

Competencies

- 201-07-001 Understands predictable phases (ie: placement, pre-finalization and post-finalization) in adjusting to adoption; the psycho-social tasks that need to be resolved during those phases; and the worker's role in supporting the child and family during each phase
- 201-07-002 Understands the typical emotional responses and ambivalence often experienced by children and adoptive family members prior to and after adoption finalization, knows when these issues are likely to emerge, and knows how to help the family manage stress and conflict during these periods
- 201-07-003 Understands how adoption may affect adopted children and families throughout their lives; the potential need for post-adoption services throughout their lives; and how to help adoptive families accept those services.
- 201-07-004 Understands the reasons adopted children, their siblings or their birth parents may search for one another; the potential psychological risks of searching; and strategies to prepare participants for the various potential outcomes of a search
- 201-07-007 Understands how factors such as children's unique vulnerabilities; visits with birth families; specific developmental stages; changes in family structure and lifestyle; or adoption finalization could trigger emotional distress or crisis for children in placement and their adoptive families
- 201-07-008 Knows how to recognize emotional distress and crisis in adopted children and their families, and knows how to provide support and crisis intervention to reduce distress, and resolve the crisis.

ADOPTION: FACTS OR FANTASY

Please discuss and answer these questions.

T rue, F alse, or J ust not sure

- _____ The issues of parenting a child by birth are just like parenting a child by adoption.
- _____ Adoptive parents who are experiencing trouble with the adoptive child are often afraid to ask anyone for help.
- _____ Adopted children are glad that they are adopted.
- _____ Dealing with the issues of adoption is a process usually completed by young adulthood.
- _____ Middle childhood years are important years for understanding adoption.
- _____ Older adoptions experience trouble more frequently than infant adoptions.
- _____ Only a small percentage of adoptees consider searching for their birth parents.
- _____ Adoptive parents might intellectually support the search, but emotionally dread it.
- _____ Birth parents “forget” about their children in a few years.
- _____ Many adoptees feel rejected by their birth families.

Themes in Adoption Parenthesis Post Adoption Program

Children who have suffered a loss through death, divorce, foster care, adoption, or other separations seem to share several common issues. However, each child will react or respond to the loss dependent upon:

1. the significance of the loss
2. whether the loss is temporary or permanent
3. inherent coping abilities of the child
4. availability of supports
5. age and cognitive abilities of the child
 - a) at the time of the loss
 - b) at the present time

Consequently, while some children may react in very extreme ways, others may respond mildly or not at all. In addition, while one child may be affected in the area of loyalty, for example, another may be preoccupied with identity issues. What follows is a discussion of these common themes with particular attention to their appearance in adoption.

GRIEF

When children have been separated from significant figures, their emotional response is one of grief and mourning. For the infant adoptee, the loss is of the fantasy or dream parent they have never met and of "what might have been." For the older adoptee, it most likely is a real loss of biological family or foster family. Grief is a process. There are five identifiable stages. However, not every individual will experience each stage or experience them in the order presented:

Shock/Denial: The child is emotionally numb and cannot accept the loss. The child may deny his own past or ethnicity. The child denies that s/he is adopted or may refuse to talk about being adopted. This stage is the mind's attempt to prevent the individual from feeling the pain of loss.

Anger/Rage: Now the numbness has worn off. Unfortunately, for the adoptee, this stage frequently coincides with adolescence, creating great chaos and confusion. The teen may be angry at themselves for causing the separation, thus feeling guilty, and many punish themselves via self-defeating behavior. The youth may be angry with the adoptive parents, perceiving the adoption as a kidnapping and may be verbally abusive, defiant, physically aggressive, truant, irritable, or oppositional. And the teen may be angry at the birth family for abandoning him/her.

Bargaining: In this stage, the youth attempts to regain the “Lost” figure through manipulation. The sophistication of the bargaining behaviors is dependent upon the child's cognitive and developmental level. Younger children may be “as good as gold” thinking that they’ll be rewarded for their behavior. Older children may attempt to disrupt the placement via acting out behavior. Adolescents may run away, make allegations of abuse, or try to “negotiate” the return of the lost figure. Children in this stage of grief also spend a great deal of time fantasizing about the birth family, often looking for them in favorite teachers, movies stars, or even in crowds.

Depression: Once the youth recognizes that the attachment figure is not returning, s/he will enter into depression, a state of mourning and sadness. Here, the youth withdraws from normal activities; eating and sleeping patterns change. S/he is moody and cries easily. Suicidal ideations and gestures as well as substance abuse may also appear as problems for some youth.

Resolution/ Understanding: Under normal circumstances, one cannot tolerate lengthy periods of psychic pain or depression. Consequently, the youth will begin to move towards resolution, slowly at first. It should be noted though, that grief is never fully resolved. Given time and support, it does become manageable. Occasions will arise such as holidays, anniversaries, or other significant events during which the youth may “re-grieve” their loss. When a child enters resolution, there is a return to age-appropriate activities and developmental tasks. Life is fun again. School performance and appearance improve. The child re-engages in the family.

CONTROL

For children who have experienced a loss, many feel that they have had no control or decision-making power over their own lives. The adoptee did not choose to lose his/her birth family, etc. This generated a feeling of frustration and helplessness for many children. Consequently, they may try to regain control of their lives by being orderly, compulsive, neat--needing routine or planning ahead. Other youth may demonstrate their need for control via constant power struggles with authority figures, truancy, defiance, substance abuse, or tantrums. The bright, sophisticated child may hide things, hoard food, develop eating disorders, or utilize more creative means to control family life. In fact, some adoptees create chaos in the family as a means of controlling other family members.

LOYALTY

Having at least two sets of parents creates quite a conflict for the child (whether the parents are real or fantasy). This is also frequently the case for children of divorce. The child may feel that closeness and love for one set of parents may be an act of disloyalty towards the other set of parents,

thus hurting them. The child finds himself/herself in a dilemma and may be overrun by feelings of guilt. Behaviors frequently seen are: distancing from family members, fantasizing about birth family, confusion/conflict regarding search, guilt over being happy in the adoptive family, denial of having questions or curiosity regarding their adoption. The issue of divided loyalty frequently crops up around the time of the child's birthday or around Mother's Day.

REJECTION/ FEAR OF ABANDONMENT

Regardless of the actual circumstances surrounding the child's adoption, the child's perception is frequently one that s/he was rejected and subsequently abandoned by the birth family. Consequently, some adoptees may feel hurt or angry toward their birth parents. Some adoptees feel that they are unlovable and "unkeepable", and they may act out to test the commitment of the adoptive family. To avoid rejection, some adoptees may not allow themselves to get close to others, or they will reject others before they can be rejected. Some adoptees react by continually seeking acceptance and approval from those around them, being almost too good. It is not surprising that developing and maintaining relationships is a difficult task for some.

