

# 2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN HAVING (OR ADOPTING) A CHILD?

CASH FLOW ISSUES	YES	NO
<b>Do you need assistance to determine how much it will cost to raise a child?</b> If so, consider the possible healthcare, childcare, and college education costs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you need help with your new budget?</b> If so, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may need to review your budget to find areas to save on current expenses, while appropriately increasing or adding new expense categories to accommodate your growing family.</li> <li>You may need to reassess your long-term financial goals to align with your updated cash flow.</li> <li>You may need to increase your emergency fund to account for any new expenses and potential liabilities.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Will you and/or your partner take maternity/paternity leave?</b> If so, consider how this will impact your cash flow and savings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you or your partner plan to stay home to raise children?</b> If so, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact on your cash flow, savings, and overall financial plan.</li> <li>The impact on your emergency fund due to living on one income.</li> <li>The possible impact on employer benefits such as health and life insurance.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Will you need professional childcare services to support your family?</b> If so, consider the cost of daycare or a nanny and the impact on your household budget.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you need to check to see if your employer offers any benefits (adoption expense reimbursements, childcare subsidies, maternity/paternity leave)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Beyond what you have saved, do you need additional cash to cover any costs related to having (or adopting) a child?</b> If so, consider taking a distribution up to \$5,000 from an eligible retirement plan, within one year of having (or finalizing the adoption of) a child. The distribution (which can be repaid for up to three years) may be taxable as ordinary income, but there is no 10% penalty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ASSET & DEBT ISSUES	YES	NO
<b>Do you expect your child to receive cash gifts?</b> If so, consider opening a custodial account (UGMA or UTMA) and possibly a 529 account.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Does your employer offer a Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account?</b> If so, you may contribute up to \$7,500 to the account, and it can be used to pay for qualified childcare expenses. However, be mindful that contributions to a dependent care FSA may impact your ability to claim the child and dependent care credit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you have an HSA?</b> If so, you may be able to contribute \$4,400 (\$8,750 for family) and an additional \$1,000 if you are age 55 or over. See "Can I Make A Deductible Contribution To My HSA?" flowchart for details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Will you give (or have you given) birth to a child in 2025 or later?</b> If so, remember to claim the \$1,000 government credit (i.e., deposit) by opening an approved Trump Account before the child turns 18, as the credit isn't automatic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INSURANCE PLANNING ISSUES	YES	NO
<b>Do you need to add your child to your health insurance policy?</b> If so, you generally have 30 to 60 days to do so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you need to find a doctor or pediatrician in your insurance network?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do you need to review life insurance and disability coverage?</b> If so, consider increasing the amount of coverage you carry (to fund future child-related expenses such as college costs).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# 2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN HAVING (OR ADOPTING) A CHILD?

TAX PLANNING ISSUES	YES	NO
<p>Is your MAGI below \$200,000 (Single) or \$400,000 (MFJ)? If so, you may qualify for the full Child Tax Credit. The credit is worth up to \$2,200 per qualifying child, and phases out after you reach the above threshold.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Do you have child or dependent care expenses that were required in order for you and your spouse (if applicable) to work or search for work? If so, you may be eligible for the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (subject to phaseout restrictions).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Is your MAGI below \$305,080, and did you adopt a child? If so, you may be eligible for the Adoption Tax Credit, which is worth up to \$17,670 (subject to phaseout restrictions). Be mindful that the Adoption Tax Credit is refundable up to \$5,120, and unused portions of the credit may be carried forward for five years.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Do you need to update how much is withheld from your paycheck? If so, consider updating your W-4.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
<p>Are there any state-specific issues that should be considered? If so, be mindful that some states offer state tax benefits (e.g., state-level Child Tax Credits, 529 contribution deductions or credits, state-level adoption tax benefits, etc.).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LONG-TERM PLANNING ISSUES	YES	NO
<p>Do you want to start saving for your child's education? If so, reference "What Issues Should I Consider To Fund My Child's College Education?" checklist.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Do you want to start saving for future expenses for your child (such as an automobile, wedding, etc.)?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Do you need to update your estate plan? If so, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Update your estate plan to create trusts and appoint trustees in order to protect your children and manage their assets during their minority and beyond.</li> <li>■ Update beneficiary designations (primary and contingent) to ensure that your partner and children benefit and are properly protected (e.g., with trusts).</li> <li>■ Appoint a guardian for the child if something were to happen to you and your partner during their minority.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The information provided herein was obtained from sources believed to be reliable and is believed to be accurate as of the time presented, but is without any express or implied warranties of any kind. Neither Andy Panko EMC LLC nor Andy Panko warrant that the information is free from error.

The information provided herein is not advice specific to you or your circumstances but is instead general tips and education. None of the information provided herein is intended as investment, tax or legal advice. Your use of the information is at your sole risk. Before considering acting on any information provided herein, you should consult with your investment, tax or legal advisor.

Under no circumstances shall Andy Panko EMC LLC or Andy Panko be liable for any direct, indirect, special or consequential damages that result from your use of, or your inability to use, the information provided herein.

This information is not intended as a recommendation, offer or solicitation to buy, hold or sell any financial instrument or investment advisory services.

**Andy Panko, CFP®, RICP®, EA**  
[www.RetirementPlanningEducation.com](http://www.RetirementPlanningEducation.com)