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Kijiji reunites adopted woman with birth mom

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An online classifieds website usually used for selling and buying second-hand goods has reunited a Calgary woman with the Saskatchewan birth mother she never knew.

CBC News



Jaelyn Marchildon, centre, was reunited with her birth mother, Wendy Kaye, left, and sister Natasha Wolff, right.
(Courtesy Jaelyn Marchildon)

Jaelyn Marchildon said she has always known she was adopted, and while she grew up in a loving home in Saskatoon and is still close to her adopted family, she never stopped wondering about her birth mother.

"I've cried every birthday since I've known," she said. "You always feel that something is missing because you know there are people out there who are your family."

The 35-year-old started looking for her birth mom as a teenager, contacting adoption agencies and reunion websites with no success. Four months ago, a friend jokingly suggested posting a personals ad on Kijiji, a free site for posting classified ads.

Since she had to sell some items for a move, she decided to try a personals ad at the same time, posting her birth name and city, which was Regina.

'I told my husband it would never work'

"I was deleting all the stuff I had sold and I was going to delete the [personals] ad because it had been there for two weeks.... I told my husband it would never work.... Then I decided to leave it on for a couple more days. The next day I got an email," she said.

"My aunt's friend was just looking through stuff and she found it and saw my birth name and knew enough information about me."

The friend passed the information along and it eventually reached Marchildon's birth mother, Wendy Kaye, in Battleford, Sask. Kaye said it never occurred to her to search for her daughter through Kijiji, although the family had been looking for Marchildon.

"Even my husband goes on it all the time. We didn't know there was personal ads on there, so when my sister called me that there was this ad on there, I was like, what? So then we contacted her right away," Kaye said.

Families reunited

Kaye has three more daughters. One emailed Marchildon, explaining that she was her long-lost sister.

"I got the email and I just couldn't even breathe," Marchildon recalled.

Kaye gave up Jaelyn at birth because she was 16 and unmarried.

"Now that piece of the puzzle to my life has been filled. Because now I've found her," Kaye said, her voice cracking with emotion.

Marchildon has since visited with her family in Saskatchewan twice.

"My husband says it's scary, 'cause we all talk the same, and we all have a resemblance," she said. "My one oldest daughter looks exactly like one of my nieces. It's pretty cool."

Jesse Kohl, a spokesperson for Kijiji Canada, said the website has already heard of 10 stories of people reuniting with long-lost relatives since 2007, as far west as Calgary and as far east as Ottawa.