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Mother and daughter write the book on adoptive families

By Cate Coulacos Prato | July 18, 2004

When **Filis Casey** of **Newton** started the Alliance for Children adoption agency in **Wellesley** 30 years ago, there was little in the way of support or communication among families who adopted children. Over the years, as the face of adoptive families changed to include international and single-parent adoptions and adoption itself emerged from behind a veil of secrecy, it became easier for families to connect.

Casey and her daughter, **Marisa Catalina Casey**, who lives in New York City, have compiled the stories of families from the Boston area and around the country in the newly published book "Born in Our Hearts, Stories of Adoption" (Health Communications Inc., 2004). Through the voices of adoptive parents and adopted children who are now adults, the book tells of the joy, trepidation, sacrifice, struggle, misconceptions, and healing that come with adoptions. WCVB-TV medical correspondent Dr. **Timothy Johnson** contributed his adoption story to the book, as did several local residents: **Brenda Cotter**, **Katherine Bower**, and **Claire-Marie Hefer**, all of Newton; **Farah Segaloff** of **Needham**; and **Denise Brown**, **Adam Schwartz**, and **Marilyn Sides**, all of Wellesley.

Casey and her husband, **J. Robert Casey**, adopted Marisa from Colombia when she was 3. Now 24, Marisa is a photographer and works for the Hearst Foundation as a grant reviewer. The Caseys also have two biological children.

The book began as a way to help adoptive families share their experiences, but Casey said she also hopes it will encourage more families to adopt.

"Really, it's about families," said Casey. "The stories are about adoptive families, but we can all relate, because we are all from a family -- however we got to be there."

Proceeds from the book's sales will go to the Alliance for Children Foundation, an international relief organization for children living in impoverished orphanages in Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America.