



Impact of Adoption on Adoptive Parents

Adoptive parenthood, like other types of parenthood, can bring tremendous joy—and a sizable amount of stress. This factsheet explores some of the emotional ups and downs that you may experience as an adoptive parent before, during, and after adoption. While every family is unique and every parent has different feelings and experiences, there are some general themes that emerge regarding adoptive parents' emotional responses. The purpose of the factsheet is to identify some of these themes, affirm common feelings, and provide links to resources that may help your family address adoption-related concerns.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Impact of the decision to adopt

Impact of the adoption process

Impact of parenting

Finding support

Conclusion

Resources

References cited

- **Before Adopting** looks at motivations that lead families or individuals to consider adoption and explores some of the questions that prospective adoptive parents may want to ask themselves.
- **During the Adoption Process** examines some of the feelings parents may encounter as they pursue adoption.
- **After the Adoption Is Finalized** explores parents' feelings about the parenting role, their child's birth family, and children's responses to early trauma.
- **Finding Help** discusses strategies that parents can use to work through adoption issues to support the best possible outcomes for their children and themselves.
- **Resources** links to additional information and resources to support adoptive parents.

Note: This factsheet is primarily focused on nonrelative adoption. While some of this information will be relevant for those adopting relatives/kin, the Child Welfare Information Gateway website offers links to many other resources specific to that population at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/relatives/adoption/>.

This factsheet is a companion to two factsheets for other members of the "adoption triad" (the adopted person, adoptive parents, and birth parents) on the impact of adoption:

- *Impact of Adoption on Adopted Persons* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-adimpact/>)
(Spanish version is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/impactoadoptadas/>)
- *Impact of Adoption on Birth Parents* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-impact/>)
(Spanish version is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/impactobio/>)

Also see the Lifelong Impact of Adoption section on the Child Welfare Information Gateway website at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-people/impact/>.

Impact of the Decision to Adopt

The desire to adopt may be influenced by religion, infertility, or a felt connection with a child in need of a home, among many other factors. Regardless of the circumstances, the decision to adopt is often highly charged with emotion.

Questions to Consider

Families, couples, and individuals who decide to adopt should always go through a rigorous screening process that encourages self-reflection and consideration of your reasons for wanting to adopt, as well as your expectations for your child, the experience of parenting, and family life. Being aware of your expectations may be particularly important, as research has shown that unmet or unrealistic expectations often play a role when adoptions fall apart.

In approaching adoption, you may want to consider your feelings about the following:

- How will a new child fit into your life and relationship?
- How will a new child affect family dynamics—especially if your family already has children?
- What changes are you willing to make to ease the child's transition?
- How do you feel about open adoption—contact with the child's birth family?
- How do you feel about welcoming a child from foster care or an institution who may have experienced abuse or neglect?
- How have you addressed your own past trauma or losses? Have you considered how adopting a child with a similar history might affect you emotionally?
- Is there anything in a child's history that you feel you would not be equipped to cope with, emotionally or financially (e.g., past trauma, sexual abuse, fragile medical condition)?
- Are there any behaviors that a child could manifest that would make it too hard to maintain him or her in your family?
- In cases of transracial or transcultural adoption, how do you feel about accommodating, helping, and promoting your child's positive cultural and racial identity?

- How will you inform family members and friends, and how will you deal with questions from family, friends, and strangers about adoption?
- How will you answer your child's questions about adoption, his or her background and history, birth family, and your reasons for adopting?
- What are your dreams, fantasies, and expectations for your child and family's future? How do you typically respond when reality does not match your expectations?
- How willing are you to learn new parenting strategies that work better for children who have experienced loss and trauma?
- How willing and able are you to seek help for yourself or your child when necessary?

For more information about making the decision to adopt and deciding what type of adoption to pursue, see the following sections on the Information Gateway website:

- *Adoption Options: Where Do I Start?* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-adoptoption/>)
- *Making the Decision to Adopt* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/before-adoption/>)
- *What Are My Choices in Adoption?* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/choices/>)
- *Who Are the Children Waiting for Families?* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/who-are-the-children-waiting-for-families/>)

Infertility

Some people adopt because they are unable to have a biological child—this includes couples (both straight and gay) as well as single people. In these cases, the prospective adoptive parents may have already faced loss and disappointment. Some will have experienced repeated miscarriages or intrusive fertility treatments. It is only natural for adults to respond with grief to these losses, and they may also experience feelings of guilt, shame, inadequacy (“why me?”), loss of control, and even jealousy of those who have been able to have a biological child (including their eventual child's birth parents) (Goldberg, Downing, & Richardson, 2009; Kupecky & Anderson, 2001).

