

ADOPTIVE/FOSTER PARENT STUDY

FAMILY NAME:

The following categories must be fully explored for each applicant. Under each of the categories, give information about Applicant #1 and #2. Please make sure that each person remains distinct; that the reader has a clear idea of each applicant as an individual, as well as part of a parenting team. A complete study will thoroughly address the areas of adoptive/foster parenting; permanency planning and attitudes and beliefs regarding foster care and adoption.

PERSONAL HISTORY (for applicant #1)

Give family of origin for each applicant (description of applicant's parents, siblings, and past and present significant others). How did applicant's parents encourage you? What methods of discipline or punishment was applicant exposed to as a child? What methods does applicant feel were most effective? Least effective? How did applicant achieve emancipation? Explore applicant's education. What were challenges and successes? Explore applicant's employment and work life experience. What were the challenges and successes? What does applicant consider significant events in their life thus far? Discuss previous marriages/significant relationships. Is there ongoing contact? Were children involved? (discuss child support visitation issues) Discuss applicant's health (physical, mental, emotional) assessment and any issues. Discuss any past abuse issues of applicants. How does applicant describe their sexual relationship? Discuss applicant's fertility issues. Where is the applicant in grief process? (this includes single applicants who may be childless) Discuss the applicant's use of leisure time. What are applicant's hobbies, talents? Discuss goals for the future: educational, career and/or relationships.

PERSONAL HISTORY (for applicant #2, if applicable)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN APPLICANT #1 and APPLICANT #2

(or for single applicant, relationship to significant other)

If Applicant #1 is involved in a relationship with a spouse or domestic partner, or if the applicant is significantly involved with another adult, describe the nature of the relationship between these persons. Discuss the characteristics of the relationship now and in the past, as well as the likely impact on the foster/adoptive plan.

CHILDREN IN THE HOME			
Name	Relationship to Applicant #1	Relationship to Applicant #2	Date Entered Household

If any child listed above is not a permanent member of the household, please note child's name and when (date) they may be leaving:

Describe each child's characteristics, including physical description, personality, educational situation and health. Discuss each child's attitude toward foster/adoptive plan and how such placements are likely to impact the child.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS (SEPARATE SUMMARY FOR EACH APPLICANT)
 Describe applicant's stability and quality of interpersonal relationships.... Cite examples of applicant's ability to delay gratification, instances where applicant may have felt unappreciated. What are the applicant's strengths or weaknesses in these areas? Does the applicant have long-term or close friendships or primarily remain to himself, with associates rather than friends? How does applicant express feelings, especially frustration, conflict and anger?

COPING SKILLS AND HISTORY OF STRESS MANAGEMENT (SEPARATE SUMMARY FOR EACH APPLICANT)
 Description and examples of how applicant handles grief and loss.... Is applicant able to see humor in stressful situations? Describe applicant's flexibility. Do they usually have a back-up plan? When confronted with an "impossible task" does this person: Dig in? Ignore the situation? Ask for help? Describe boundary issues as well as general openness or rigidity to new ideas or accepting help.... Is this person able to make shifts in role definition when required? What outlets does applicant have to relieve stress (e.g., physical exercise, hobbies, support group)? Does applicant acknowledge and appreciate individual differences among people?

SUPPORT SYSTEM
 (may choose to attach an ecomap here)

Describe applicant's current support system and supports available in the community. Discuss how a foster/adoptive placement impact, and is impacted by, these supports. Include both formal and informal systems, such as family, friends, church, counselor, club, support group. Include historical and current supports and also who the family plans to use for support in the future. Who do they go to for advice? Who will provide day care, respite care? In case of incapacity or fatality of the parental figure, who would be responsible for the foster/adoptive child(ren)?

PARENTING SKILLS

Discuss applicant's parenting skills and abilities.... Describe nature and extent of previous experience with child supervision and parenting.... How does the applicant apply child development knowledge to parenting?... What about parenting gives them satisfaction? Describe applicant's knowledge of various parenting skills/ techniques and his or her history of practical application of these.... Describe applicant's ability to help children develop positive self-esteem.... Can they use behavior management techniques?... Can applicant discuss positive parenting methods versus punishment methods?... Include applicant's experience or willingness to learn the unique skills needed to parent children with special needs (behavioral, emotional, developmental, physical). What has been applicant's experience with the school system? Does the applicant feel equipped to advocate so the child will receive necessary services?INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS: If the adoption study approves the prospective adoptive parents to parent a handicapped or special needs adoption, this fact must be clearly stated per Title 65 Code of Federal Regulations 204.3 (e) (4).

ADOPTIVE OR FOSTER PARENTING

What does applicant hope their family will experience in caring for a foster or adoptive child. Discuss applicant's empathy. Give examples of instances where this has helped or caused problems in applicant's life.... Describe applicant's ability to verbalize what another person is feeling.... Are they able to visualize themselves in the child's or birth parent's place?... Does applicant understand how entitlement issues impact foster and adoptive families? Are they able to verbalize their feelings about parenting another person's birth child?" Do they show evidence of an ability to internalize their rights and responsibilities (limited in foster care but entire in adoption).... Give examples of applicant's ability or inability to maintain long-term relationships and keep promises/commitments even when applicant's quality of life is adversely affected. Discuss support services and how to access those services as a foster or adoptive parent.

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Discuss the process of permanency in child welfare practice and their understanding of a child's experiences of loss and attachment. Discuss how applicant will make a child a part of their family. Discuss the type of care the applicant wishes to provide; short-term (respite, emergency), foster care, foster care with a willingness to adopt or adoption. How has the family prepared themselves to provide this type of care. Is applicant able to realistically anticipate child's future needs or problems? Are they capable of meeting long-term needs of children in care; i.e., commitment? For adoptive and foster families willing to adopt are they willing to continue the parenting role into the child's adulthood, if necessary... Do adoptive parents understand that adoption provides legal bonds and responsibilities? If the family is limited to providing short-term foster care, how has the family prepared themselves to transition the child back home or to a permanent family?

