

Adoption Attitude Survey

Workshop title: Connecting the Dots for Permanency

Date: _____

We offer this survey as a tool for self-awareness and self-discovery as you contemplate your own personal and professional growth in the world of Adoption. We hope that it will also help to focus your thinking as you engage in this workshop and this conference. Thank you for your investment.

Please **circle the words** that best describe your opinion.

1. I am comfortable explaining the adoption process to families.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
3. Everyone involved in the adoption process is grieving a loss	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
4. I believe the family team should make decisions in case planning for adoptions.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
5. It is possible for every child to find an adoptive home.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
7. Families need preparation and support to transition from fostering to adoption	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
8. Single parents should be encouraged to adopt.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
9. Families who adopt children of a race, color, national origin or ethnic background that differs from their own have an obligation to expose them to their race.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
10. It is important to hear and document a family's story to share with the child.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
11. Every child has the right to understand the strengths they got from their birth family	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
13. Flexibility and change in practice are inherent when working in child welfare.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
14. Assessing for readiness is important for case planning for adoptions.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
15. I understand how to prepare a youth for placement with an adoptive family.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>

16. Concurrent planning enables a child to move more quickly toward permanency.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
20. I know strategies for facilitating adoptions for teenagers.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
21. I know the differences between closed, open and kinship adoptions.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
22. Children have the right to know why they cannot live with their birth families	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
23. Siblings should always remain together when adopted.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
24. Resource parents should always be ready to move toward adoptions.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
25. My role in the adoption process is clear to me.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
27. I am well-equipped to respond to post-adoption crises.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
28. It is important to provide potential adoptive parents with all the information about the child during the full disclosure process.	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>

Child Preparation: Basic Concepts of the 3-5-7 Model

Children should be prepared prior to their first move...

Preparation should continue throughout their “foster care journey”.

These issues will need to be re-addressed as the child moves developmentally through their life

Three Major Tasks of Child Preparation (CIA)

- **Clarification:** assisting the child to understand **what “really” happened to them;** a lengthy and non-linear process that ebbs and flows based on developmental level and emotional readiness **Hearing and reframing child’s view of events, being honest at child’s developmental level, lifting blame from them and placing it where it belongs.**
- **Integration:** acknowledging the **child’s membership and emotional ties to many families, and validating that these families had meaning to them and they had meaning to the families; assists child in dealing with loyalty conflicts** regarding birth family, foster family, adoptive family – **It’s ok to love them all – means that there will be grief.**
- **Actualization:** assisting the child to **begin visualizing what it is going to be like to be a member of a permanent family – by actual experience.** This process should begin prior to placement, as children are developing a relationship with a new permanent family. **Child learns this by experience, in foster care. Learn about family roles – we don’t hit kids in this family... actually begin to experience a healing relationship**

Five Questions that Must be Answered

Who am I? – *AM I lovable, bad, worthy, doomed to repeat the past? Level 3?*

What happened to me? *First separation, and all others...*

Where am I going”? *Will there ever be a place for me?*

How will I know when I get there? *Will I be able to form a relationship?*

When will I know I belong? *Will someone really mean it? This can take time...*

Seven Critical Elements in Preparing Children

Engage the Child in the Process

Listen to the Child’s words

When you Speak, Tell the **Truth**

Validate the Child and the Child’s Life Story – *don’t tell the child how to feel – don’t join in, either.*

Create a **Safe Space** for the Child as s/he does this Work (*your relationship*)

It is Never Too Late to **Go Back** in Time

Pain is Part of the Process – *it’s hard – make sure you have your own support!*

Adapted from Darla Henry and Judi Damiano, Daikon/Family Design Resources

Based on *The 3-5-7 Model: Preparing Children for Permanency*, by Darla L. Henry

Through the Trauma/Adoption Lens

Statistics:

- **More than 68% of children and adolescents had experienced a potentially traumatic event by the age of 16**
- **Rates of PTSD in children who have been maltreated are 20 to 63 percent**
- **Adoptive families are two to five times more likely to utilize outpatient mental health services than are non-adoptive families**
- **Adoptive families are four to seven times more likely to place their children in residential treatment centers**

•Bottom lines:

- *Child and family professionals need to be aware that their clients are likely to have been exposed to trauma*
- *Trauma clinicians are treating children who have been adopted*

Treating Trauma is Critical, But Often Not Enough

Only 25% of adoptive parents reported that they believed their mental health professionals were adoption-competent

Areas Adoptive Parents Viewed Therapists as Unhelpful or Insensitive:

- Failing to validate or believe their experiences
- Blaming parents for their children's problems
- Pathologizing adoption and viewing the family as pathological
- Questioning the parents' motives for adoption
- Advising parents not to talk about adoption with children because it will "stir things up"
- Seeing children with attachment problems without parental presence or input
- Telling parents to just give their children back to the state
- Failing to gather information about the children's histories or to address the impact of previous maltreatment

As summarized by Brodzinsky, D. M. (2013)

Trauma and Adoption: Integrated Practice

- Children that have interrupted attachments and placements often need help, support, and clarification to process the grief and loss, above and beyond trauma treatment
- **Trauma treatment can help to facilitate healing, and support the adoption process**
- Trauma treatment can facilitate the acquisition of coping skills that assist with a decrease in externalizing behaviors that can assist in placement stability
- **Trauma and loss affect children of all ages. Processing trauma and loss can help to encourage healthy attachments.**

- Sibling relationships are the longest standing familial relationships, the impact of siblings being separated in foster care can be traumatic for children
- **Being honest and present with a child through grief and loss can help healing. Assisting resource parents to be therapeutic in dealing with grief and loss can increase placement stabilization. It may get worse before it gets better.**
- **When children are having symptoms as a result of trauma or loss, a caregivers love may not be enough. They may need treatment to learn how to cope and address grief, loss, and trauma.**
- Trauma treatment can assist a child in feeling safe and give them coping skills that can help through other life transitions.

Source: *Adoption and Trauma Communities Coming Together to Improve the Well-Being of Children in Foster Care or Adoption*, CWLA-NCTSN Webinar Series. Julie Collins, Director of Standards for Practice Excellence, CWLA; Kelly Decker, PhD, Service Systems Program, NCTSN, UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute & Hospital; Darlene Allen, MS, Executive Director, Adoption Rhode Island; Kelly Sullivan, PhD, Center for Child and Family Health; Sarah Kelly-Palmer, LICSW, Family Service of Rhode Island

Devereux Adult Resilience Survey

AN INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Devereux Adult Resilience Survey.

Authored by Mary Mackrain, the Devereux Adult Resilience Survey (DARS) is a 23-item reflective checklist that provides adults with information about their personal strengths. The information can be used to help individuals build on these strength, such as creativity and setting limits, so that they can better cope with adversity and the stresses of daily life.

Statistical analysis shows that the DARS is an excellent tool for providing adults with an opportunity to gain valuable insights, particularly in these four areas:

Relationships: The mutual, long-lasting back-and-forth bond we have with another person in our lives.

Internal Beliefs: The feelings and thoughts we have about ourselves and our lives, and how effective we think we are at taking action in life.

Initiative: The ability to make positive choices and decisions and act upon them.

Self-Control: The ability to experience a range of feelings, and express them using the words and actions society considers appropriate.

The purpose of the DARS is not to compare individual's scores to the population, but to give adults, more specifically teachers, the opportunity to become aware of personal strengths and areas of need. Upon completion of the Devereux Adult Resilience Survey, individuals are encouraged to use the Building Your Bounce: Simple Strategies for a Resilient You Adult Journal. This journal provides suggested strategies for strengthening adults' protective factors shown to support resilience.

It takes a fair amount of reflection and practice to change any negative thoughts we might have and to integrate new behaviors that are good for us. You are worth it. Even is you are already a strong, happy person you will want to continue building yourself up to maintain or increase your level of well-being.

Best wishes on your personal journey.

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Devereux Adult Resilience Survey (DARS)

by **Mary Mackrain**

Take time to reflect and complete each item on the survey below. There are no right answers. Once you have finished, reflect on your strengths and then start small and plan for one or two things that you feel are important to improve. For fun and practical ideas on how to strengthen your protective factors, use the chapters in this book. For a free copy of the DARS visit www.centerforresilientchildren.org.

Items	Yes	Sometimes	Not Yet
Relationships			
1. I have good friends who support me.			
2. I have a mentor or someone who shows me the way.			
3. I provide support to others.			
4. I am empathetic to others.			
5. I trust my close friends.			
Internal Beliefs			
1. My role as a caregiver is important.			
2. I have personal strengths.			
3. I am creative.			
4. I have strong beliefs.			
5. I am hopeful about the future.			
6. I am lovable.			
Initiative			
1. I communicate effectively with those around me.			
2. I try many different ways to solve a problem.			
3. I have a hobby that I engage in.			
4. I seek out new knowledge.			
5. I am open to new ideas.			
6. I laugh often.			
7. I am able to say no.			
8. I can ask for help.			
Self-Control			
1. I express my emotions.			
2. I set limits for myself.			
3. I am flexible.			
4. I can calm myself down.			