Support After an Adoption

Why You Might Need Support
Adopting a child is a joyful event. However, adoption also involves loss for all of those involved and comes with a unique set of family issues. Like all children, those who are adopted may face difficulties with emotions, development, friendships, or school. Even parents who are well prepared to adopt can have feelings they did not expect. Challenges are a normal part of the adoption process.

Adoption Support and Preservation Services Can Help
- Children and youth process feelings of loss or grief related to the adoption.
- Parents build trust and attachment with their children.
- Families heal from childhood trauma.
- Older children and youth explore questions of identity (“Who am I? How am I like and different from my parents?”).
- Children find ways to succeed in school.
- Children and families learn more effective ways to respond to stress.
- Children and adoptive parents navigate safe and positive connections with birth relatives.
- Prevent crises that can result in adoption disruption or “rehoming.”

Finding Services
It is important to find service providers who understand adoption-related issues and how to help adoptive families. One or more of the following can provide information about post-adoption supports available to you and your family:
- Other adoptive parents and local support groups
- Your adoption agency
- Your doctor or your child’s doctor
- Your employer’s human resources department or employee assistance program (EAP)
- Your State postadoption services contact, which you can find through the National Adoption and Foster Care Directory—now available as a mobile app (Go to https://www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad/ and check the box for “State Foster Care and Adoption Officials.”)
- The Adoption Assistance by State Database, which includes information about services for after adoption: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/adopt-assistance/

Remember: Every family has ups and downs. Adoption support and preservation services can help your family enjoy the ups and survive the downs.

This tip sheet was created with information from experts in national organizations that work to prevent child maltreatment and promote well-being. At https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/tip-sheets/, you can download this tip sheet and get more parenting tips, or call 800.394.3366.