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS REGARDING FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION ISSUES

Discuss the applicant's ability to meet the special challenges of foster care and/or adoption, including birth parent issues, issues related to commitment and teamwork and his/her ability to work within the guidelines of the child welfare system. Discuss the applicant's understanding of birth parent history and its relationship to a child's identity. Discuss the attachment theory and how multiple moves affect the child's sense of trust, stability, and the child's behavior. Discuss the applicant's willingness to support the child, as a minor or an adult in areas of identity development as an adoptive person.

ABSENT OR PART-TIME CHILDREN

If applicant's children live outside the home or only visit, discuss why children are absent or part-time, other parties involved, how this situation is now handled and how the situation will be impacted by fostering and adopting. Discuss applicant's relationship with their adult children.

NON-APPLICANT ADULTS IN THE HOME
(Complete for each adult member of the household)

Name: _____
Date when entered household: _____
Is this person considered a permanent member of the household? Yes No
If no, estimated date this person will be leaving the household: _____
Relationship to applicant: _____
Discuss this adult's characteristics, including why he/she is living in the household and what his/her role will be regarding the foster/adopt child(ren).
Include this person's education, health and criminal history.

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND DIVERSITY

Discuss and offer documentation of the applicant's awareness of the impact of culture on his or her daily life. Discuss the applicant's understanding of diversity issues, especially regarding the level of cultural diversity in the applicant's daily living and within the applicant's extended family and community. Discuss whether or not diversity issues have caused conflict or problems in the applicant's life and how these were/were not resolved. Discuss how the applicant's cultural awareness may impact the ability to identify and meet any culture-related needs a child may have. Indicate applicant's knowledge of discrimination and comment on the applicant's skills to help children learn to deal appropriately with discrimination, should this occur. Discuss whether or not a child's race would make them targets of discrimination in the applicant's school, community or extended family. If the child could be such a target, indicate how the applicant plans to deal with child safety issues and the source of the discriminatory behavior. Does the applicant understand how to use the knowledge of the child's culture to stimulate development, manage behavior appropriately and to assist the child to meet the demands of daily living? Can the applicant advocate for equal access to services and activities for the child? The use of an assessment tool may be used and attached to this study. Discuss what motivated the applicant to consider trans-racial/trans-cultural placement.... What in the applicant's current lifestyle would support a child's ability to stay connected to their racial or cultural heritage? What changes, if any, to their lifestyle does the applicant foresee in order to meet the child's needs? Include racial and cultural composition of neighborhood, school, community and how the applicant feels this will impact the child, positively and/or negatively.... Can or will the applicant provide adult and peer role models from the child's race/culture? Discuss extent that applicant has thought through becoming a multi-racial and a multi-ethnic family. Include how this will affect others in the home and extended family.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND/OR SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

Discuss applicant's spiritual beliefs, values and practices and how these will impact the foster/adoptive plan. Discuss impact of religious/spiritual beliefs on family's day-to-day life. Discuss church or synagogue attendance, family rituals, etc. What are the beliefs of extended family members as they relate to applicant family and prospective foster/adoptive children? For example, will extended family expect certain rituals or memberships for child? How does applicant intend to meet the child's religious needs? How will conflicts be resolved if the child entering the home has differing religious heritage or practice/beliefs?

FAMILY FINANCES

If applicable, discuss foster care payments, adoption assistance and relative custody assistance. Give the applicant information on assistance available for both foster care and adoption regardless of the type of care they plan to provide. Discuss supports beyond state financial assistance within the child welfare system. Summarize applicant's financial situation and how this will impact the foster/adopt plan. Is current income sufficient to meet the needs of current members? How will the placement affect the family financially? Is the family realistic regarding changes that may have to occur? How are family's financial decisions made? What types of paid leave or other benefits does the applicant's employer offer regarding adoption? If applicable, describe the family's understanding of foster care and adoption assistance rates and benefits and how the assistance will affect their family's finance? If not, explain. INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS must include a description of family income, financial resources, debts and expenses.)

SUMMARY OF COLLATERAL CONTACTS AND INFORMATION

Summarize references and information from other social services agencies with which applicant has had contact (including other foster or adoption agencies).

FAMILY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

List strengths and needs that have been identified by the agency and the family.

Strengths	Needs

Describe the plan developed with the applicant to build on strengths and to address needs. Include such things as skill development, education, and experiential events.

Briefly give a summary of this family and their readiness to foster/adoption.

FOSTER HOME LICENSING/ADOPTION STUDY APPROVAL (If applicable)

Foster home licensing/adoption study recommended approval for applicant(s) # _____.

Describe type of child whom applicant is approved to care for (sex, age, number)

List any restrictions on license, or waivers/variances to be requested:

Foster care licensing/adoption study denied

- give specific reason, rules, and attach documentation.

Foster license approval only

- provide specific reasons why this family has not been approved for adoption and attach documentation.

Adoption approval only

- provide specific reasons why this family has not been approved for a foster-care license and attach documentation.

***If a foster application is denied, the agency must make a recommendation to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division.**

SIGNATURES:

Assessor/Social Worker: _____ Date: / /

Supervisor: _____ Date: / /

OPTIONAL:

Other Title Date

Other Title Date

Purpose statement:

This study was completed for the purpose of: Child foster care

International adoption

Adoption of children under state guardianship

Domestic infant adoption

This study should be used only for the purposes mutually agreed upon by

_____ and the _____
Name of agency Name of family