Regardless of the exact circumstances, couples and individuals who turn to adoption because of infertility may have already weathered an emotional roller coaster. Their feelings must be honored and addressed before parents can effectively support adopted children in healing from their own losses. For those who need help working through the grief of infertility, there are support groups and counselors who specialize in helping infertile couples and individuals. It is important to remember that both partners in a couple may not resolve their grief at the same pace, and arriving at the decision to adopt may come at a different time for each person.

Although growing your family through adoption may include emotional ups and downs, it also can be full of joy. See the following websites to hear about a variety of adoption experiences:

- Adoption Tapestry (Spaulding for Children) at <http://spaulding.org/adoption-tapestry/>
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids Success Stories (Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption) at <https://davethomasfoundation.org/adopt/success-stories/>

Impact of the Adoption Process

The adoption process can seem cumbersome to prospective parents. Each State has its own laws governing adoption. Intercountry adoptions are subject to additional regulations. For the most part, these laws are designed to protect the best interests of the child and the rights of all members of the adoption triad before the birth parents decide to place their child for adoption. So, it is normal for prospective adopters to feel vulnerable and powerless at times.

During the adoption process, you will find yourself making life-changing decisions that can be both exciting and stressful. Decisions need to be made about what type of adoption to pursue; whether to work with an adoption service provider and, if so, which one; and how to respond to a potential placement of a particular child or children. The home study process can feel intrusive and may highlight emotional issues that you have not fully addressed, either individually or as a couple. You also may experience long periods of waiting and may have to face uncertain outcomes. It's not unusual to feel anxious about the process and to find it difficult to go about your regular routine.

A good agency and social worker can help you manage the adoption process and provide guidance for the decisions and learning along the way. Some agencies link prospective parents to support groups for those awaiting adoption or to counselors who can help during the waiting period.

Sometimes a planned adoption does not proceed—for example, because the birth parents decide to parent, a child in foster care is reunited with his or her birth family, or a country unexpectedly suspends international adoptions. While the prospective parents may have known that this was a possibility, the reality can be difficult to accept. If the parents have already met and attached to the child, it may be particularly difficult. This is a loss, and grief is an understandable reaction. Prospective adoptive parents in this situation may need time to work through their feelings before they're ready to proceed again.

For more information about the adoption process, see the following sections on the Information Gateway website:

- Who Can Adopt? (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/whocan/>)
- Home Study (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/home-study/>)
- Finding an Adoption Agency (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/finding-agency/>)

Impact of Parenting

For many adoptive parents, completing the adoption matching and placement process means that the most difficult phase is behind them. Most adoptive children settle in with their new families, and research shows that the great majority of adoptive parents are satisfied with their decision to adopt (Vandivere, Malm, & Radcliff, 2009).

But settling into parenthood or the “postadoption period” can present its own difficulties for parents. In some cases, adoption-related concerns arise long after the adoption has been finalized, and parents may be unprepared for the issues that may come up throughout the lifelong adoption journey. Some stressors are the same types of challenges that all families—biological and adoptive—face; however, there are other potential stressors unique to adoption and adoptive parents may want to familiarize themselves with these possibilities.

Information Gateway offers a robust collection of resources to support those who are parenting after adoption. Visit <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/>.

This section includes a series of factsheets to help adoptive parents address issues specific to particular developmental stages:

- *Parenting Your Adopted Preschooler* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/preschool/>)
- *Parenting Your Adopted School-Age Child* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/parent-school-age/>)
- *Parenting Your Adopted Teenager* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/parent-teenager/>)

The following additional factsheets also may be of interest:

- *Helping Your Foster Child Transition to Your Adopted Child* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-transition/>)
- *Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Abuse or Neglect* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/parenting-CAN/>)
- *Parenting a Child Who Has Been Sexually Abused: A Guide for Foster and Adoptive Parents* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-abused/>)

Postadoption Depression

After months or years of anticipating parenthood, the excitement of the actual adoption can give way to a feeling of “let down” or sadness in a small percentage of parents (Foli, 2010; Senecky, Agassi, Inbar, Horesh, Diamond, Bergman, Apter., 2009). Much like postpartum depression, and occurring at about the same rate, postadoption depression may occur within a few weeks of adoption finalization. The realities of parenthood, including lack of sleep (for parents of infants or children

with behavioral or sleep issues) and the weight of parental responsibilities can be overwhelming. Parents may have difficulty attaching to the new child and may question their parenting capabilities. They also may be hesitant to admit that there are any problems after a long-awaited adoption.

