

## THE ADOPTION PROCESS

Families who desire to adopt through the Agency must apply and be approved for an adoptive placement upon meeting the requirements of the California Department of Social Services.

The steps in the adoption process are:

- Attend the Foster/Adoption orientation to learn more about our children and our system
- Fill out an adoption application
- Meet with your assigned social worker to discuss your family needs
- Conduct a home study
  - Criminal background check
  - Medical Exam
  - Verification of income
  - Reference letters
  - Disclosure of financial condition

The home study process will assist the adoption social worker in making a placement that best meets the needs of our children and your family.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *Do I have to be married to adopt?*

No. Adoptive parents can be single or married, male or female.

### *Am I too old or too young to adopt?*

The general rule is that an adoptive parent must be at least 10 years older than the child they are wishing to adopt. Many grandparents or retired people are also adopting children today.

### *Do I have to be wealthy to adopt?*

No. While independent adoptions through a private adoption agency generally cost thousands of dollars, The law allows a fee of \$500 for adopting a child through Human Services Adoption Agency which is routinely waived by DHS.

### *Is financial and medical assistance available?*

While prospective adoptive families need to be self-supporting, most children adopted through the Agency are eligible for financial assistance and Medi-Cal through the Adoption Assistance Program. Assistance is based on need and may continue until the child is age 21. The program is designed to allow children to be adopted rather than remain in foster care.



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KCDHS 174-Adop (8/07)

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## Adoption



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Opportunity. Options. Empowerment.

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# Opportunity. Options. Empowerment.

ADOPTION

The Human Services Adoption Agency of Kern County is a full service adoption agency, licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services.

Adoption Agency services include:

- Assessment of a child or children
- Moving children from foster care into a permanent home
- Various legal services required to facilitate adoption
- Post-adoption services including counseling referrals, birthparent and/or adoptee searches and background information

## THE CHILDREN

The vast majority of children placed for adoption through the Human Services' Adoption Agency are children who entered the child welfare system due to safety concerns in their family of origin. There are children of all ages in the child welfare system who need out-of-home care. Many are, or will become, eligible for adoption by relatives or licensed foster parents. The Adoption Agency is continually seeking families that are motivated to make a difference in the life of a child.

## PERMANENCY PLANS

Once it is determined that reunification with a child's birth family is not possible, then adoption, legal guardianship or long-term foster care become options. When a child is freed for adoption, it is frequently the care provider, whether it is a relative or foster parent, who is considered as the prospective permanent family.



## THE NEED FOR FOSTER LICENSING

A Foster Home License is needed almost always to adopt through the Human Services Adoption Agency and is available through the Department of Human Services. Many foster families become licensed solely for the purpose of adoption.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about the next Foster/Adoption Orientation, please call 661.631.6204, or for additional information, please call the Human Services Adoption Agency at 661.631.6006.