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Preparing and Supporting Foster Parents Who Adopt

Child welfare practitioners are increasingly aware of the importance of foster parents as permanency resources for children and youth in foster care. Many children in foster care who become available for adoption are adopted by their foster parents. In order to facilitate these types of adoption, professionals should be knowledgeable about the benefits, costs, and practice implications.

What's Inside:

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Trends in Foster Parent Adoption

Foster parents are the most important source of adoptive families for children in the child welfare system. According to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), in fiscal year 2011, 54 percent of children adopted from foster care were adopted by their foster parents (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). Data from the 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents (NSAP) and the 2007 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) show that among children adopted from foster care by nonrelatives, 8 out of 10 (80 percent) were adopted by their foster parents (Office of the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation, 2011).

Foster parents were not always preferred candidates for adoptive parenthood. Earlier in child welfare practice, distinctions were made between foster parents, who were seen as temporary caregivers, and adoptive parents, who were specially matched with a particular child for permanent placement.

Additionally, if parents decided to discontinue foster parenting after they adopted, or if the number of children in the home after a child's adoption exceeded the number allowed by State policy, then the agency lost a foster home. The practice of discouraging adoption by foster parents continued through the mid-1970s, when two in three States either prohibited or warned against the practice (Festinger, 1974). By the early 1980s the tide had turned, influenced by a combination of foster parent activism and permanency planning projects that demonstrated the

benefits of foster parent adoption. The result was the passage of the Federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272), which supported foster parent adoption by making subsidies available for children adopted from foster care (Proch, 1981). It took a great deal of time—more than 30 years—and the passage of several Federal laws to shift practice toward acknowledging the important role foster parents play in achieving permanence for children and youth. Now, foster parents are recognized as valuable resources for waiting children. While 26 States give priority to a child's relatives when he or she enters out-of-home care, 28 States provide procedures for foster parents to adopt when their child becomes legally free for adoption. More information on these State procedures and requirements is available in Information Gateway's *Home Study Requirements for Prospective Foster Parents*: https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/homestudyreqs.pdf#Page=7&view=Fit.

Foster parent adoption is also the basis for two well-recognized practices in adoption, legal risk placements and concurrent planning. In legal risk placements, children whose situations indicate that parental rights will likely be terminated—legally freeing children and youth for adoption—are placed with foster parents who are willing to adopt. In concurrent planning, a practice supported by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997, the permanency goal of reunification is supplemented by an alternative goal (often, adoption) to ensure that if reunification is not possible, the child has a clearly identified permanency option that can quickly be put in place. Children and youth are often placed with foster families who would

consider adoption should reunification with birth parents or other relatives become impossible, thus minimizing the number of placements children experience. For this model to work, these foster parents must be able to support both the reunification plan, as well as the plan for adoption. After the passage of ASFA, adoption from foster care increased 65 percent between 1997 and 2000. Additionally, foster parent adoption increased after ASFA's passage—28 percent between 1998 and 1999 alone (DeVooght et al., 2011). More information on concurrent planning is available in Information Gateway's *Concurrent Planning: What the Evidence Shows*: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue_briefs/concurrent_evidence/concurrent_evidence.pdf.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 also promotes foster parent adoption. This law included provisions aimed at increasing adoption from foster care. Among these were the requirements that States inform prospective adoptive parents, including foster parents, about the Federal adoption tax credit available to those who adopt a child with special needs (DeVooght et al., 2011). Other provisions included funds for Kinship Navigator programs, through new Family Connection grants, to help children in foster care locate relatives. The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRCPCF) published an information packet titled *Kinship Care and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008* that provides facts and statistics on kinship care and the kinship care policies and provisions in the Fostering Connections Act: http://www.nrcpfc.org/fostering_connections/download/Kinship_Care_&_Fostering_Connections_Act_KimHertz.pdf

More information on Fostering Connections, ASFA, and other important child welfare legislation is available through Child Welfare Information Gateway's publication *Major Federal Legislation Concerned With Child Protection, Child Welfare, and Adoption*: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/otherpubs/majorfedlegis.pdf>

Benefits of Foster Parent Adoption

Unlike most other types of adoption, children, youth, and foster parents involved in foster parent adoption have already spent time living as a family before the adoption is initiated and have had the opportunity to make some initial adjustments. In addition, research indicates that children waiting for adoption by their foster parents are less likely to experience disruption than children in nonrelative, non-foster-parent adoption (Berry & Barth, 1990; McRoy, 1999; Smith & Howard, 1991).