SELF-ESTEEM

The perception of being rejected is a direct blow to the adoptee's self-esteem. As one adoptee said, "How can someone who never knew me give me away?" Some adoptees believe that something is wrong with them. They may feel unwanted. Some adopted individuals assume the worst about their birth families and believe that their genetic make-up is far from ideal. School performance and self-confidence are frequently affected. Because they believe themselves to be less, they may settle for less than ideal friends or act out their self-image. They may engage in self-endangering behaviors. Some adopted youth seem to fear success, which would challenge their self-concept.

TRUST

This is a particularly crucial issue for children who have had multiple moves during their young lives. Separations at an early age may threaten the establishment of a basic trust and attachment, which is so necessary for healthy growth and development. Many older adoptees come from a history of abuse and neglect and homes where broken promises are the norm. These children may avoid closeness or require longer times to "warm up". They may have difficulty with intimacy or become involved in clinging, dependent relationships. Stealing, lying, and delayed conscience development may occur in some cases.

IDENTITY

The lack of information and secrecy that frequently surrounds the child's history and birth family make it difficult for the adoptee to establish his/her identity, a major task of adolescent development. The teen may find this issue confusing, frustrating, and scary. They may have no known history or connection to formulate a base for the "self". "Who am I?" is no longer a rhetorical question. For the child adopted at an older age, the information may be negative (mental illness, substance abuse, abuse/neglect) or chaotic.

Adolescents who are experiencing extreme difficulty may resort to running away, trying on multiple (and usually bizarre) identities, hanging out with "low life" peers, promiscuity, pregnancy, depression, or anger. Some adoptees state that they have always felt different and have never fit in with their peers as being adopted prevented them from "being like everyone else". Consequently, they may initiate a search to satisfy this need, or they may create a blood tie through a pregnancy.



Not all adoptees experience problems with these issues. Some may experience minor difficulties at different developmental stages. The adoptive family, sometimes with the help of a knowledgeable professional, may handle these minor difficulties successfully. A small percentage of adoptees find these issues overwhelming and require more intensive services. It is recommended that adoptive families experiencing extreme distress find post adoptive services that can provide support and assistance that is specific to the adoption related issues of the child.

Developed by:
Denise Goodman, PhD
Betsy Keefer, LSW

Continuum of Development of Adopted Children
Adapted from a handout developed by Parenthesis Family Advocates, Columbus, Ohio

0-3 Years	3-7 Years	8-12 Years	12-16 Years	16-19 Years
Adopted child does not realize difference between themselves and non-adopted children	Child asks a lot of questions. Loves to hear his/her adoption story. Can repeat it verbatim but has little understanding of the concepts.	Child understands concept of adoption. Begins grieving process. May stop asking questions as part of denial. Realizes that he/she had to lose something to be adopted.	Child enters anger stage of grieving. May resist authority and try on new identities. May be angry over loss of control in his/her life.	Young adult may be depressed and over-react to losses. May be anxious about growing up and leaving home.
Strategies for Parents	Strategies for Parents	Strategies for Parents	Strategies for Parents	Strategies for Parents
<p>Collect as much concrete information as possible (goodbye letters from birthparents and pictures are helpful).</p> <p>Develop "LifeBook" for child, including these concrete bits of information.</p> <p>Begin talking comfortably and positively with your infant, family, and friends about adoption.</p>	<p>Encourage questions and answer honestly. Difficult issues may be omitted (but never changed) until child is older.</p> <p>Tell Adoption Story as a favorite bedtime story.</p> <p>Use and add to Life Book.</p> <p>Reassure child that he/she will not lose adoptive family.</p>	<p>Don't force child to discuss issues but let him/her know you are open and comfortable when he/she is ready.</p> <p>Let child know it is understood that he/she can love both sets of parents. He/she does not have to choose.</p> <p>Ask if child has questions or feelings he/ she would like to discuss.</p> <p>Let child know you are not threatened or angry about questions regarding birth family and/or past history.</p>	<p>Allow child to exercise control whenever possible. Provide opportunities for decision-making.</p> <p>Child has a right to his/her birth information. Help child access and accept information.</p> <p>Try to keep from responding to child's anger with more anger. Understand that much of his anger is directed at the birthparent.</p> <p>Be firm in limit-setting. Establish preset consequences for broken rules. Allow child to experience natural consequences of behavior.</p> <p>Continue to let child know that you love him/her no matter what.</p>	<p>Let child know he/she may remain at home after graduation if he/she chooses.</p> <p>Be alert for sadness when relationships with peers fail or during anniversary reactions such as birthdays or Mother's Day.</p> <p>Continue to keep adoption topic open within the home.</p> <p>Provide supportive opportunities for independence and freedom.</p>

Handout 4 The Biological Clock

Taken from "Adoptalk Newsletter" Fall 1991

The Biological Clock: Key Times in an Adopted Person's Life

by Carol L. Demuth, CSW-ACP

The non-adopted person is surrounded by genetic heritage and has easy access to family history. In families formed biologically answers abound and are absorbed before the need for a question arises. Feelings of belonging and relatedness are taken for granted as they develop gradually and become a part of the person's identity.

Shared ancestry, family resemblances and in some cases cultural heritage are denied the adopted person, who grows up separated from blood relations. As the adopted person matures, the need for information about his birth family grows. Both external life events and internal processes may trigger the desire for additional knowledge or bring to the surface the need to know one's roots.

The following outline will give both the professional working with the adopted person and the adopting parents an idea of the key times at which an adopted person may need more information or may have increased wonderings about his birth heritage. The list is not exhaustive, nor is it meant to imply that every adopted person will have the same need for information at each of these times. An increased awareness of these times, however, will aid those who interact with adopted persons in being more emotionally available and in being better able to meet the adopted person's needs.

Preschool years (2-5), when the child becomes aware of a pregnant woman in his environment

- This causes him to approach his parents with questions about his own birth, which he initially will probably connect with his adoptive parents.

Entrance into school

- The child must deal with adoption outside of the family for the first time, often the first time he has done so on his own.
- He may feel different from his peers.
- He may be faced with questions for which he has been ill prepared.

- He begins to become aware of society's views about adoption, which may differ from those held by his parents.
- Realization of "how babies are made."
- The child realizes there are two people who are not his adoptive parents that made him, but chose not to keep him.
- He may wish he had been born to his adoptive parents.

Birthdays

- This becomes a natural day to "connect" with the birthmother psychologically. As the adopted person reflects on his own birth, he will wonder if his birthmother is thinking of him too.
- Although primarily thoughts will concern the birthmother, there may also be thoughts about the birthfather.

Times of loss (death, divorce, a move, rejection by a friend, etc.)

- Any loss has the potential of triggering the original loss of the birthparents, once the child is aware of their existence.
- Also, TV programs, movies or books about loss may have the same effect.

Medical appointments, illness or medical crises.

