

## Child Adoption Checklist

- Many children with special needs need to be adopted

### **Before adopting:**

#### **Consider using one or more of the following to find a child to adopt:**

- Private agencies - the wait may be up to 10 years, usually because prospective parents are looking for a newborn and/or Caucasian infant
- Public agencies - usually cheapest
- Independent - prospective adoptive parents deal directly with the birth mother
- Networking – Make sure your friends and associates know that you'd like to adopt and ask them to mention it to their friends and associates
- Advertising, e.g., newspapers
- Get help with the process:
  - Lawyer
  - Social worker, and/or
  - Adoption agency
- Be aware that many children available for adoption from many foreign countries may have problems adapting to adoptive parents and may have health problems, learning difficulties, etc.

#### **After finding a prospective child to adopt:**

- Get as much information as you can about the child's background - to help determine if the child might be violent, have learning difficulties, have health problems, etc.
- Determine how long the birth parents have to back out of the adoption

#### **After adopting:**

- Be aware that adoptive parents can suffer from some depression similar to post - partum depression, due to the letdown from the anticipation and from being overwhelmed by the major changes in a daily routine
- Introduce the concept of adoption to the adopted child in a warm and supportive manner

#### **Keep assuring your adopted child that:**

- He/she is not different from other kids
- He/she is secure and loved
- Make sure you have adequate term life insurance on you (the parents), especially income - producing parents (consider getting approximately five times the parents' annual income for the first child, plus an additional four times your income for each additional child or dependent, up to a maximum of approximately 12 times your income)

**If your adopted child asks questions relating to his/her birth parents and is younger than age 4:**

- Listen to the question (s) carefully so you don't answer a question he/she didn't ask
- Take the time to answer questions carefully but honestly, although not in too much detail