For children and youth, some of the other benefits include:

- A continuing and legally secure relationship with foster parents they know and trust
- An end to the uncertainty of foster care and, for many children, a positive psychological shift in their sense of identity, connection, and belonging (Triseliotis, 2003)
- The chance to remain in a familiar community, school, and neighborhood
- Tendency for shorter time to permanency than in other types of adoption (Howard & Smith, 2003)

- Greater likelihood of maintaining an ongoing connection with the birth family than in families formed through matching (Howard & Smith, 2003)
- Experienced parents to manage their needs (often including emotional and behavioral challenges due to trauma and complicated life histories)
- An established legal permanency for children and youth who would otherwise be wards of the court

For the adopting family, the advantages of adopting a child in their care include:

- Continuity of the relationship with the child or youth
- The opportunity to raise the child without oversight from an agency
- An established legal guardianship, becoming the sole decision-maker regarding school, religious practice, medical treatment, travel, discipline, and much more
- Often, both familiarity and a relationship with the child's birth family and greater knowledge of their child's background than in non-foster-parent adoption
- Access to continued support for the adoption of children with special needs, such as the adoption assistance subsidy

For the birth family, foster parent adoption sometimes means the birth parents know and can have a relationship with those who will be the permanent caregivers for their children. Foster parent adoptions are often open—an adoption arrangement in which identities are known and there is direct contact between birth families and adoptive families—either

because a relationship developed between the birth and adoptive parents when the children were in care or because the children know their birth families' contact information and may contact them after adoption. More than one-third of all children who have been adopted (36 percent) had some postadoption contact with their birth families (Vandivere, Malm, & Radel, 2009).

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Creating an environment for children to be successfully adopted requires that child welfare workers and adoptive parents understand the impact that trauma can have on a child or youth's life and development. Child Welfare Information Gateway's Treatment and Trauma-Informed Care web section provides information and resources for building trauma-informed systems, assessing and treating trauma, and trainings for staff on interventions that address the impact of trauma:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/responding/trauma.cfm>

Information Gateway's *Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Children Affected by Sexual Abuse or Trauma* explores the characteristics and benefits of trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) to help child welfare caseworkers and other professionals who work with at-risk families make informed decisions about when to refer children and their caregivers to TF-CBT programs:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/trauma/trauma.pdf>

Foster parent adoption also provides an opportunity for siblings to stay together or remain connected. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 requires States to make reasonable efforts to maintain sibling connections in order to receive Federal funding. Since its passage in 2009-2011, 13 States passed statutes regarding sibling placement and visiting (National Conference on State Legislatures, 2012). Sibling placement and contact after permanency vary widely by State, however, and while it is possible that the percentage of sibling groups placed together has improved since the passage of the Fostering Connections Act, there are no current sibling studies sampling children placed after 2008. A number of barriers to placing siblings with the same foster family—including the size of the sibling group, age, varying needs for siblings, or siblings born to the birth family after other siblings entered care—may carry over into barriers to adoption of a sibling group by the same foster parents.

Child Welfare Information Gateway offers more information on the topics of open adoption and sibling issues in adoption from foster care.

Working With Birth and Adoptive Families to Support Open Adoption: A Bulletin for Professionals:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_openadopt.pdf

Sibling Issues in Foster Care and Adoption: A Bulletin for Professionals:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/siblingissues/siblingissues.pdf>

For larger society, there are also benefits from foster parent adoption. These include:

- Reduced costs to government agencies when a child moves from foster care to adoption, since the administrative costs of recruiting, training, and approving an adoptive family are reduced
- As with all adoptions from foster care, a decrease in the number of youth exiting foster care with no family, reducing risk for a host of problems, including homelessness, incarceration, and poverty

Costs of Foster Parent Adoption

Just as there are benefits, foster parents assume additional costs when they adopt.