- Because the adopted person does not live within his biological family, he rarely has as much medical history as a non-adopted person.
- The adopted person's access to updated medical information is rarely equal to that of a non-adopted person.
- An adopted person may feel disconnected, experience heightened anxiety and possibly anger at the lack of medical history.

Adolescence.

- The presence of abstract thinking allows for a more thorough and complex processing of the "whys" of the adoption.
- The adopted adolescent may wonder about what "might have been", and entertain fantasies, both positive and negative, about birthparents.
- The absence of biological role models may lead to feelings of disconnectedness and heightened anxiety about bodily changes.

- Entrance into male/ female relationships and the accompanying feelings of sexual attraction may cause speculation about the relationship between birthparents.
- The adopted adolescent may try to use his adoptive status as a tool for manipulation with his parents, if he senses they are unsure of their role, or threatened by birthparents.

Attainment of adult status (18-21).

- An adopted person may feel this is the first time he has a “right” to information on his birth family. Also, he may feel more comfortable seeking information directly, rather than going through his adoptive parents.

Engagement or marriage.

- The adopted person may have fantasies of marrying someone to who he is related if birth family is totally unknown.
- Contemplation of having children may be fraught with fear and anxiety if medical history is unknown.

Pregnancy/ birth of a child.

- Will often cause the adopted person to reflect on his own birth and his position in the chain of life.
- The adopted person may experience anger and/or feelings of loss and depression as he reflects on not being kept by birthparents.
- Often has increased expectations of feelings towards the baby born to him, as the child frequently is the first person he knows to whom he is related.
- A female adoptee may be particularly reflective during pregnancy, labor and delivery.

Mid-life crisis.

- Sometimes this is the turning point to seek information if it has been thought about, but postponed before.
- An adopted person becomes aware of birthparents' increasing age, and possibility of their impending death.

Death of adoptive parents.

- May trigger original loss of birthparents.

- An adopted person may feel freed for the first time to pursue information on himself, without fear of hurting the adoptive parents.
- He may unconsciously be seeking to replace lost family.

Questions from children.

- Even when adopted person has not sought information, his children may raise questions or need information that will cause an adoptee to pursue more information or possibly search for birth relatives.

Old age.

- An adopted person may realize this is his last chance to seek information before his own death. Often, he realizes his birthparents are deceased, but he may want information, or contact with siblings.
- Often the adopted person wants to leave information to his own children.

ADOPTION TERMINOLOGY

Parenthesis Post Adoption Program

Words and phrases to watch for positive and negative connotations.

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Birth parent (father, mother) Biological (parent, child, ancestry) Woman (lady) who gave birth	Real parent Natural parent
Adopted person Adoptee Adult Adoptee	Adopted child (when speaking of an adult)
Adoption Triad Adoption Triangle Adoption plan was made for... The baby joined the family The older child moved in with his/her family An adoption was arranged for... He/she was placed	Adoption Triad (when it applies to the negative connotation associated with triangulation) Adopted out Put up for adoption given away given up
Birth child	Their own child Their real children
To opt for, to take on, to choose, to continue) Parenting	Keeping

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Born outside of marriage Born to a single person (Divorced Single , Never married, Unwed mother)	Illegitimate child Bastard Unwanted child
Termination of parental rights; unable to continue parenting (older child) Court termination	Gave up
Made an adoption plan Legally released Voluntary release	Gave away
My child	Adopted (when it is used constantly, it can become a label)
The waiting child Child with special needs Child available for adoption	Hard to place child
Search Reunion Making contact	

- Language is important in describing adoption.
- Adoptees are sensitive to feeling different
- We want to try to avoid negative terms and use less judgmental language.
- How is language manifested in your own family? What does Grandma say? Peers? Outsiders?

GLORIA

Gloria is a 17 year old girl who was adopted independently by her affluent parents, a childless infertile couple, at 2 days of age. She was a delightful child until age 12 when she began underachieving in school and became angry and oppositional.

Gloria is extremely promiscuous and has been sexually active since age 14. She has had a series of relationships with males and has trouble maintaining long-term relationships with girlfriends as well. Most of her boyfriends are abusive, physically and emotionally, and most have problems with alcohol. Gloria too has a serious drinking problem. Gloria is obsessed with her appearance and had developed bulimia. She is a talented artist and won a slot in a prestigious "arts" high school. However, she refused to attend. Instead, Gloria decided to drop out of high school and live with her alcoholic, abusive boyfriend.

The parents have been to four different therapists in an attempt to find help for Gloria. They have had trouble setting limits and expressed fear that they will lose Gloria if they are too tough.

What are the developmental issues?

What are the adoption issues?

What are the cultural issues?

How would you intervene?

KIM

Kim is a 13 year old Korean girl adopted by an affluent Caucasian family with two biological children, ages 18 and 20. Kim was an abandoned orphan in Korea, and no information is available about her birth family or birth history. She came to this country to her adoptive family at approximately 18 months. She was "assigned" a birth date and name at the orphanage. She appears to be older now than her assigned age; it is likely that orphanage workers underestimated her age due to malnutrition and poor growth.

Kim was furious with her parents because the family decided to move to a new neighborhood and a new school system. She refused to speak to her parents for days at a time. She was frequently upset about food issues and assumed that her parents did not love her or favored their birth children if the parents did not cater to her food cravings and demands. Kim was determined to hate the new school and twice tried to commit suicide.

The adoptive parents were unable to cope with or understand Kim's rage. They adopted a child internationally with the desire to help or "rescue" a less fortunate child. The parents indulged and pampered her for years and could not understand why she seemed to hate and reject them.

What are the developmental issues?

What are the adoption issues?

What are the cultural issues?

How would you intervene?

EMMANUEL

Emmanuel is a 16 year old boy who was placed with his adoptive parents, a childless infertile couple, when he was 11 years old. Emmanuel was neglected as a small child and was placed in three foster homes before he was adopted. His birth mother and two older sister committed suicide, and Emmanuel demonstrated a problem with clinical depression, substance abuse, and suicidal, self-destructive behavior.

Emmanuel frequently insisted that he no longer wished to live with the adoptive parents. He was verbally abusive to the parents and refused to participate in family activities. He left the adoptive home for five months to live with his only surviving sibling, a young married woman with three small children. He returned to the adoptive home two months ago at his own request but has been acting out and oppositional ever since, frequently insisting that he wishes to leave the family.

The adoptive father was angry that Emmanuel showed no respect to either parent. During one explosion, the father told Emmanuel that he was no longer welcome to remain in the adoptive family. Emmanuel went to stay with a friend that night. The mother called the following day to say that they wanted Emmanuel to return, and harsh words were said in anger and were not sincerely felt. Emmanuel did return, but the family is spiraling toward a no-win crisis with the termination of the adoption as a distinct possibility.

Both Emmanuel and his father feel that the other should apologize. Emmanuel has threatened to file neglect charges against his father for "throwing me out".

What are the developmental issues?

What are the adoption issues?