In some cases, these feelings resolve on their own as parents adjust to their new life. If these feelings last for more than a few weeks or interfere with your ability to parent, peer support or professional help (with a therapist skilled in adoption issues) may help you to address the issues causing the depression and assume your parenting role with greater confidence (see Finding Help later in this factsheet). For more information and resources, see the Information Gateway web section on Postadoption Depression at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/depression/>.

Identity

Adoption is a life event that changes the identities of all involved. For many adoptive parents, this change in identity means the realization of the long-awaited role of “mom” or “dad.” However, sometimes adoptive parents are slow to adjust or wonder what expectations accompany their new identities.

Adoptive parents may worry that they don’t “feel” like parents, even after the adoption is complete. Some wonder whether they are really entitled to parent their new son or daughter. Or, after years of keeping their parenting desire in check, they find it difficult to fully embrace parenthood or to believe they are truly parents like other people are. Parents may even question why they don’t immediately love their new child or wonder whether they love their child enough (Eidson, 2012). For these new parents, parenting may seem like a tentative status at best. Furthermore, the lack of role models for adoptive parents may give them a sense of isolation.

If you have adopted from foster care, you may have had visits with the child, or the child may have actually lived with you before the adoption. Even so, the finalization creates a permanent family situation, and you and your child may take some time to develop a bond and evolve into your new identities, just as a couple adjusts to marriage after dating for a long time.

If you have adopted an infant, received a child in an emergency placement, or adopted through an intercountry adoption, the suddenness of the child's arrival may leave little time for becoming accustomed to your new identity. You may be so absorbed in the practical tasks of meeting your child's needs that you have little time to dwell on your new status, especially at first.

For some parents, there is a pivotal moment when they first feel like "Mom" or "Dad" (e.g., the first visit to the doctor, school registration, the first time the child says "momma"). For others, it is the day-to-day routine of caring for the child and forming a mutual attachment that gradually leads to self-identification as the child's parent. However this occurs, the vast majority of parents eventually move beyond their feelings of being "not worthy" or "not capable" of parenting their child; they become comfortable in their new roles, accepting the responsibility and recognizing and feeling fully entitled to parent their child.

There are a number of things that you can do to help yourself and your family adjust to your new identity. The following strategies may be useful right after an adoption, as well as 5, 10, or 20 years later, because parents and children can encounter identity and adoption issues throughout their lives—especially around particular milestones, such as birthdays, holidays, births, and deaths:

- **Connect with parents who have completed a similar adoption.** Learning how other parents have made the adjustment and have dealt with challenges can be reassuring. More experienced adoptive parents can serve as role models to newer parents. Parent support groups are meant for just that—supporting and lending a hand and a sympathetic ear to parents who need it. (Information Gateway's National Foster Care and Adoption Directory lists kinship, foster care, and adoption support groups by State at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad/>)
- **Establish family traditions or rituals.** You may want to establish daily or weekly activity schedules. Routines can be comforting and stabilizing for children, and they can help to normalize family life. Rituals can be as simple as bedtime reading or family movie night. You also may want to establish traditions to commemorate important days (the day of the adoption placement or finalization) or holidays. These special occasions can be a time for celebration and can reinforce parent and family identification.
- **Create a family story.** Writing your family's story can help all family members feel a sense of belonging. You can start the story while you are awaiting adoption, beginning with your own story, from childhood through the decision to adopt. As each new member joins the family, his or her background and story are added. There are many possible formats for these stories—including scrapbooks, journals, videos, and blogs—and they can be maintained through multiple generations. (A family's story is different from a child's individual lifebook, which focuses only on the child. See the Information Gateway section on Lifebooks for more information at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/lifebooks/>)
- **Connect with your child's birth culture.** Developing a strong family identity that involves all members and makes everyone feel included may be especially important for the transracial or transcultural family or for any "conspicuous" adoptive family. You can choose activities, schools, friends, encounters with professionals, and neighborhoods that send a message that they value the diversity of all family members.
- **Prepare to respond to outsiders (including relatives, friends, and strangers) about the adoption.** New adoptive parents can be caught off guard by some of the questions asked by friends, relatives, and even strangers. Preparing for how to respond to questions, how much of the child's story to share, and how to inform or educate relatives and friends about adoption can reinforce the new identity of parents and children, empower the new family, and even be a family attachment experience if the children are old enough to be involved. For more information and resources, visit Information Gateway's web section on Talking About Adoption at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/talking/>.