- While families gain autonomy, they can lose the assistance of the agency and relationships with caseworkers.
- Families may receive fewer resources and supports, sometimes leaving them financially vulnerable.
- While foster/adoptive parents gain decision-making privileges, they become financially responsible for the child's welfare, as well as legally responsible for the child's actions.

Some of these costs to parents may be mitigated by adoption assistance and other postadoption services. According to a recent study, roughly 90 percent (88 percent) of children adopted with public agency involvement in 2009 received an adoption subsidy (DeVooght et al., 2011). It is important to educate foster parents about the availability of adoption subsidies and not assume that they've been provided with all the necessary information. Research shows that

the Adoption Tax Credit is not widely used by families that adopt from foster care and that most tax credit dollars are used by families who adopt through intercountry adoption. Many families report not knowing that this tax credit exists.

Foster and adoptive families should be made aware of the nature of adoption subsidies. They are not merely maintenance payments; often they include services like counseling, Medicaid, and even respite or residential care in some States. Because adoption subsidies vary widely from State to State, it is also important to introduce parents to the fact that subsidies may be reduced over time.

Section 8 of the Children's Bureau's *Child Welfare Policy Manual* addresses the Adoption Assistance Program:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/index.jsp

Child Welfare Information Gateway's Adoption Assistance webpage provides resources for obtaining adoption assistance and other financial supports, including college scholarships, vocational education, and tuition waivers:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/preplacement/adoption_assistance.cfm

Information Gateway's State Guides and Manuals search links professionals to online publications created by State agencies that describe services and provide guidance on child welfare-related topics:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/sgm/index.cfm>

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) has several resources for adoption specialists and adoptive parents about subsidies. *The Value of Adoption Subsidies: Helping Children Find*

Permanent Families explores the benefits of adoption subsidies to children, families, and communities:

<http://www.nacac.org/adoptionssubsidy/valueofsubsidies.pdf>

NACAC's State Adoption Profiles provide State-specific eligibility requirements, benefits, and funding information:

<http://www.nacac.org/adoptionssubsidy/stateprofiles.html>

Practice Implications With Children and Parents

Even though foster parents have the advantage of knowing and having cared for the children and youth they plan to adopt, they still need careful preparation and support. Research indicates that foster parents need and want more preparation and information than they typically or currently receive in making this important transition (Howard & Smith, 2003). Practices associated with moving families from foster care to adoption include assessment, preparation for adoption, facilitating an ongoing connection between the child and birth family, including the child's siblings (when it is in the child's best interests), and working with families who choose not to adopt. As with all adoption practice, policies vary greatly among States and agencies.

Assessment. Assessing the family's interest and ability to adopt is a crucial step. Workers should not assume that foster parents will choose to adopt, even if they have cared for a child for an extended period or have expressed interest in the past. Instead of

asking parents, particularly those who are ambivalent, *if* they will adopt, another approach is to help them explore the benefits of adoption, while still addressing their concerns.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

New research has shed light on the brain development of children and youth, showing that the brain continually develops from puberty through the mid-20s. Understanding what contributes to and what hinders positive brain development, and the implications for children and youth in foster care, is extremely important.