What are the cultural issues?

How would you intervene?

MARCUS

Marcus is a 14-year-old boy who was placed with his adoptive family at 12 months of age following one foster placement. There was an older adopted sister (not biologically related to Marcus) in the adoptive family. The sister became pregnant and delivered a baby on the preceding Christmas Day. She decided to keep the baby; both the sister and her baby were living in the adoptive home.

Marcus began doing very poorly in school when he entered middle school. His grades were even worse, often to the point of failing, when he entered high school. He was often verbally abusive and he was particularly angry at his sister for becoming pregnant. He was embarrassed that his first year in high school was spent as the brother of the only pregnant girl in the school.

Marcus searched for and found his birth mother. He made contact with her before even telling the adoptive parents about the search. The adoptive parents first became aware of the search when the birth mother called them to talk about her recent conversation with Marcus. The adoptive parents were horrified and were still reeling from the pregnancy of the older child. The entire family immediately went into crisis.

What are the developmental issues?

What are the adoption issues?

What are the cultural issues?

How would you intervene?

ADOPTON SUPPORT GROUPS for Adoptive Families

Handout 10

Adoptive Family Support ACT Group, Advocates for Children Today

3965 Ganyard
Brunswick, Ohio 44212

Contact: Diane Smith,
(330) 225-1088

* Adoptive, kinship and foster
family support

* Advocacy for foster, kinship
and adopted children

Meeting time: Usually 3rd
Saturday of every other month

Meeting place: Bedford Library

ACTION- Adopting Children Today Information/Options Network

P.O. Box 122
West Alexandria, Ohio 45381

Contact:
Linda McAllister or Pat Hill
(513) 268-0777

* Adoption support, information,
referral; pre/post-adoption

Adoption Awareness Alliance

11370 Springfield Pike, Suite 200
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246

Contact:
Veronica Berry, (513) 771-3515

* Alliance of support groups
and agencies for adoption
education and advocacy

Meeting time: 1st Tuesday of
every other month

Adoption Network Cleveland

1667 East 40th St., Suite B-1
Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Contact: Linda Bellini,
(216) 881-7511, x 103,
Linda@adoptionnetwork.org

* Adoptees, adoptive parents,
birthparents

Adoption Support Group

4012 Venice Road #77
Sandusky, Ohio 44870

Contact: Diana Boehler,
(419) 626-0360

* Members of the adoption
triad

Adoptive Families & Friends

5641 Dolphin Street
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Contact: Joanne Nystrom,
(216) 257-7746

* Adoptive families

Meeting time: 3rd Friday of
Month, Sept – June

Meeting place: St. Bede's
Church, 9114 Lakeshore Blvd.
(Mentor)

Special events:
Christmas party, summer picnic

Adoptive Families of Greater Cincinnati

4686 Yankee Road
Middletown, Ohio 45044

Contact: Beth Shadwick,
(513) 539-9787

* Adoptive families

Meeting time: 2nd Friday of
each month, Sept-May,
7:30 p.m.

Meeting place: Clifton United
Methodist Church

Adoptive Families Together

Contact: Paula
(513) 245-9773

* Adoptive families

Adoptive Family Support Association

P.O. Box 91247
Cleveland, Ohio 44101-3247

Contact: Chris Siebert
(216) 491-4638

* Families with internationally
adopted children; Current and
prospective adoptive parents/
families

Meeting time:
1st Saturday of each month,
Sept. – June, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: Parma Lutheran
Church, 5280 Broadview Rd.
(Parma)

Special events: Summer picnic
in July, Children's classes, Pre-
parenting classes, Summer
camp for adopted Korean
children

Adoptive Parent Support Group

2272 Harrisburg Pike
Grove City, Ohio 43123

Contact: Linda Wilburn,
(614) 871-1164

* Adoptive families, special needs children and older children

Adoptive Parenting Support

2612 San Rae Drive
Kettering, Ohio 45419

Contact: Sally Wold,
513) 299-2110

* Adoptive and prospective adoptive parents

*Post Adoption group

Catholic Charities (Diocese of Toledo)

1933 Spielbusch Avenue
P.O. Box 985
Toledo, Ohio 43697-0985

Contact: Peg Gearing

* Adoptive parent

Celebrate Adoption

Contact: Gail
(513) 351-5412

* Prospective adoptive parents

Compagnons

P.O. Box 21668
South Euclid, Ohio 44121

Contact: Pam Clark,
(216) 691-9216

* Adoptive families, but welcome biological parents, foster parents

Meeting time: Usually 1st Wed. of each month

Concern for Children

6425 Somerset
North Olmstead, Ohio 44070

Contact: J. Ohlik,
(216) 734-7580

* Adoptive parents; children of Latin America

Meeting time: 1st Friday of each month

Meeting place: St. Phillip's Church

Population served:
Latino Americans

Dayton Area Minority Adoptive Parents

191 Coddington Avenue
Xenia, Ohio 45385

Contact: Raymond Moore
(513) 372-5700

* Adoptive parents

Meeting time: 3rd Tuesday of each month, Sept – June

Meeting place: Dayton Public Library, 217 E. Third Street

Population served: Adoptive families with minority children

Down Syndrome Assoc. of Greater Cincinnati

5741 Davey Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45224

Contact: Robin Steele
(513) 542-3286

* Birthparents and adoptive parents

Population served: Families of children with Down Syndrome (including families adopting children with Down Syndrome along with birth families making adoption plans for a child born with Down Syndrome)

FACT (Families for Acceptable Care and Treatment)

565 Children Drive, West
Columbus, Ohio 43230

Contact:

Tracey Brown, (614) 228-5523

* Adoptive families with medically fragile children

Families Blessed by Adoption, Ross County

74 Clinton Road
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

Contact: Debbie Congrove
(614) 775-6784

Families through Adoption

P.O. Box 2521
Akron, Ohio 44309

Contact: Mary Ellen Pyke
(330) 922-0987

* Families who have adopted or who are seeking adoption

Meeting time: 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: Holy Cross Elementary (Latonia, KY)

Family Outings

1189 E. Lytle Five Point
Centerville, Ohio 45458

Contact: Janet Shuff,
(513) 885-4823

* Adoptive family support, Families waiting for children

Friends through International Adoption

Contact: Melissa or Tim Sweeney
(513) 832-0442

* International adoptions

Full Circle

318 Albright Drive
Loveland, Ohio 45140

Contact: Carol Sroufe,
(513) 683-7923

**Good Samaritan Hospital
School of Nursing**

Contact: Dee
(513) 872-3727

* Prospective adoptive parents

**Group of Black Adoptive
Parents**

1055 Grayview Court
Cincinnati, Ohio 45224

Contact: Robert Simpson,
(513) 541-4166

* Adoptive parents

Population served: African
Americans

**Insight to the Adoption
Triad**

P.O. Box 14217
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Contact: Mary Fuller,
(614) 267-9311

* Members of the adoption
triad

**Jewish Community Center,
Adoptive Parent Support
Group**

26001 South Woodland Road
Beachwood, Ohio 44122

Contact: Carolyn Bayer,
(216) 831-0700

* Adoptive parent

Meeting time: Sunday mornings

Meeting place: JCC

Population served: Jewish
families who have adopted

**Jewish Family Service,
Stars of David**

6625 Sylvania Avenue
Sylvania, Ohio 43560

Contact: Kathryn Linver,
(419) 885-2561

* Jewish families who have
adopted

Korean Family Connection

Contact: Donna
(513) 677-1732

* Families who adopted
children from Korea

Latin American Families

Contact: Helen
(513) 677-1732

* Families with children
adopted from Latin America

**Life RAFFT (Raising
Adoptive & Foster Families
Together)**

207 Hilltop Drive
Chardon, Ohio 44024

Contact: Sheila Wright,
(216) 632-5933

* Adoptive and foster families

Meeting time: 3rd Saturday of
each month, 7-9 p.m.

