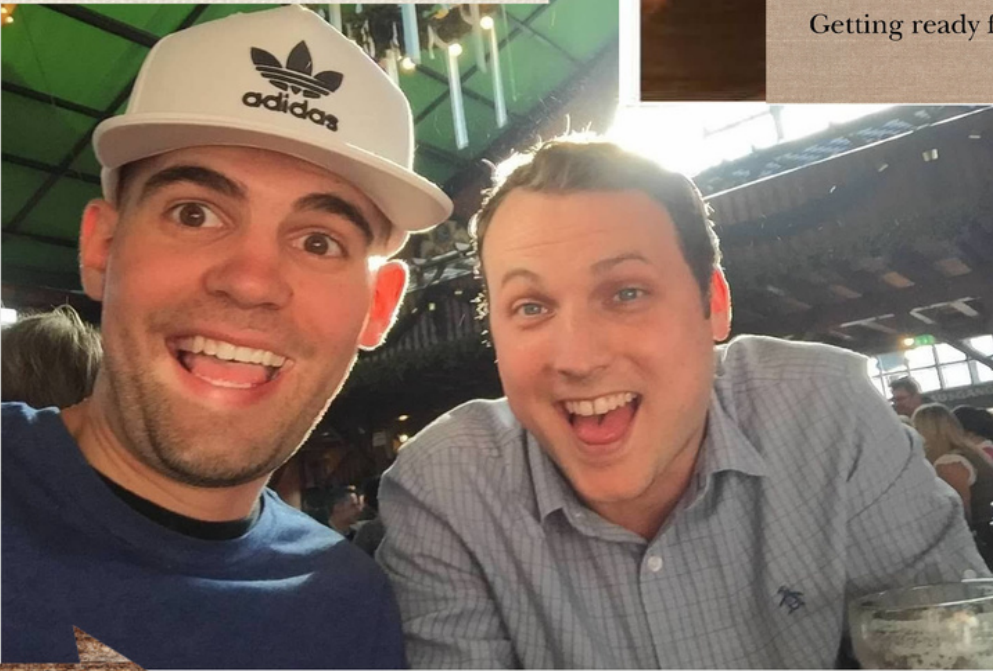
THIS IS OUR Happy Place



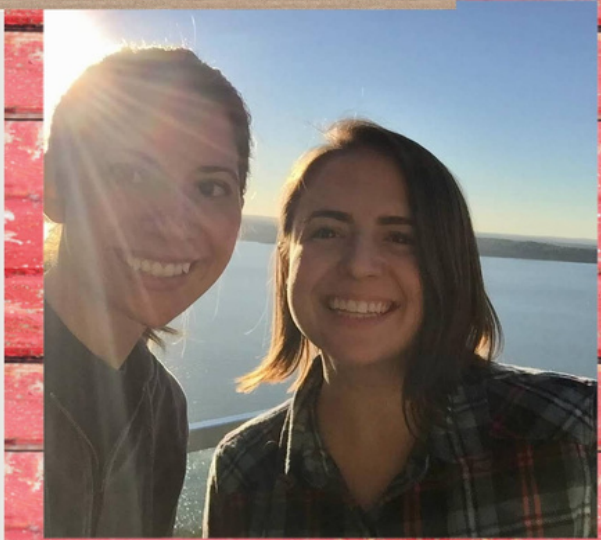
Jordan and good friend, Matt



Getting ready for Halloween with our annual pumpkin carving party



Jordan and Brett, a close friend since high school, in Germany



Rachael and Brittany, who have been friends since 6th grade, enjoying the view of Lake Travis



THINGS WE CAN'T WAIT TO DO AS A FAMILY...



Jordan...

- Play Connect Four
- Read Dr. Seuss books
- Eat buffalo chicken mac and cheese
- Travel to national parks
- Visit family and friends
- Teach him or her how to play the drums
- Sing the Song That Never Ends
- Watch Pixar movies
- Make waffles

Rachael...

