



mandy + mike



about us

We met online and on our first date it felt like we had known each other our whole lives. We got married a year and a half later, and Mandy's house became a home when Mike and his daughter Elaina moved in. Elaina is an awesome 11-year-old and lives with us every weekend and on alternating holidays. We are a fun bunch of nerds that love sharing our interests with each other. We are always looking for something new to experience; as a result, we go to different cultural events in the area like watching Celtic dancing or middle eastern food tasting. We have both lived in other countries - Mike in Afghanistan during his time in the military and Mandy in Spain for her undergraduate degree. We enjoy learning about other cultures and Mandy loves learning languages (she's fluent in Spanish, and somewhat conversational in French). We hope to raise our future child to be curious and open to whomever or whatever they meet in life.



who is MIKE



By Mandy: Mike is a goofy, fun-loving dad. He didn't find being a chemist challenging enough, so he self-taught himself how to become a system engineer in the tech field. He now works from home and we converted our third bedroom into his office. In his free time, he loves playing video games or board gaming with his close-knit group of friends. Both of us will enjoy game nights where all of us will bring our families together for food, fun, and geeking out. He enjoys teaching his daughter new skills and shares my love of never-ending learning. His experience with parenting will definitely be helpful with our future child!

who is MANDY

By Mike: Mandy is a fun and loving wife who has been looking forward to starting a family since before I met her. She is very involved with the people in her life. As a high school teacher, she acts as a mentor and counselor and is absolutely tied to those kids' futures. She is always coming up with creative ideas for us to do things together or coming up with suggestions for my daughter. She enjoys TV shows and video games. She also has a love for reptiles and introduced me to our many snakes and geckos.





our HOME

Our home is a renovated three-bedroom, one-bathroom house on a quiet street. The outside of our house is gorgeous year-round! Our magnolia and pear tree have beautiful flowers in the spring, and the rose of Sharon bushes bloom in the summer. We have a fenced in backyard, and we get to see our neighbor's two friendly dogs in the yard next door. Our neighborhood is often full of children playing hide and seek or riding their bikes together. We are within walking distance of a new park and a grocery store, and all the local schools are a 5-minute drive away. Mandy is actually a teacher at the local high school!



Our Daughter Elaina is Mike's daughter and Mandy's stepdaughter. She loves to draw, paint, and animate on her iPad. She is interested in possibly becoming a chef someday, so Mike teaches her how to cook and involves her in meal prep on the weekends. He will also play online video games with her when she is at her mom's house in order to stay connected. When she is here on the weekends, all three of us will play games together on the Switch, watch baking competition shows on Netflix, or he'll take her to art classes. Elaina will be great at teaching her younger sibling her artistic and culinary skills.

Our Pets Mandy's first passion was animals, so over the years between her and Mike they have built up a small zoo in their house. We have three young cats, Nico, Remy, and Ollie. They are very sweet and love attention from their mama and human sister. We have three snakes that live in the basement: Sterling, Merlin, and Beta. Mandy has raised them since they were babies, so they are very tame and relaxed. We have a grumpy looking bearded dragon named Rhaego that likes to nap on your chest, and two geckos named Tinkerbelle and Lilith.



Mandy's Favorites



- The Book Thief
- Italian
- Halloween
- Otters
- Waffle House
- Garbage
- The Office

- Monty Python and the Holy Grail
- Cross stitching, hiking, and reading
- Prank gifts in Christmas stockings
- Winning 1st place in a creative writing competition

Book

Food

Holiday

Animal

Restaurant

Band

TV Show

Movie

Hobbies

Family Tradition

Childhood Memory

Mike's Favorites

- Name of the Wind
- Mexican/Spanish
- Christmas
- Bearded dragon
- Taco Bell
- The Offspring
- Game of Thrones



- Inception
- Board games, video games, and cooking
- Christmas get together with family
- Swimming and camping

OUR family

Mandy's parents, Mike and Kathy, have been married for 39 years. Mandy is their only child, so they've been waiting to be grandparents for a long time! They have been getting their practice in with their nieces' and nephews' children, and love spoiling. Kathy is an avid baker and always has cookies on hand. Mike is the ultimate handyman, knowledgeable in household repairs and technology. Whenever Mandy visits, she enjoys watching Lifetime movies with her mom and checking out the neighbor's chickens with her dad. Kathy normally has a new Pinterest-inspired craft to show off, and Mike brags about his vegetable garden's latest crop. They live three hours away from us, but we always make sure to visit on holidays and summer break.

Mike's parents, Greg and Kathy, have been married for 34 years. Mike is their oldest of three children, and they have six grandkids. Mike was adopted by Greg, his stepfather, when he was a baby. Greg is an amazing artist in his free time and also loves woodworking. Kathy enjoys fishing with her family and watching her grandbabies. They both take pride in their beautiful gardens around the house. Mike's parents live two hours away, but we still try to visit around holidays to see them and his siblings. They like to play board games, sit around a fire, and cook meals together. They are an outdoorsy family, so going to neighborhood parks, kayaking, and playing in the backyard are family favorites.



Mike's family at our wedding



Mike's family at Christmas



Mandy's parents with a friend's son



Mandy's cousin Hollie and family



Hollie's big family



Mandy's cousin Kurt and family



Mike's sister Cassandra and family

Dear Birthparent,

We are so grateful that you're taking time to get to know our happy little family. Mandy has become a "mom" to hundreds of students over the years, but she has always wanted to have a child of her own. While she loves spending time with her stepdaughter, she can't wait to go through all the wonderful challenges of raising a baby with Mike. In our family, what is most important is supporting each other in doing whatever we love doing. As parents, we encourage our daughter to pursue her passions, and act as her cheerleaders whenever she feels doubt. It's also important for us to accept everyone for who they are, no matter what their differences. Our lives are full of people of different races, cultures, beliefs, etc. because that's what keeps life interesting! They say it takes a village to raise a child, and our village is so ready and would love to shower your child with love.

No matter what decision you make, we wish you and your child love and happiness!

Mandy + Mike



why ADOPTION?

We have adoption woven throughout our lives. Mike was adopted by his stepfather as a baby, and several of our friends have adopted children for various reasons. Mandy also has three friends that were adopted as infants. After seeing how adoption has so wonderfully changed lives, we feel that adoption is the right journey for us instead of trying to have biological children.