Meeting place: Geauga
County Department of Human
Services

Population served: All, but
largely families with special
needs children

LIMIAR: U.S.A., Inc.

11 Atterbury Blvd, Suite #4
Hudson, Ohio 44236

Contact: Nancy Cameron,
(216) 653-8129

* Adoptive families created
through the adoption of a
Brazilian child

Special events: July
International reunion, Christmas
gathering, spring and fall
activities

Mum's the Word

381 Bartley Avenue
Mansfield, Ohio 44903

Contact: Judy Braddock,
(419) 524-0564

* Members of the adoption
triad

New Roots

P.O. Box 14953
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Contact: Stacey Moore,
(614) 471-1024

Suzi Zelinski, (614) 263-9853

Voice Mail (614) 470-0486

* Adoptive and prospective
adoptive families

Meeting time: 2nd Wednesday
of each month, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: Broad Street
Presbyterian Church

**Northeast Ohio Adoption
Services**

8029 East Market Street
Warren, Ohio 44484-2229
(330) 856-5582

Ohio Council on Adoption

132 Aspen Court
Delaware, Ohio 43015

Contact: Lynn Stacy

* Information and advocacy

Ohio Family Care Assoc.

2931 Indianola Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43202

Contact: Bob or Dot Erickson
(614) 299-2961 or 262-1297

* Statewide adoptive and foster parent education and advocacy

Our Children of Stark Co.

1223 11th Street, N.W.
Canton, Ohio 44703

Contact: Marie O'Brien,
(330) 454-7715

* Adoptive families – special needs, older, siblings

Population served: All, but largely special needs

Parenting Adopted Children

2070 Valley Park Circle
Broadview Heights, Ohio 44147

Contact: Ruth Lindly,
(216) 237-1197

* Adoptive families

Parents of Adopted Children

773 Andover Road
Mansfield, Ohio 44907

Contact: Mary Ann Weeks
(419) 756-5301

* Adoptive families – information/social

Rainbow Families of Toledo

1920 South Shore Blvd.
Oregon, Ohio 43618

Contact: Nancy Shanks,
(419) 693-9259

* Adoptive parents

RESOLVE of Ohio

P.O. Box 141277
Columbus, Ohio 43214-6277

Contact: Rachel Fish,
(216) 468-2365 or
1-800-414-OHIO

* General adoption, before and after

Meeting time: 1st Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: 26 Sandy Hill, Sagamore Hills

Reunite

P.O. Box 694
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

Contact: Kathy Singer,
(614) 861-2584

* Search, adoptive parent, birth family

Meeting time: 4th Wednesday of each month, 7:30 p.m.

Meeting place: Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (Westerville)

Single Parent by Adoption

Support System
2547 Talbott Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45211

Contact: Marilou Priestle,
(513) 661-5170

* Single adoptive parents, local & international adoption

Meeting time: 4th Saturday of each month, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: Usually Hamilton County Fairgrounds

Southeast Ohio Adoptive Family Support Group

P.O. Box 75
Athens, Ohio 45701

Contact: Mary Ann Linscott
(614) 448-6119

* Adoptive parents and children

Meeting time: 1st Thursday of each month

Meeting place: 14 Stoneybrook Drive, Athens

Southern Ohio Families with Children from China

Contact: Debbi
(513) 523-1544

* Families who have adopted children from China

Spaulding Adoptive Parent Support Group

c/o Beechbrook
3737 Lander Road
Pepper Pike, Ohio 44124

Contact: Robin Bonner,
(216) 831-2255 –
Janet Christen, (216) 531-3205

* Adoptive parents

Meeting time: 2nd Saturday of each month, 4:30 – 6:30

Meeting place: Beechbrook

Population served: All, but largely families with special needs children

**Stark County Family
Council Adoption Support
Group**

1205 Grove Street, N.E.
North Canton, Ohio 44721

Contact: Gail Weisand,
(330) 494-2327

Meeting time: 2nd Wednesday
of each month

Meeting place: Stark County
Family Council office

Population served: Adoptive
parents involved with family
council

Support Adoption Triad

P.O. Box 723
Stryker, Ohio 43557-0723

Contact: Marjorie Drinnon,
(419) 682-1803

* Members of the adoption
triad

ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUPS **For Adult Adopted Persons** **And/or Birthparents**

Adoptees Search Rights Association

P.O. Box 8713
Toledo, Ohio 43613
Contact: Nancy Gillen
* Search support

Adoption Awareness Alliance

11370 Springfield Pike
Suite 200
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246

Contact: Veronica Berry, (513) 771-3515

* Alliance of support groups and agencies for adoption education and advocacy

Meeting time: 1st Tuesday of every other month

Adoption Connection

P.O. Box 2482
Youngstown, Ohio 44509
Contact: Lucy Ruffner, (330) 792-3546

* Birthparents, Adult adopted persons and adoptive parents

Adoption Network Cleveland

1667 East 40th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Contact: Linda Bellini,
(216) 881-7511 x103
linda@adoptionnetwork.org

* Adopted persons, adoptive parents, and birthparents

Adoption Option Footprints

(mentoring program for unwed pregnant teens and women)
P.O. Box 429327
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Contact: Carole Adlard, (513) 793-7268

Population served: Pregnant teens, women seeking adoption info.

Meetings: Individual, one-on-one meetings

Adoption Support Group

4012 Venice Road *77
Sandusky, Ohio 44870

Contact: Diana Boehler, (419) 626-0360

* Members of the adoption triad

After math

P.O. Box 201
New Carlisle, Ohio 45344

Contact: Mary Pacinda,
(513) 845-9980

* Birthparents

Birthmothers Sharing

Contact: Denise,
(513) 272-5926

* Birthmothers

Meeting time: 1st Wednesday of each month

Meeting place: AAA,
11370 Springfield

Birthmothers' Support Group

856 Pine Needles Drive
Centerville, Ohio 45458

Contact: Bertha Yenny,
(513) 436-0593

Birthparent Support

3423 Bluerock Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45239

Contact: Lynn Lape,
(513) 741-0929

Birthparent Support

426 Goosepond Road
Newark, Ohio 43055

Contact: Deb Bibart,
(614) 364-0797

* Birthparents exploring options of parenting vs. making an adoption plan

Birthright of Columbus, Inc.

