

## Pre-Finalization Adoption Services

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### Note Taking Guide

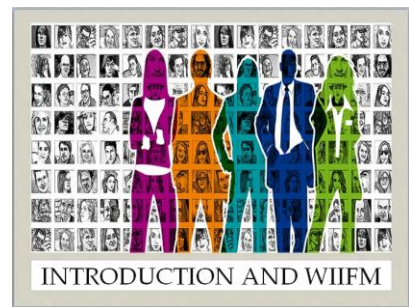
**At the end of this training, you will be able to:**

1. Describe three strategies for building attachment between the adoptive parents and the child
2. Give examples of trauma-informed parenting techniques
3. Identify strategies for each stage of family adjustment to assist the family in moving through the stage
4. State the purpose of home visits at each of the four sub-phases – at placement, early placement, mid placement, and finalization.
5. Describe the steps to take to assist a family in crisis.

### Introductions and WIIFM

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- The absence of supportive services before and after adoption finalization has been widely identified as a critical factor in the successful continuance of an adoption (Coakley and Berrick, 2008).
- An assessor’s primary roles are adult educator and coach, facilitator, child advocate, and child interventionist.




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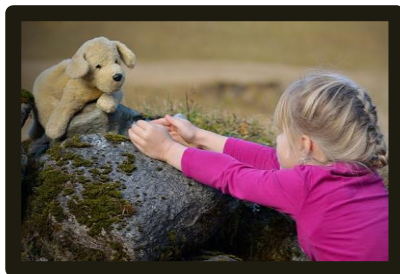
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### Attachment

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- Attachment occurs on a continuum. Many children in care will have stressed attachment. Very few will meet the criteria for Reactive Attachment Disorder.
- Interventions to help build attachment include:
  - The Arousal Relaxation Cycle
  - The Positive Interaction Cycle
  - Claiming Behaviors

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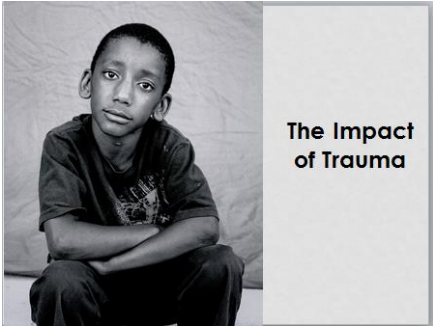
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## The Impact of Trauma

- Children that enter the foster care system have often had multiple traumatic experiences. These experiences and the effects of these experiences are known as complex trauma.
- Children with complex trauma have stress response systems stuck in the “on” position. This creates toxic stress and causes the child to be on constant alert, respond quickly to threats, perceive benign events as threatening, and distrust adults.
- Trauma-informed parenting strategies include tracking behaviors, consistency and predictability, safety talk, staying regulated, and pre-teaching.



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## Common Stages of Adjustment



- There are five stages of adjustment including:
  - Getting acquainted
  - The honeymoon
  - Ambivalence
  - Reciprocal interactions
  - Bond solidification

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Lined area for notes.

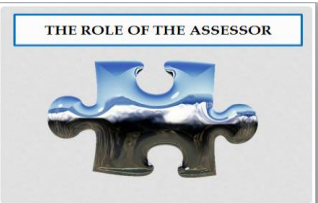
### Strategies to Support Adjustment

- Common adjustment issues include:
  - Unresolved feelings from prior loss
  - Unmatched expectations
  - Diversity issues
  - Family dynamics
- Exploring strategies to address adoptive family loss, unmatched expectations, diversity, and family dynamics and will strengthen the adjustment of child and family.
- Openness can help the child adjust to the placement by preserving their connection to special people and to the culture.
- Even the child is transitioning from being a foster placement to an adoptive placement in the same home, there are recommended activities to help the child adjust.



Lined area for notes.

### The Role of the Assessor



- The content and focus of visits will vary depending on the stage of pre-finalization period: placement, early placement, mild placement, and finalization.
- Assessors should always encourage self-care, provide education, and coach parents.
- When an assessor notices early warning signs of issues, they should confront the issue and avoid over-reacting or under-reacting.

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**Managing Crisis to Prevent Disruption**

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- The stages of escalation include the honeymoon, diminishing pleasures, the child seen as the problem, going public, the turning point, the ultimatum, the final crisis, the decision to disrupt, and the aftermath.
- An assessor can take steps in a crisis including identifying the presenting problem and source, developing a short-term plan of relief, exploring with family what they want, and designing an intervention plan.



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**Summary and Action Planning**

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What services, supports or interventions will you utilize with a family with whom you are currently working?

What strategy or strategies did you learn today that you could use with the families you work with in the pre-finalization stage?

## Resources

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### **Ohio Child Welfare Training Program**

Training handouts and supplemental resources

<http://www.ocwtp.net/Trainee%20Resources.htm#A>

### **SACWIS Knowledge Base**

Resources and training materials on utilizing SACWIS

<http://jfskb.com/sacwis/>

### **OAC 5101:2-48-17**

Pre-Finalization visits

<http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-48-17>

### **Assessing Well-being through Caseworker Visits with Children in Foster or Kinship Care**

**303-15-S**

Search E-Track for scheduled sessions

<https://e-track.teds.com/Everyone/TEDSEveryOne.jsp>

### **Foster Parent College**

On-line courses for adoptive, kinship, and foster care families

<http://www.fosterparentcollege.com/>

### **Adoption Learning Partners**

Offer e-learning courses, resources, and a community forum for adoptive families

<http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/>