Child Welfare Information Gateway's *Supporting Brain Development in Traumatized Children and Youth* summarizes what child welfare professionals can do to support the identification and assessment of the impact of maltreatment and trauma on brain development. It also explains how to work effectively with children, youth, and families to support healthy brain development and how to improve services through cross-system collaboration and trauma-informed practice:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/braindevtrauma.cfm>

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative produced *The Adolescent Brain: New Research and Its Implications for Young People Transitioning From Foster Care*, an issue brief about new research concerning youth brain development: http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org/sites/default/files/The%20Adolescent%20Brain_prepress_proof%5B1%5D.pdf

In reviewing the concerns of foster parents, the worker can explore the seriousness of each concern and determine what information or resources might reduce the parents' anxiety. This exercise may help parents realistically examine their fears and consider if they should proceed with adoption. If the worker helps the foster parents explore their feelings, fears, and hopes openly and honestly over time, the odds increase that the foster parents will commit to adopting or will be active in helping the child move to another permanent family (Howard, 2002). However, it is important to note that a foster parent should never be pushed to adopt a child or youth. A resource for foster families considering adoption is the Child Welfare Information Gateway factsheet *Foster Parents Considering Adoption*: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_fospar.cfm

Foster parent interest in adoption may stem from their sincere desire to become the adoptive parents. It may also stem from strong feelings toward the child and discomfort with the idea of others raising the child, despite their own misgivings about adoption. It is important to help foster parents consider factors that may make it difficult for them to meet the child's needs now and in the future, due to the nature of adoption.

Indicators that the foster parents are good candidates to adopt include evidence of:

- A mutual emotional connection between children and parents, including signs of affection
- Understanding and accepting the child's behaviors, abilities, and challenges
- Commitment to keep siblings together whenever possible and, when not possible,

encouraging and facilitating the ongoing communication between separated siblings

- Valuing the birth family (even when they have made serious mistakes as parents) and respecting and supporting the child's emotional connection to previous attachment figures, including siblings and other relatives or even previous foster parent relationships
- Competence in meeting the child's needs and advocating for needed resources
- Commitment to caring for the child now and in the future

Many agencies have specific assessment processes for determining whether adoption by a particular family is in the best interests of the child and for helping families come to a decision about their suitability for adoption. Those same processes are still relevant in cases of foster parent adoption. While the foster family may already have a completed home study, including background checks, the family should complete any remaining parts of the assessment specific to adoption. Agencies that have implemented a dual home study process that covers both foster care and adoption requirements initially will be able to process foster parent adoptions more quickly.

Preparation for adoption. Once the parents (and the child, if old enough to consent to adoption) have committed to the adoption, the worker should help the family make the transition from fostering to adoption. Even though foster parents and children benefit from knowing each other, adoption is an adjustment for all persons involved. As with assessment, many agencies have standard procedures for helping families and children prepare for adoption. While some of the

procedures may be unnecessary since the child has already been living in the home, the worker can facilitate other preparations.

For the family, these preparations may include:

- Providing full disclosure of information about the child and the birth family in writing, including explanations of the child's placement history and full medical history, as well as implications for parenting
- Preparing the family for the possibility of the child acting out feelings he or she may experience as a result of committing to adoption, after the adoption is formalized, such as testing the parents' boundaries to ensure their commitment is for the long term
- Preparing the family for less support from the child welfare system
- Preparing for the impact on other children in the family, particularly other foster children who are not being adopted
- Providing information on the legal steps in the adoption process
- Providing information and access to the adoption assistance payment (subsidy)
- Informing parents about the one-time, per-child, Federal adoption tax credit
- Helping the family negotiate ongoing birth family contact, if in the child's best interest
- Providing parents with access to ongoing training, therapy, and/or other resources to prepare parents for the journey of adoption

For the child or youth, preparation may include:

- For older children, involving them in the adoption decision

- Helping the child understand the differences between foster care and adoption and what those differences will mean on a day-to-day basis and in the future
- Assuring the child/youth about the types of feelings that may come up as a result of committing to adoption, such as grief, acceptance, loss, uncertainty, reassurance, identity formation, etc.
- With the family, helping the child review his or her history and put together a lifebook or lifemap that includes a visual presentation of the child's life and a chronology of the child's removals and placements and establishment of a forever family with the foster-adoptive parents
- Helping the child navigate the possible grief and the loss he or she might feel for birth family members and accept the addition of the adoptive family as a permanent family
- Helping the child to prepare for ongoing contact with the birth family if that is in his or her best interest and will occur in the future

A resource for workers and families is the Child Welfare Information Gateway factsheet *Helping Your Foster Child Transition to Your Adopted Child*:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_transition.cfm

Facilitating ongoing connection with the birth family. Children adopted by their foster parents often have deep emotional attachments to members of their original families, including siblings who may be placed elsewhere. Even children who were not well cared for in their birth families may

experience profound loss at separation, which may deepen when they are adopted and/or when they learn they will never return to their biological family/home.