- Play in the sprinklers
- Read Mercer Mayer books
- Eat tacos
- Travel to the beach
- Visit a pumpkin patch for Halloween
- Teach him or her how to read
- Sing It's a Beautiful Day
- Watch Moana and A Goofy Movie
- Make drawings and crafts



FAMILY VALUES

We are followers of Christ and believe that being a Christian means that you love and accept others. We respect everyone's convictions and will encourage our child to do the same, and to discover their beliefs and faith.

We want to raise an individual who is confident in who they are, feeling loved and secure. Our approach to parenting will be rooted in these values:

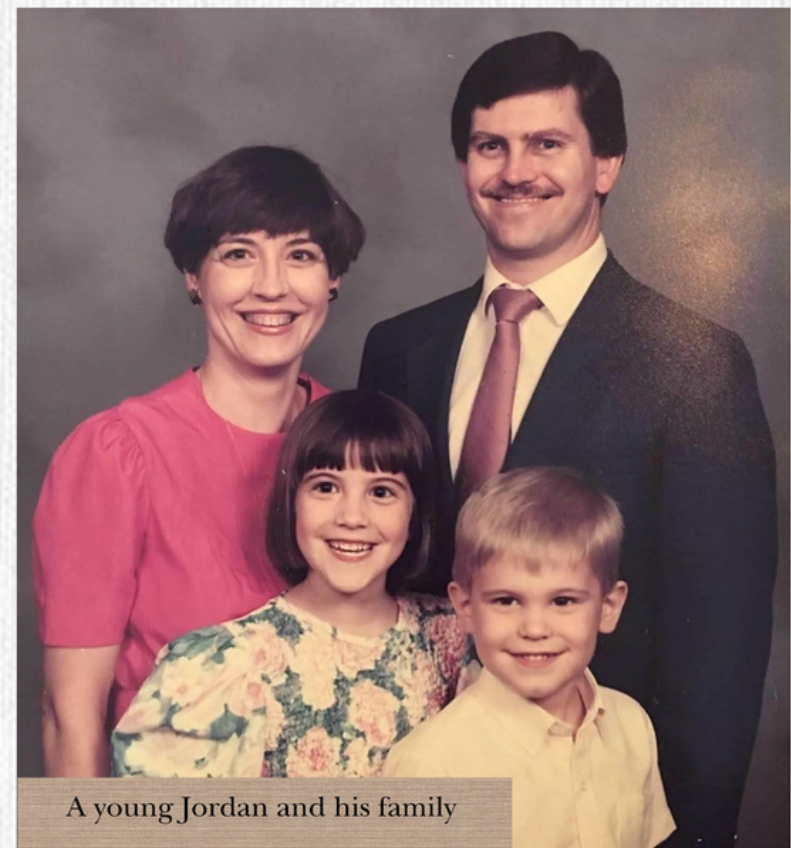
Demonstrate love - Let others know you love them through acts of kindness and selflessness.

Have empathy - Always consider how your actions affect those around you, even if it's unintentional.

Show respect - We show respect to everyone, including ourselves.

Understand consequences - It is important to learn at an early age that actions have consequences. As parents, we'll make sure boundaries are clearly set and positively reinforced through discussion and reflection.

Live joyously - Life won't always be easy, but we can always find reasons to have joy. We will teach our child how to laugh, even when times are tough, and to celebrate life's precious moments, big and small.



A young Jordan and his family



A young Rachael and her family



Rachael's dad playing with his nephew's daughter, Kenley. Kids love him!



Spending time with our friends from college and sweet baby Claire

WHAT ADOPTION MEANS TO US

Adoption is a beautiful intertwining of two families' paths. By committing to each other, we'll have a bigger family and more love in our lives. While at times it might take hard work, any worthwhile relationship does. Open adoption will allow our child to truly know who they are. We're ready for the opportunity, hopeful to form a bond with the birth family, and eager to see where the path takes us.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for taking the time to get to know us. We pray for wisdom, peace and love as you go through this journey.

With warm regards,
Rachael & Jordan