22 East Gay Street, Suite 881
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Contact:
Jean Kennedy, (614) 221-0844
* Pregnancy support group

Chosen Children

311 Springbrook Blvd.
Dayton, Ohio 45405

Contact: Joanne Gall,
(513) 274-8017

* Search Support

Meeting time: 3rd
Wednesday of every
other month

Meeting place: Dayton
Public Library

**Concerned United
Birthparents, Cincinnati**

Contact: Missy,
(513) 741-4536

* Birthparents, search

Meeting time: 3rd
Wednesday of each
month, 7:30 p.m.

**Concerned United
Birthparents, Toledo**

6704 Inglewood
Holland, Ohio 43528

Contact: Lisa Dinges,
(419) 865-9604

Full Circle

318 Albright Drive
Loveland, Ohio 45140

Contact: Carol Stroufe,
(513) 683-7923

**Insight to the Adoption
Triad**

P.O. Box 14217
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Contact: Mary Fuller,
(614) 267-9311

**Jewish Family Service,
Birthmothers Support
Group**

6525 Sylvania Avenue
Sylvania, Ohio 43560

Contact: Kathryn Linver,
(419) 885-2561

Meeting time: Last
Thursday of each month

Meeting place: J'S Office

Mum's the Word

381 Barley Avenue
Mansfield, Ohio 44903

Contact: Judy Braddock,
(419) 524-0564

Reconnections

2468 N. Knoll Drive
Beavercreek, Ohio 45431

Contact: Marjalie Schaaf
(513) 426-0646

* Mostly search assistance

Reunite

P.O. Box 694
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

Contact: Kathy Singer,
(614) 861-2584

* Search, all triad members

Meeting time: 4th
Wednesday of each
month, 7:30 p.m.

Meeting place: Grace
Evangelical Lutheran
Church (Westerville)

**Southeastern Ohio
Searchers (S.O.S.)**

4 Cook Drive
Athens, Ohio 45701

Contact: Micki Glassburn
(614) 592-1070

* Search

Sunshine Reunions

1175 Virginia Avenue
Akron, Ohio 44306

Contact: Jean Batis,
(216) 773-4691

* Search

Support Adoption Triad

P.O. Box 723
Stryker, Ohio 43557-0723

Contact: Marjorie Drinnon
(419) 682-1803

**Twelve Step Adoption
Healing Group**

2120 Pershing Blvd.
Dayton, Ohio 45420

Contact: Sue Langenhorst
(513) 252-9560

* Post-reunion support

Intergenerational Issues in Adoption

(Core Issues of Adoption and Intergenerational Issues in Adoption developed by Sharon Kaplan Roszia and Deborah Silverstein.)

	Adoptee	Adoptee as Parent	Birth Parents	Birth Parents as Parents	Adoptive Parents	Adoptive Parent as Grandparent	Birth Grandparent	Siblings
Loss								
Rejection								
Guilt and shame								
Grief								
Identity								
Intimacy								
Control and Mastery								

Intergenerational Issues in Adoption

Handout 11A

(Seven Core Issues of Adoption and Intergenerational Issues in Adoption developed by Sharon Kaplan Roszia and Deborah Silverstein.)

	<i>ADOPTEE</i>	<i>ADOPTEE AS PARENT</i>	<i>BIRTH PARENTS</i>	<i>BIRTH PARENTS AS PARENTS</i>
Loss	I lost both parents, extended family, cultural and genealogical heritage, sense of connectedness, sense of self, social status	I lost the ability to pass on history of extended family, cultural heritage, medical history, loss of extended biological relationships (cousins, aunt, uncles)	I lost of social status, loss of acceptance, loss of lifelong relationship with child, loss of relationship with child's father/mother, loss of genealogical connectedness	I lost the raising biological children together, loss of trust from other birth children- "am I secure here?"
Rejection	I feel rejection by birth family, "like I was gotten rid of," or "thrown-away,"	I feel vulnerability in marital relationship and with in-laws, I fear rejection by child so I become overprotective	I fear rejection peers and parents, rejection by the other birth parent after adoption plan, and I feel self-hatred (rejection of self)	I fear rejected by other child when learn of relinquishment,
Guilt and Shame	If I had been different, would they have kept me? <i>Guilt</i> What was so wrong about me as a person they dumped me? <i>Shame</i>	If something was wrong with me to be given away, will I feel the same about my child? Am I making the same mistakes my birth parents did?	No good person would place a child for adoption - <i>Guilt</i> I am truly a worthless person for doing this - <i>Shame</i>	Why couldn't I have cared for this child - <i>Guilt</i> What good parent would allow for a family to be separated by adoption -- <i>Shame</i>
Grief	I may never know birth family roots or background, may never know bio siblings, may never feel truly connected	I will never have a genealogical connection to the past, or I will never look into the eyes of my birth parent or siblings	I will never know (in closed adoption) how child is doing, never see first day of school, first date, graduation, etc.	I will never be able to share the joys of raising children together
Identity	Who am I? Who do I look like? Who do I act like?	What identity do I pass on to my children? Who are they in light of my adoption?	I may never have another child and never have the identity of being a mother or father.	Can I truly feel good about my identity as a parent since I allowed for this adoption plan?

	<i>ADOPTEE</i>	<i>ADOPTEE AS PARENT</i>	<i>BIRTH PARENTS</i>	<i>BIRTH PARENTS AS PARENTS</i>
Intimacy	How close can I become? Will I be rejected in this relationship, too?	I fear intimate relationships - what will I pass on genetically to my offspring?	I fear intimacy because other close relationships have led to significant losses.	Can I really be close to these children because of my past?
Control	I never had any say about being placed for adoption (especially issue for child adopted as older). No one ever asked me how I felt.	I have no control over my child knowing any genetic past or medical history or having a sense of connectedness.	My parents made this decision for me. I fear powerless, like a victim.	I cannot control how my other children will feel about the issue of adoption in this family.

