

## Adoption Self Assessment

Please take some time to consider the following situations that will affect the adoption of your child. While thinking about these situations, remember that every child is unique and has their own special history and story. It is impossible to plan for every possible scenario. The following circumstances represent typical issues that Lutheran Family and Children's Services encounters in preparation for growing your family through the adoption process. As you consider these circumstances, consider your own family history and experience as well as resources within your community that you may want to explore for support. Most importantly, take the time to look within yourself as you begin the adoption process to explore how your own feelings, beliefs and expectations will add to your child's life story.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your preferred age range?

- Newborn (under six months)
- Infant (6-12 months)
- Toddler (1 to 3 years)
- Preschooler (3-5 years)
- School Age (6+)

2. Would you consider a sibling group?

- Yes
- No

3. Would you consider a child of a different race or ethnicity other than your own?

- Yes
- No

4. How would your family and friends view that decision?

5. How would you support your child's cultural heritage?

6. Which of the following racial heritages would you be willing to consider in an adoptive child?

- Any Race
- African American
- Asian
- Biracial (Caucasian & African American)
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Native American

7. Are there medical factors in the child or birth parent's history that would influence your decision?

Some common issues are: (please check those which you would be comfortable discussing)

- Sickle Cell Trait
- Prematurity
- Benign Heart murmur
- Little or no prenatal care
- Developmental delays or concerns
- Mental Health diagnosis

8. Would you consider a child born drug exposed?

- Yes
- No

9. Would you consider a child whose mother was known to use illegal drugs during her pregnancy?

- Yes
- No

10. Would you consider alcohol use during pregnancy?

- Yes
- No

11. Would you consider a child conceived through rape or incest?

- Rape
- Incest

12. When Birth Parents are seeking an immediate placement, a legal risk situation may occur. An immediate placement allows the child to begin bonding with the adoptive family. Would you be open to this situation?

- Yes
- No

13. Would you consider a situation which may involve additional expense such as:

- Birth mother's living expense
- Birth mother's medical expense
- Child's medical expense
- Prolonged foster care
- Legal fees which may expedite placement

14. You have the ability of maximizing the number of times your profile is considered by birth parents by allowing your profile to be viewed on the Lutheran Family and Children's Services Website. Would you consider consenting to this arrangement?

- Yes
- No

## **Openness**

The movement towards open adoption had taken place in the context of larger social change. Birth parents are now empowered to make choices: There is less stigma in raising children alone and greater access to abortion and birth control. Also, the societal movement toward less secrecy and the prizing of diversity, including a variety of family structure, has allowed for a greater acceptance of adoption.

Open, or fully disclosed, adoption allows adoptive parents, and often the adopted child, to interact directly with birth parents. Open adoption falls at one end of an openness communication continuum that allows family members to interact in ways that feel most comfortable to them. In semi-open or mediated adoptions, information is relayed through a mediator (e.g., an agency caseworker or attorney) rather than through direct contact between the birth and adoptive families. In confidential adoptions, no identifying information is exchanged.

The goals of open adoption are:

- To minimize the child's loss of relationships.
- To maintain and celebrate the adopted child's connection with all the important people in his or her life.
- To allow children to resolve losses with truth, rather than with fantasy.

Please read the enclosed article on openness. If you have any questions regarding openness, please list them below and they will be discussed during the homestudy process.