Foster parents are likely to have had contact or even relationships with their child's birth family. Workers and adopting parents, often with the help of therapists, need to assess what level of ongoing connection is in the child's best interests and how to develop a postadoption connection agreement that works well for everyone. Some States use mediation or family group decision-making to help develop such agreements. More information about family group decision-making meetings can be found at:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/famcentered/overview/approaches/family_group.cfm

Postadoption connection does not necessarily mean contact, although it may. A range of possible connections are described in the Child Welfare Information Gateway bulletin *Working With Birth and Adoptive Families to Support Open Adoption*:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_openadoptbulletin.cfm

In addition, the Child Welfare Information Gateway's *Postadoption Contact Agreements Between Birth and Adoptive Families* explores postadoption connections:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/cooperative.cfm

Social media and adoption. Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets have changed the landscape of adoption. Child Welfare Information Gateway's Video Gallery features digital stories told by children and youth waiting to be adopted and foster parents whose lives have been changed through adoption, and more

(see <https://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/video.cfm>). The NRCPCF also features new digital stories of foster/adoptive families: http://www.nrcpfc.org/digital_stories/fafp/

The Children's Bureau's AdoptUSKids provides several social media tools and resources for foster parents and child welfare professionals:

- The Deciding to Pursue Adoption section of AdoptUSKids' website features YouTube videos with stories of foster/adoptive parents: http://adoptuskids.org/for-families/how-to-adopt/deciding-to-pursue-adoption?utm_source=Gateway&utm_medium=Link&utm_campaign=NAM
- Several recruitment and retention webinars are also available for professionals: <http://adoptuskids.org/for-professionals/free-resources/webinars-on-recruitment-and-retention>

Although statistics are not yet available to document the number of adopted children or youth and their birth parents connecting via social networking sites, anecdotal evidence suggests that it is a growing trend. Evidence also suggests that adoptive families tend to ask for advice or help after they or the adopted child have already been in contact with the birth parents. With this in mind, it is suggested that preparation is needed for both parents and youth about the realities of birth family contact through social media, including safe and appropriate contact and use of these tools.

The 2011 issue of *CW360° Child Welfare and Technology* by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) reviews technology innovations to improve child welfare outcomes and considers current

gaps in technological practice knowledge. One such gap is that of social media and networking and the use of technology by children and youth in foster care:

http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/attributes/PDF/publications/CW360_2011.pdf

Adoption Star, a nonprofit child-placing agency, provides a list of tips and guidelines for adoptive and birth parents connecting online:

<http://www.adoptionstar.com/child-placement/adoption-and-social-media-recommendations-for-healthy-ongoing-communication/>

Adoptions Together discussed the issue of social media's effect on the adoption field in its blog:

<http://www.adoptionstogether.org/Blog/tabid/333/EntryId/84/Social-Networking-and-the-Changing-Landscape-of-Adoption-Search-and-Reunion.aspx>

Families who do not adopt. Some parents may evaluate their situations and realistically conclude that adopting a particular child is not right for them or the child. If that is the decision foster parents make, and additional information and support do not allay their concerns, it is important to honor their decision and involve them in helping the child understand and transition to a new family. Specifically, the foster parents can help with:

- Not hindering the development of a new permanency plan for the child/youth
- Preparing the child for transition to a new family
- Helping the child grieve leaving the family and giving their blessing for the move

- Being an ongoing presence in the child's life, if this is in the child's best interests (Howard, 2002)
- Considering the possibility of providing respite care if needed, or even taking the child back into foster care in their home if the adoption disrupts

Caseworker reservations. What if the family is willing to adopt the child or youth, but the worker has reservations? Despite good intentions, many initial foster placements are made quickly, without adequate time to assess the fit between family strengths and child needs. While the emotional connection between the child and family is one important consideration, workers must consider whether a foster parent adoption is the best long-term option for the child or youth. Older foster parents of young children, parents who have limited support systems, parents who are harshly critical of a child or the child's birth family or birth culture, and parents who exhibit limited ability to adapt to meet a child's needs are examples of situations workers need to assess with special care. On the other hand, it is important that workers do not allow personal biases to play a role in impeding the process for permanency through adoption.