	<i>ADOPTIVE PARENTS</i>	<i>ADOPTIVE PARENTS AS GRANDPARENTS</i>	<i>BIRTH GRANDPARENTS</i>	<i>SIBLINGS</i>
Loss	I suffer the loss of biological child, loss of genealogical connection to the future, loss of social status, loss of sharing a child together, loss of birthing experience, loss of time with child	I experience the loss of biological child, loss of genealogical connection to the future,	I experience the loss of relationship with grandchild, loss of information about child, loss of genealogical connection to the future,	We experience the loss of relationship to birth sibling, loss of trust in birth parent if disclosed later in life, and possible loss of security
Rejection	By each for infertility reasons, by society - what's wrong with you, by parents - Subconsciously - couldn't produce grandchild	Fears rejection by grandchildren if birth grandparents come into the picture	Might experience rejection by child (birth parent) because they didn't support them and enable them to keep child.	"If they got rid of one, if I do something wrong, will I be rejected."
Guilt and Shame	If I were a better person would I conceive? Guilt What is so bad about me that I cannot become a biological	I don't want my child to search in case I will be replaced and I feel badly about that - Guilt When they said they	Why couldn't I have cared for this child - Guilt What good grandparent would allow for a family to	I can't believe my mother would give a child away - Guilt ... If she is like that, may I am, too - Shame

	<i>ADOPTIVE PARENTS</i>	<i>ADOPTIVE PARENTS AS GRANDPARENTS</i>	<i>BIRTH GRANDPARENTS</i>	<i>SIBLINGS</i>
	parent? <i>Shame</i>	wanted to search, I was again reminded of my inadequacies as a person	be separated by adoption -- <i>Shame</i>	
Grief	I will never have a genealogical connection to the future, will never look into the eyes of a biological child	I will never have a genealogical connection to the future, I will never look into the eyes of a biological grandchild	I will never be able to share in the joys of grandparenting this child, or to share with friends about them	We will never share the same memories of growing up together, we may never meet
Identity	Am I truly entitled to the identity of being this child's parent - am I a "real" parent	Am I truly entitled to the identity of being this child's grandparent - am I a "real" grandparent	Can I even consider myself a grandparent to a child I do not know?	I grew up as an only child after my sibling's birth and relinquishment. Am I a "real" sister/brother? What is my identity in this regard?
Intimacy	I fear intimacy because it reminds me of the pain of infertility. I fear closeness with my children because of rejection by them.	I fear closeness with my grandchildren because of rejection by them, especially if the birth grandparents return.	Can I be close to other grandchildren if I allowed one to be placed for adoption?	I fear close relationships because my older sibling was placed for adoption and how close can I really get to my parent.
Control	I have had no control over my body or circumstances leading to adoption.	I have no control over my place in my grandchild's life if birth parents return.	I had no choice whether the adoption occurred or not. I would have raised the child.	I had no input on this adoption. I wasn't born yet, but I wish it hadn't happened.
MASTERY AND GROWTH COMES AS A RESULT OF WORKING THROUGH THESE ISSUES - RECOGNIZING A PERSON HAS A RIGHT TO BE HAPPY AND LOSSES CAN LEAD TO GROWTH AND DEPTH. (Sharon Kaplan Roszia)				

List of Suggested Reading Materials
Charting the Course

Arms, Suzanne. *To Love and Let Go*. 1983. Stories of birth parent experiences and feelings about their pregnancy and placement of child.

Askin, J & Oskim, B. *Search: A Handbook for Adoptees and Birth Parents*. 1982. Harper & Row, NY. A guide for use in searching. Includes current state policies and techniques for searching.

Bourguignon, Jean Pierre & Watson, K. *After Adoption: A Manual for Professionals Working With Adoptive Families*. An excellent resource regarding attachment disorders and other issues of post-legal adoption services.

Brodzinsky, Schechter, & Henig. *Being Adopted, The Lifelong Search for Self*. 1993. Doubleday. A book to help adoptive parents and adoptees understand the struggles and stages of developing an identity when an individual experiences separation from his roots.

Cline, Foster. *Parenting With Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*. 1990. Raising kids who are self-confident and motivated.

Davis, Diane. *Reaching Out to Children with FAS/ FAE*. 1994. Offers support and hope and serves as a comprehensive resource to professionals and families.

Delaney, Richard and Kustal, Frank. *Troubled Transplants: Unconventional Strategies for Helping Disturbed Foster and Adopted Children*. 1993. University of Southern Maine. Conventional approaches to parenting do not work for many foster and adopted children. This book is easily understood and should prove useful to parents at the end of their ropes.

Dorner, Patricia. *Talking to Your Child About Adoption*. 1991. The booklet emphasized that communication about adoption is an ongoing process.

Dorris, Michael. *The Broken Cord*. 1989. Harper Collins. A single adoptive father writes about his experiences in parenting a child with fetal alcohol syndrome.

Dusky, Loraine. *Birthmark*. 1979. M. Evans & Co., NY. Ms Dusky, a birthmother, tells the story of her experiences and adjustment over the years since making an adoption plan for her daughter. (Lorraine and her daughter are featured in *How it Feels to be Adopted, After Reunion*).

Fahlberg, Vera. *Separation and Attachment, Putting the Pieces Together*. 1984. Michigan Department of Social Services, DDS Publication #429. An excellent workbook and overview of attachment and separation issues.

Freundlich, Madelyn and Wright, Lois. *Post-Permanency Services*. 2003. Casey Family Programs. Washington D.C. Explores post adoption services and supports most responsive to the needs of children and families.

Hall, Beth and Steinberg, Gail. *An Insider's Guide to Transracial Adoption*. 1998. Pact Press. San Francisco, CA. A comprehensive guide for families for adopt transracially.

Homes, A.M. *In a Country of Mothers*. 1993. Alfred A. Knopf. A novel which examines contemporary myths surrounding adoption and motherhood.

James, Arleta. 2009. *Brothers and Sisters in Adoption*. Perspectives Press. A comprehensive book about how adoption impacts the equilibrium of families.

Jewitt, Claudia, *Adopting the Older Child*. 1978. Harvard Common Press, Harvard, Mass. Dr. Jewitt, an adoptive parent of older children and a psychotherapist, provides various case histories and experiences of families formed by older child adoption as well as information on the decision to adopt and preparation for children and families.

Jewitt, Claudia. *Helping Children Cope with Separation and Loss*. 1982. Harvard Common Press, Harvard, Mass. Very specific guide about helping children cope with separation, loss, and grief. Can be used by professionals and parents.

Keck, Gregory and Kupecky, Regina. *Adopting the Hurt Child: Hope for Families with Special Needs Kids*. 1995. Addresses Attachment Disorder, issues and strategies for healing the hurt child.

Keefer, Betsy and Schooler, Jayne. *Telling the Truth to Your Adopted or Foster Child: Making Sense of the Past*. 2000. Gives specific techniques for talking with children in a developmentally appropriate way about difficult birth histories.

Komar, Miriam. *Communicating With the Adopted Child*. 1991. Walker, NY. A guide to the how and what of talking about adoptive issues.

Lifton, Betty Jean. *Twice Born: Memoirs of an Adopted Daughter*. 1975. McGraw-Hill Book Co., NY. Adult adoptee autobiography. Explores author's life long process of coping with being adopted, includes search experience.

Lifton, Betty Jean. *Journey of the Adopted Self*. 1994. Provides an insightful, thorough, and compassionate guide to the adoption experience.

