

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 10: Adoption and Guardianship	Effective Date: August 1, 2021
	Section 04: Resource Parent's Role in Preparing the Child for Adoption	Version: 4

POLICY OVERVIEW

Children need caring adults who support the permanency plan, work to achieve permanency, and acknowledge that the child's questions and feelings are normal and acceptable. The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) partners with the resource parent to prepare the child for the adoption process.

PROCEDURE

DCS will communicate with and include the resource parent in the planning and implementation of the adoptive placement process. DCS will support the resource parent decision regarding their pursuit of adoption (if applicable), if DCS agrees that it is in the best interest of the child.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Have a discussion with the current resource parent to determine if the resource parent plans to pursue adoption of the child. See 10.A Tool: Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)/Adoption Checklist for additional guidance;
2. Include the resource parent in planning, implementing, and supporting the child through the adoptive process;
3. Utilize the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting and/or Case Plan Conference to develop an adoption transition plan (see policy 10.09 Pre-Placement Visits/Adoption Transition Plan);
4. Seek a recommendation from the child's therapist and/or CFT members to plan for an age and developmentally appropriate discussion with the child regarding the resource parent's decision about adoption;
5. Assist the resource parent in being prepared to appropriately acknowledge the child's feelings about the adoption process and respond to the child's questions;
6. Prepare the resource parent for possible changes in the child's behavior prior to the adoption or new adoptive placement;
7. Ensure the child's Lifebook remains up-to-date; and
8. Document all discussions and actions taken in the case management system.

If the resource parent is **not pursuing adoption** of the child, the FCM will complete all steps above and:

1. Explain the adoption recruitment process to the resource parent and obtain an agreement that the resource parent will fully assist and support the child through the adoption placement process, which includes making the child available for adoption

recruitment activities. See the Indiana Adoption Program Recruitment Booklet for additional assistance;

2. Share general information about the potential adoptive placement with the current resource parent;
3. Encourage the resource parent to appropriately express feelings to DCS related to the child's potential adoptive placement;
4. Offer therapeutic resources to the child and resource parent to address loss and grief issues that may occur due to the child leaving the resource parent's home;
5. Encourage the resource parent to give the child permission to move on and have a permanent family; and
6. Request that the resource parent prepare a goodbye letter that can be shared with the child when a permanent family is identified.

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Guide the FCM in developing and implementing the adoption transition plan, discuss with the FCM progress made in securing permanency and address any needs of the child; resource parent; and/or prospective adoptive parent during regular staffing and clinical supervision; and
2. Ensure all actions that are taken, including any deviation from best practice, are documented in the case management system.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC-31-9-2-99.2: Prospective Adoptive Parent](#)
- [45 CFR 1355.34: Criteria for Determining Substantial Conformity](#)

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Clinical Supervision

Clinical Supervision is a process in which an individual with specific knowledge, expertise, or skill provides support while overseeing and facilitating the learning of another individual.

Prospective Adoptive Parent

A prospective adoptive parent is a person who has filed a petition for adoption of a child under IC 31-19-2-99.2.

Resource Parent

For the purpose of DCS policy, the term Resource Parent includes a foster/adoptive parent, foster parent, and relative or kinship caregiver.

Forms and Tools

- [10.A Tool: Termination of Parental Right \(TPR\) / Adoption Checklist](#)
- [Goodbye Letters](#)
- [Indiana Adoption Program Recruitment Booklet](#)
- Lifebook – Available in hard copy from the regional [Adoption Consultant](#)

Related Policies

- [10.09 Preplacement Visits/Adoption Transition Plan](#)