Pre- and Postadoption Services

Services for families before and after adoption may be just as necessary for foster parent adoption as they are for other types of adoption. The fact that the child has lived with the family as a foster child does not preclude the need for services at the time of the

adoption or in the future. Specifically, workers can help provide information about:

- Informing families of and constructing an adoption assistance agreement that reflects the child's current and future needs; for more information, see the Child Welfare Information Gateway factsheet *Adoption Assistance for Children Adopted From Foster Care*: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_subsid.cfm
- Formal support in the form of therapy or counseling resources or other mental health services, especially with therapists and counselors who have experience with adoptive families and will accept Medicaid. See the Information Gateway factsheet for families *Selecting and Working With a Therapist Skilled in Adoption*: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_therapist.cfm
- Support groups for adoptive families (or support groups for adopted children/youth), especially families who have adopted children with a history of maltreatment; for listings by State, see the National Foster Care and Adoption Directory: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad>
- Experienced adoptive and foster parents who might serve as mentors
- Educational and informational services
- Ongoing parenting education, such as classes, conferences, and workshops
- Respite care

Much of the preparation for adoption is best done through group trainings, where parents join other foster parents who are considering

or currently taking this step. There are a number of curricula to prepare parents for fostering and adoption. Visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway webpage on Training for Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Families for links to curricula and other training information: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/management/training/curricula/foster/>

The Child Welfare Information Gateway bulletin *Providing Postadoption Services* provides detailed information about the range of services that child welfare workers can facilitate or link families to in order to ensure that the adoption is successful: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_postadoptbulletin/index.cfm

Questions for Further Research

Given the increase in adoption following ASFA and the Fostering Connections Act, most of which has been through foster parent adoption, there is a need for more research on foster parent adoption to ensure that workers and agencies are providing the best services for children and families. Important questions for further research include:

- How do the needs of nonrelative adopting foster parents differ from those of subsidized guardians, relatives who adopt, and other adoptive parents?
- What are the long-term outcomes for children adopted by foster parents?
- What types of ongoing postadoption services are most effective in sustaining healthy successful families?
- What are the differences in outcomes for children who have been adopted by foster parents when the placement was planned (such as legal risk and those arranged through concurrent planning) as compared to unplanned?
- Given that most foster parents have moderate to lower incomes, are adoption assistance payments adequate to meet the needs of children after adoption?
- What is the impact on adopted children when their parents continue to foster other children?
- What is the impact on the adoptive family's birth children when adoption occurs?
- How might initial placements for children be more carefully selected?
- What impact does open adoption, which encourages birth family and sibling connections, have on adopted children and their families?

Moving children and youth from foster care to permanence is paramount to ensuring their social and emotional well-being, and foster parents play an important role in that process. Foster parent adoption currently accounts for nearly half the adoptions of children from foster care. Child welfare professionals and prospective adoptive parents must work together and fully understand the benefits, costs, and implications of foster parent adoption.

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Resources

Additional resources for workers facilitating adoption of children from foster care can be found on the following websites:

- Child Welfare Information Gateway—Adoption From Foster Care section <https://www.childwelfare.gov/permanency/adoption/>
- AdoptUSKids <http://www.adoptuskids.org/>

- National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections
<http://www.nrcpfc.org>
- National Resource Center for Adoption
<http://www.nrcadoption.org/>
- North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)
<http://www.nacac.org>
- The Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice
http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org/pr_casey_center.html

- The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)
<http://www.cwla.org>

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