Feelings About Your Child’s Background and Birth Family

Regardless of the type of adoption, questions or concerns about the child’s family of origin and background can impact adoptive parents’ feelings about the adoption.

Contact with birth family. In some cases, adoptive parents still have a say in whether their adoption is open (i.e., whether the adoptive family remains in contact with their child’s birth family). However, the Internet and increasing use of social media are causing rapid changes in this area; in most cases, it is no longer a question of if but when adopted children learn about, locate, and (potentially) communicate with birth family members, which may include birth parents, siblings, or other relatives. Contact with birth family can take many forms, from occasional letters, to contact on social media sites, to regular, face-to-face visits. For more about the role of social media in adoption, see Information Gateway’s resources for parents and caregivers at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/intro/social-media-adoption/#caregivers>.

Initially, some adoptive parents feel fearful of birth family contact or wonder whether their child will understand “who is who.” They may worry about having to “compete” with birth family for their child’s affection or may fear feeling accountable to birth parents for their day-to-day parenting decisions (Singer, 2010). Some parents may feel that by avoiding contact with birth family, they are protecting their children from feelings of grief and loss. However, these losses exist regardless of birth family contact.

Research shows that open adoption arrangements generally work well for all involved. In fact, studies have shown that openness is associated with better postadoption adjustment for adoptive parents, as well as for birth parents and adopted persons (Ge et al., 2008). Adoptive parents who have maintained contact with birth families rarely regret the decision or desire less contact (for a summary of relevant research, visit <http://www.adoptionhelp.org/open-adoption/research>). For a summary of fears and facts related to open adoptions, visit <http://www.openadopt.org/adoptive-parents/facts-about-open-adoption/>.

Your guidance and ability to provide consistent, age-appropriate information about your child’s background and birth family will help him or her better understand the adoption and birth family relationship. This information, and contact with the birth family when possible, will eliminate some of the mystery and fantasies that adopted children naturally develop around their birth families.

Parents who adopt from foster care may experience unique struggles regarding their child’s birth family. They may know that, in most cases maintaining ties to birth siblings, grandparents, or birth parents is important for the child’s identity, development, and long-term well-being; however, they also may know that some of these relatives neglected or maltreated their child. Your willingness to facilitate birth family contact (with appropriate boundaries) supports his or her well-being and provides a model of mature behavior for your child. Child Welfare Information Gateway offers a factsheet for families with information to support adoptive families in considering and maintaining open adoption. *Openness in Adoption: Building Relationships Between Adoptive and Birth Families* is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-openadopt/>.

Find more information and resources in the following Information Gateway web sections:

- Open Adoption and Contact With Birth Family (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adoptive/before-adoption/openness/>)
- Social Media in Adoption, Resources for Parents and Caregivers (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/intro/social-media-adoption/#caregivers>)
- After Adoption From Foster Care (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/foster/>)

Gaps in background information. Although your adoption agency or organization is required to provide you with all of the information they have about your child, sometimes information is simply unavailable. Children in foster care may have complex family histories, have experienced multiple placements, or have files that simply suffer from lapses in recordkeeping. Children adopted from other countries may have spent time in foster homes in their native country or have been in orphanages or other institutions for months or years. Often, there is little reliable information from their country of origin about the child's background, relatives, or medical history. Even parents who adopt their children as infants may feel frustrated that they do not know more about their child's birth family or prenatal care.

These unknowns are a common aspect of adoption; adoptive parents may need to accept that their child has had previous experiences that the parents may never know about. On the other hand, particularly in the case of older adopted children, parents should be prepared for the possibility that they may learn more about their child's history as he or she begins to feel safe in the adopted home.

The Information Gateway factsheet *Obtaining Background Information on Your Prospective Adopted Child* has suggestions for learning as much as you can about your child prior to adopting at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-background/>.

Impact of Childhood Trauma

Adoptive parents are sometimes surprised when their child acts out or continues to have issues stemming from past experiences after the adoption is finalized. This behavior may be a sign that your child is experiencing trauma—an emotional response to a past intense event that threatened him or her or caused physical or emotional harm. In many cases, children recover quickly from traumatic experiences with no lasting harm. However, for some children, trauma interferes with normal development and can have long-term effects.