Magid, , McKelvey. *High Risk: Children Without a Conscience*. 1989. Bantam Books. A frightening look at the impact of attachment disorder on conscience development.

Mansfield, Lynda and Waldmann, Christopher. *Don't Touch My Heart: Healing the Pain of an Unattached Child*. 1994. Pinon books. A story of holding therapy.

McNamara, Joan. *Adoption and the Sexually Abused Child*. 1990. Addresses needs of the child who has experiences sexual abuse.

Melina, Lois. *Raising Adopted Children*. Harper & Row. This book provides a guide for adoptive parents to assist them with many questions and situations in parenting a child who is adopted. Appropriate for both families who adopted infants and older children.

Melina, Lois. *Making Sense of Adoption*. 1989. Practical help for parents in how to talk to their children about adoption.

Melina, Lois & Roszia, S., *The Open Adoption Experience*. 1993. Harper Collins. Preparation, placement and adjustments through adolescence.

Musser, Sandra Kay. *I Would Have Searched Forever*. 1979. Jan Publications, Division of AIM Inc. Capa Coral, Florida. Sandy explores the struggle for all in the adoption triangle in reconciling with each other, creating comfortable relationships among all in search situations.

Pohl, C. and Harris, K. *Transracial Adoption: Children and Parents Speak*. 1992. Watts, NY. Issues of transracial adoption through words and experiences of families.

Rosenberg, Elinor. *The Adoption Life Cycle: the Children and Their Families Through the Years*. 1992. Free Press, NY. Looks not only at the issues of adoptees, but also at those of birth parents and adoptive parents.

Schaffer, Judith & Lindstrom, Christina. *How to Raise an Adopted Child*. 1989. Crown Publishers. A comprehensive how-to book anticipating nearly every situation adoptive parents may encounter. Chapters cover specific age groups, from infancy to teen years.

Schooler, Jayne. *The Whole Life Adoption Book*. 2009. NavPress, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Realistic advice for building a healthy adoptive family.

Schooler, Jayne. *Searching for a Past*. 1993. Pinon Press, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Adopted adults' unique process for finding identity.

Sheehy, Gail. *Spirit of Survival*. 1986. Bantam Books, NY. Gripping story of the journey of Gail's adopted daughter from Cambodian work camps to her adjustment in her adoptive home. Excellent book.

Silber, Kathy & Speedin, Phyllis. *Dear Birthmother*. 1982. Corona Publishing Co., Texas. A creative approach to adoption through letters exchanged by adoptive parents and birth parents.

Watkins, Mary & Fisher, S. *Talking to Young Children About Adoption*. 1993. Yale University Press, New Haven. Accounts with twenty parents of conversations graphically conveying what the process of sharing is like.

Books for Children and Teens

Brown, Irene Bennett, *Answer Me Answer Me*. Bryn Kenney's search for her parentage begins after the death of her Gram when she is unexpectedly provided with a fortune and a clue to her roots.

Bunin, Catherine and Sherry. *Is That Your Sister? A True Story of Adoption*. 1992. Six year old tells what is like to be adopted in a multiracial family.

Cole, Joanna. *How I Was Adopted*. 1995. A story of what makes people different and what makes them the same.

Crook, Marion. *Teenagers Talk About Adoption*. Based on interviews with more than 40 adopted teens in Canada, this book conveys the feelings they have about their birthparents, being adopted, and the attitudes of others toward adoption.

Fredberg, Judy and Gueiss, Tony. *Susan and Gordon Adopt a Baby*. 1992. Big Bird is curious when a baby is adopted on Sesame Street.

Gabel, Susan. *Filling in the Blanks: A Guided Look at Growing Up Adopted*. 1988. Perspectives Press (ages 10-14). A workbook to help pre-adolescents understand their own histories.

Girard, Linda Walford. *Adoption is for Always*. 1986. Celia feels alone, angry and insecure about being adopted. But with her parents' patience and understanding, she accepts it and makes her adoption day into a special family celebration.

Gordon, Shirley. *The Boy Who Wanted a Family*. 1980. Michael's hopes, fears, and experiences with his new mom are explored during the one year waiting period to finalize his adoption.

Greenberg, Judith E. & Carey, Helen H. *Adopted*. 1989. Sarah and Ryan are adopted. To help Sarah understand, her parents and grandfather explain about adoption and being a family member.

Grossnickle, Mary. *A Place in My Heart*. 2004. Speaking of Adoption. Wonderful story for young children about the adoption of chipmunk by a family of squirrels.

Krementz, Jill. *How it Feels to be Adopted*. 1982. Alfred A. Knopf, NY. Nineteen adopted children ages 8-16, of various races and cultures are interviewed. Each describes feelings and thoughts about adoption.

Livingston, Carole. *Why Am I Adopted?* 1978. Lyle Stuart Inc. Appropriate for early elementary age children.

Mandlebaum, Pili. *You Be Me, I'll Be You*. A bi-cultural child decides she dislikes her brown skin. Her father devises a creative alternative.

Mills, Claudia. *Boardwalk With Hotel*. 1985. Eleven year old Jessica becomes angry about her adoption and starts to feel competitive with and jealous of her siblings who are not adopted.

Mitchell, Christine. *Family Day: Celebrating Ethan's Adoption Anniversary*. 2009. Author House. Bloomington, IN. A book explaining adoption to school-age children.

Nerlove, Evelyn. *Who Is David?* 1985. Child Welfare League of America. An excellent novel about an adolescent adoptee struggling with identity who participates in a support group for adopted adolescents.

Rogers, Fred. *Mr. Rogers--Let's Talk About Adoption*. 1995. confronts questions children have about adoption with sensitivity and insight.

Rosenberg, Maxine. *Being Adopted*. Helpful for children, ages 5-10, when they first have questions about adoption. Three children relate their adoption stories.

Stein, Sara Bonnet. *The Adopted One*. 1979. Walker & Co., NY. Unusually insightful book for pre-school and early elementary age children. Outstanding text is provided for adoptive parents and older children about normal feelings of adoptees.

Discussion Questions: Thoughts, Reaction, Insights

1. What appeared to be the adoptive parents' primary motivations in adopting? Mother? Father?
2. What were some of the possible expectations of the adoptive parents?
3. In what ways did they fail (unintentionally and uninformed) to meet Deann's cultural needs?
4. What unspoken message did Deann possibly receive from what she perceived where her parents' expectations for her?
5. What did you sense were some of the real feelings of the adoptive siblings?
6. What feelings and issues did you sense from the birthmother? How did she attempt to rectify those at this point in her life?
7. What feelings and issues did you sense from the birth sibs, especially the brother?
8. What did Deann's entrance into the adoptive family and reentrance into the birthfamily potentially represent to all her siblings?
9. What did people in Deann's life fail (unintentionally and uninformed) to do for her?
10. Where were those missed opportunities in Deann's life to validate her needs and issues?