

Adoption Core Competencies for Adoptive Parent Education

Final

I. Understanding of Adoption and Impact on Parenting/Family Dynamics

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Explain the concept of "permanence" in adoption for the adoptive child and parents.
B. Acknowledge and accept the role of a birth family in an adopted child's life.
C. Recognize the impact adoption can have on significant relationships, especially the parents' relationship with each other.
D. List strategies for preparing birth children for an impending adoption.
E. Explain the additional parenting issues present with adopted children vs. those with birth children.
F. Identify current parenting skills and identify new parenting strategies needed to manage challenging behaviors.
G. Recognize signs of family stress and develop appropriate coping strategies.
H. Identify ways to communicate effectively with children about their adoption story at different developmental stages, including how to talk about difficult information in the child's history; use a lifebook as a tool in the communication process.
I. Use adoption language appropriately

Adoption Core Competencies for Adoptive Parent Education

Final

II. Understanding of Issues for Child in Adoptive Placement

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Understand effects on a child as a result of separation from and loss of birth family, abandonment, maltreatment and trauma; recognize how these issues can affect a child during the initial adjustment period as well as during future stages of the child's development.
B. Acknowledge the impact of a child's genetic endowment on his/her temperament, personality, and motivation.
C. Understand that events in a child's history might cause problematic behaviors that will need therapeutic intervention and specialized parenting strategies.
D. Identify stages of normal child development; explain how separation, loss, abuse or neglect may affect the child's physical, emotional, and psychological development, for both the short and long term.
E. Identify the possible short and long-term effects of prenatal use of alcohol and other substances; understand that the effects may not be identifiable before a child joins his/her adoptive family.
F. Accept that medical, genetic, and social history information on a child may be inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable; that the agency will give all such information that is not protected by legal confidentiality, but it cannot guarantee the accuracy or completeness of that information.
G. Identify how to access appropriate medical and genetic information prior to placement
H. Recognize how a child's understanding of adoption changes as the child grows from birth to adulthood and its impact on a child's adjustment.

Adoption Core Competencies for Adoptive Parent Education

Final

III. Understanding of Loss and Grief for the Adoptive Family

Parents will be able to:

Learning Objectives

- A. Understand that family formation through adoption involves aspects of grief and loss issues for the adoptive parents, through childbearing issues, and for the child, in the loss of the birth family.
- B. Identify the ways children and adults grieve when they suffer loss in their lives; recognize that grieving has no time limit and may occur at any stage, or at numerous stages of development, which may have an impact on the child's attachment.

IV. Understanding of Attachment Issues in Adoptive Placement

Parents will be able to:

Learning Objectives

- A. Explain how attachment and bonding occur, and identify techniques to facilitate bonding.
- B. Recognize the impact of multiple placements on a child's emotional, cognitive, social and brain development.
- C. Identify behaviors that can be a sign of attachment issues in children of all ages, including infants.
- D. Understand the continuum of severity in attachment issues.

V. Understanding of Support and Resources for Adoptive Placement

Parents will be able to:

Learning Objectives

- A. Identify current support system; develop and maintain a network of parenting support.
- B. Identify resources to meet their child's needs throughout the child's growth and development.
- C. Learn strategies for communicating with service providers who can help with areas such as adoption-related issues, cultural competency, mental health counseling and child development.
- D. Choose appropriate resources and support available to them and their child in their community as related to adoption, cultural heritage, counseling and child development.

Adoption Core Competencies for Adoptive Parent Education

Final

VI. Understanding of Cultural Sensitivity in Adoption

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Understand that culture and heritage are a part of the child's identity; understand that healthy development for the child involves the parents' positive attitude regarding their child's culture and heritage for positive identity formation.
B. Develop a plan to help their family acquire knowledge of and appreciation for their child's cultural heritage and incorporate elements of the child's cultural heritage into family practice.
C. Recognize that prejudice is a part of our society; develop strategies to combat negative attitudes and racism.
D. Model appropriate answers for their child in response to hurtful or insensitive questions and comments regarding culture, adoption, and family formation.

VII. Understanding of the Effects of Abuse and Neglect in Adoption

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Describe family situations that can contribute to physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of children and explain the impact on children in those situations; identify the behaviors and developmental issues that are likely to be displayed by children who have been abused and neglected.
B. Define child sexual abuse; identify behaviors, including sexual behaviors, that a child who has been sexually abused will likely exhibit.

Adoption Core Competencies for Adoptive Parent Education

Final

VIII. Understanding of Legal Issues related to Adoption

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Identify the role of each person/entity in the adoption process; identify the responsibilities and activities for each role.
B. Explain the legal responsibility of the adoptive parent both before and after adoption.
C. Explain the state requirements about the adoption process, post adoption reporting and processes for finalization in the United States, including Adoption Assistance and Adoption Records Search Program in Wisconsin.

IX. Understanding of Children Coming from an Institutionalized Care Setting

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Identify behaviors in infants and children that may be exhibited as a result of institutionalization.
B. Explain how abandonment, separation and loss can affect a child during the initial adjustment period following a move to family home, as well as during future stages of the child's development.

X. Understanding of Educational Issues in Adoption

Parents will be able to:

<i>Learning Objectives</i>
A. Work with teachers to increase their awareness of adoption issues.
B. Understand that a variety of factors related to development, attachment issues, medical and emotional conditions may cause a child to have special educational needs.
C. Advocate with the school system to access special educational services for children's exceptional educational needs (EEN).