If you know your child has traumatic events in his or her history, it will be important to watch for signs of their impact. If there are gaps in your knowledge about your child's history, be aware that difficult behaviors may be signs of trauma and have your child evaluated if necessary. In the meantime, it might be helpful to remember that your child's behavior may be a learned response to stress.

Even foster parents who established a relationship with their child prior to adoption are sometimes taken by surprise by behaviors that emerge once the adoption is finalized. Some children adopted from foster care may act out or misbehave in an effort to induce feelings of rejection, anger, pain, and abandonment in their parents. This testing behavior may actually indicate that the child feels comfortable enough with the parents to communicate his or her feelings. Parents should prepare for their own response, modeling understanding and appropriate reactions if that occurs.

Parenting a child who has experienced trauma can be difficult. Parents sometimes feel isolated, as if no one else understands what they are going through. They may feel frustrated or even resentful toward their child. Some parents begin to doubt their own parenting abilities and wonder, "Why can't I fix this?" This can put a strain not only on your relationship with your child, but with other family members as well (including your spouse or partner). Learning about what your child experienced also may act as a trigger for you if you have your own trauma history. Taking time to focus on self-care and your own healing will be especially important.

For more information, see the Information Gateway factsheet, *Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/child-trauma>), and the web section, Resources on Trauma for Caregivers and Families (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/trauma/caregivers/>).

Finding Support

Some adoptive parents find they need support to work through the emotions that arise before, during, or after the adoption is finalized. In at least one survey, the majority of adoptive families identified some ongoing issues that made daily life challenging—including emotional, behavioral, and school concerns (Stevens, 2011). If this is true for your family, keep in mind that seeking help is a sign of strength and doing so earlier rather than later may help to prevent a crisis.

It will be important to find support services that are tailored for adoptive families. (For information about the difficulties some families face in locating adoption-competent services, see Casey Family Services, 2003.) One place to start is with your adoption agency. Many agencies offer some kind of postadoption support and services. Some offer preservation programs dedicated to keeping an adoption intact by helping parents understand their child's behavior and how to manage it effectively. Research has shown that a good therapeutic relationship between adoptive parents and their social worker can provide significant support during the postadoption phase (Zosky, Howard, Smith, & Howard, 2005).

Other services that adoptive families have found beneficial include the following:

- **Respite care** offers a short break from the responsibilities of parenting, giving parents an opportunity to rest, practice self-care, and take advantage of additional support services. Respite can range from a few hours to a few days.
- **Support groups**, whether online or in person, provide parents an opportunity to connect with others in similar situations, vent their feelings in a safe environment, receive supportive feedback, and learn new strategies from more experienced adoptive parents.
- **Adoption-competent counselors or therapists** can provide targeted therapeutic services to children, parents, and the family as a whole to address adoption-related issues.

- **Adoption subsidies** are available for some families who adopt from the child welfare system to help with the costs of caring for children with special needs.
- **Educational advocates** help parents of children with special needs to understand their child's educational rights and to work effectively with the school system to identify and access accommodations, programs, and services to help their child succeed.

Any counselors or therapists that the adoptive parent or family uses should be "adoption competent"—meaning they have experience with adoption issues and knowledge about the adoption triad. If your child has (or you suspect has) a history of trauma, it will be important that the therapist is also knowledgeable and experienced in working with child traumatic stress. Other adoptive families are often good sources of referral for therapists and other assistance. Your agency or other local support organizations may maintain lists of adoption-competent, trauma-informed counselors and therapists.

Two Information Gateway factsheets provide more detailed information about locating adoption-competent postadoption services: *Finding and Using Postadoption Services* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-postadoption/>) and *Selecting and Working With a Therapist Skilled in Adoption* (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f-therapist/>).

Find more information and resources in the following sections of the Information Gateway website:

- Adoption Assistance by State (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-assistance/>)
- Finding Services for an Adopted Child (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-parenting/services/>)

Conclusion

Adoption is a lifelong commitment, and adoption-related issues may arise at any point in the parents' or their child's lifetime. A willingness to learn about the issues and seek support if necessary can help to ensure that parents and children experience happy and healthy family lives.

