

## Themes and Questions

Things to ponder throughout pre-adopt training and the home study process

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*Below are a few themes that are really important in all types of adoption. These themes will arise over and over during pre-adopt training, the home study process, and in your re-configured family. Please record thoughts, questions, concerns, etc as they come up for you.*

Unconditional commitment

Parenting birth children is different than parenting adopted children, different strategies are required – most people have to learn a whole lot to be successful

Almost everything in adoption from foster care is impacted by the fact that trauma impacts the developing human brain in profound ways

Therefore, to adopt from foster care means that you will be creating a ‘healing home’

Becoming a multicultural family and knowing that my adopted child sees the world differently than I do

Birth families will almost always be involved in some way

Finding humor in the midst of difficult situations

Awareness that healing doesn’t come quickly, not all wounds can be healed

Enthusiasm for using help and support resources, especially when there is no crisis

Attachment is an interactive experience. Building it requires adults to be pro-active

You will become your kid’s advocate in multiple systems, and that can be a lot of work

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### Quick Self-Check Am I Ready for This?

#### Do I have the following characteristics?

- Patience and perseverance
- Good sense of humor and ability to deploy it in stressful times
- Ability to roll with unexpected changes, stresses and challenges
- Ability to deal with rejection without personalizing it
- Capacity to function when you have conflicting feelings/truths at the same time
- Awareness that healing doesn't come quickly and not all wounds can be healed
- Strength to be consistent and set limits despite relentless efforts to get you to back down
- Willingness to learn and to try new parenting techniques
- Tendency to ask for and/or accept help, suggestions
- Can be persistent and proactive in assuring your kid's medical, educational needs are met
- Ability to dig for and to use community resources

#### If you have all or most of the characteristics above, then ask yourself a few more questions:

- Do I clearly understand why I want to adopt?
- If there are two of you, are you both committed to adoption, knowing that it will profoundly affect your relationship?
- What do you suppose are some of the differences between adoptive parenting and birth parenting?
- Have we talked about some of the ways we expect that our lives will change?
- Unconditional commitment means that you will be the kid's parent NO MATTER WHAT...are you ready
- Do you have friends and/or family that you expect to be supportive and helpful to you in this experience?
- How do you feel about potentially building a relationship with your kid's birth family?
- How would you know if you were prepared to lead a multi-cultural family?
- Is now a good time to adopt? (Any recent or upcoming moves, changes to financial situation, recent traumas, recent additions or losses in household? Do I/we have time to complete the home study process, matching process, and adding a new child into our home?)

#### Some of my questions are: