

Silberman School of Social Work



Child Welfare Practice II

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Session 4:

Adoption



What is Adoption?

Adoption is the social, emotional, and legal process in which children and youth who will not be raised by their birth parents become full and permanent legal members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family.

Adoption

Adoption has many facets and touches people in different ways—depending on their role and perspective.

Read: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/>

Watch the Film: Then and Now

A history of how adoption has changed

Then review the remainder of the PowerPoint

Positive Adoption Language Matters

The language of adoption has constantly been changing and evolving. Since the 1970s, it has been a controversial issue linked closely with adoption reform efforts. The reason behind the controversies is over the use of terms which, though in line with being more appealing or less offensive to some persons affected by adoption, may cause offense or insult to others at the same time.

See: <https://www.adopthelp.com/why-positive-adoption-language-matters/>

Terms to avoid:

Real parent/mother/father,

Natural parent/mother/father

Adoptive parent/father/mother

Natural child, own child, one of my own

Give up/Put Up for adoption

Adopted child (vs. my own child)

Positive Adoption Language:

Birth parent/mother/father,
(even more recently, the term “first mother” has grown in usage)

Biological parent/mother/father

Parent, mother, father, mommy, daddy

Birth child, biological child

Plan for adoption

My child/son/daughter

Steps in the Adoption Process

The basic tasks in the adoption process in New York State are:

- Connecting with an adoption agency – public or private
 - Connecting with staff in that agency
 - Submitting an application
 - Completing the Home Study Process
 - Attending the agency training sessions
- Working with the social worker to make an appropriate match
 - Visiting with the child
 - Applying for a subsidy, if eligible
 - Child is placed in your home
 - Three months of supervision, if necessary
 - Finalizing the adoption in court
 - Post Adoption Services

Fees Associated with Adoption

There are no fees when adopting through the City of New York. The homestudy will be prepared without cost to you and financial assistance is often available to cover legal fees.

If you choose to work with a private agency, they may charge fees. Also, fees may be charged to adopt a child who is waiting in foster care outside New York City. However, when families adopt children who are in foster care and eligible for subsidy, the families may be eligible for reimbursement of limited nonrecurring adoption-related costs, such as attorney's fees and court fees, through the child's state and federal options. Many families use low-cost adoption options every year.

Read: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/child-welfare/foster-adopt-frequently-asked-questions.page>

Types of Adoption

1. Adopting Through the Child Welfare System

Also known as foster care, this system involves, “Adopting children who are under the custody of the State, If a parent’s parental rights are terminated, their children become available for adoption.

2. International Adoption

Many families pursue this option to widen their search for an addition to the family. Others want to provide opportunities for children without homes in underdeveloped and developing countries.

3. Private Adoption

Private adoption is done typically through an agency and not directly with the birth parents. It is attorney negotiated. Cost can run upwards of \$35,000 or higher. Sometimes there is no agency. Instead, there is a direct legal agreement between the adoptive and birth parents via an attorney.

Types of Adoption

4. Relative or Kinship Adoption

Sometimes people adopt members of their own family. Where children cannot safely remain at home with their parents, this is the first type of adoption considered.

5. Adult Adoption

In New York State, an individual may adopt a person over the age of 18. This grants the person over the age of 18, the legal treatment of a biological child. Adult adoption often occurs for the purpose of establishing legal rights, including inheritance or recognizing a parent-child relationship. New York State does not have strict laws governing who is eligible to adopt as well as who is eligible to be adopted. For instance, in certain states, an adoptee must be a minimum of 10 years younger than the adopter. New York State only requires that the adoptee agrees to the adoption.

Read: <https://www.central-islip-lawyer.com/2017/08/adult-adoption-growing-trend/>

Types of Adoption

The two overarching types of adoptions in New York State, **agency adoptions and private placement adoptions.**

Both types are regulated by state laws and the adoption must be approved by the court before it becomes official.

Review of the Session

Adoption has changed over the years – it's not just about infertility

Adoption is similar to foster care and yet very different

Positive Adoption language matters

There are several important steps in the adoption process

There are many different ways to adopt

Adoption is a life long process and is complex

Next Session:

More About Adoption

Read:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/search/>

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/preplacement/coreissues/>