Resources

- **Adoption Exchange.** The Adoption Exchange provides expertise and support before, during, and after the adoption process. It has offices in eight States and provides educational support nationally (<http://www.adoptex.org>).
- **AdoptUsKids.** Primarily a tool for connecting potential families with waiting children, this website also offers a number of resources for adoptive families, including information about the adoptive process, adoption advocacy, and stories for parents and children. Two resources that parents may find particularly helpful are *Taking a Break: Creating Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Respite Care in Your Community* (http://www.adoptuskids.org/_assets/files/NRCRRFAP/resources/taking-a-break-respite-guide.pdf) and the *Minority Specializing Agency and Resource Directory* (http://www.adoptuskids.org/_assets/files/NRCRRFAP/resources/minority-specializing-agency-directory.pdf).
- **Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.).** The C.A.S.E. website includes information on adoption-competent therapy, adoption training, community education, and publications. It also offers publications, including the *W.I.S.E. Up! Powerbook*, which empowers adopted children to answer questions about adoption if, when, and how they choose (<http://www.adoptionssupport.org>).
- **Families Adopting in Response (FAIR).** FAIR is an all-volunteer organization that offers information, education, support, and fellowship to adoptive and preadoptive families. Members include families who have adopted children through public and private agencies from the United States and from many other countries (<http://www.fairfamilies.org>).
- **Institute for Human Services.** The Institute for Human Services provides child welfare training and offers a number of resources to support child welfare professionals and parents who foster and adopt children from the child welfare system, including an overview of how adoption can impact all members of the adoption triad for multiple generations in *Intergenerational Issues in Adoption* (<http://www.nysccc.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/intergenerational-issues-in-adoption.pdf>; http://www.ihs-trainet.com/products_resources/products_books.htm).
- **New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children (NYSCCC).** Although this website is focused on New York families, many of the resources have relevance for other adoptive families. Transracial and transcultural resources and questions and answers may be particularly useful (<http://nysccc.org/family-supports/transracial-transcultural>; <http://nysccc.org/family-supports/>).
- **North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC).** Founded in 1974 by adoptive parents, NACAC is committed to meeting the needs of waiting children and the families who adopt them. NACAC offers advocacy, education, parent leadership capacity building, and adoption support (<http://www.nacac.org/>).
- **Pact, an Adoption Alliance.** Pact offers a comprehensive site addressing issues for adopted children of color, offering informative articles on related topics as well as profiles of families, links to other resources, and a reference guide with a searchable database. The site also provides opportunities to interact with and ask questions of birth parents, adopted people, adoptive parents, and adoption professionals (<http://www.pactadopt.org/adoptive/welcome.html>).

References Cited

- Casey Family Services, the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice. (2003). *Strengthening families & communities: Promising practices in adoption-competent mental health services*. New Haven, CT: Casey Family Services.
- Eidson, F. (2012, Winter). Adoption ghosts: A personal and professional view. *The Infant Crier*, 132, 3–7.
- Foli, K. J. (2010). Depression in adoptive parents: A model of understanding through grounded theory. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 32, 379–400.

Ge et al. (2008). Bridging the divide: Openness in adoption and post-adoption psychosocial adjustment among birth and adoptive parents. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22, 529–540.

Goldberg, A. E., Downing, J. B., & Richardson, H. B. (2009). The transition from infertility to adoption: Perceptions of lesbian and heterosexual couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 26, 938–963.

Kupecky, R., & Anderson, K. J. (2001). Infertility and adoption. In Groza, V. and Rosenberg, K. F., *Clinical and Practice Issues in Adoption: Bridging the Gap Between Adoptees Placed as Infants and as Older Children*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 21–35.

Senecky, Y., Agassi, H., Inbar, D., Horesh, N., Diamond, G., Bergman, Y. S., & Apter, A. (2009). Post-adoption depression among adoptive mothers. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 115, 68–69.

Singer, E. (2010). Embracing the importance of birth parents in the lives of adopted children. *Adoption Today*, 33, 32–34.

Stevens, K. (2011). Post-adoption needs survey offers direction for continued advocacy efforts. *Adoptalk* (North American Council on Adoptable Children). Retrieved from <http://www.nacac.org/adoptalk/postadoptionsurvey.html>

Vandivere, S., Malm, K., & Radcliff, L. (2009). *Adoption USA: A Chartbook Based on the 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Retrieved from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/75911/index.pdf>.

Zosky, D. L., Howard, J. A., Smith, S. L., & Howard, A. M. (2005). Investing in adoptive families: What adoptive families tell us regarding the benefits of adoption preservation services. *Adoption Quarterly*, 8(3).

Suggested Citation

Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2015). *Impact of adoption on adoptive parents*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

