

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 10: Adoption/Permanency	Effective Date: February 1, 2014
	Section 4: Resource Parent's Role in Preparing the Child for Adoption	Version: 2

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will partner with the resource parent¹ to help prepare a child for the adoption process.

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's decision regarding his/her pursuit of adoption, if DCS agrees that it is in the best interest of the child.

DCS will complete a Lifebook for each child in preparation for adoption.

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE [REVISED]

If the resource parent is pursuing adoption of the child, the Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Discuss the Indiana Adoption Assistance Program with the resource parent(s). See separate policy [10.14 Indiana Adoption Assistance Program Overview](#);
2. Utilize the Child and Family Team (CFT) Meeting or Case Plan Conference to develop a plan for adoption, include the resource parent, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and therapist in the adoption planning;
3. Seek a recommendation from the child's therapist, if applicable, regarding the appropriate time and setting to discuss with the child the resource parent's decision regarding adoption of the child;
4. Assist the resource parent in explaining the decision to the child in a manner that is appropriate based on the child's age and developmental level; and
5. Ensure the Lifebook is completed. See Practice Guidance.

If the resource parent is not pursuing adoption of the child, the FCM will:

1. Assist the resource parent in helping the child to understand his/her decision;

Note: Encourage the child to express his/her feelings regarding the resource parent's

¹ For purposes of DCS policy, the term Resource Parent includes a foster/adoptive parent, foster parent, and relative or kinship caregiver.

decision and include the therapist if applicable.

2. Submit a referral to the Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) Specialist if a home has not been identified;
3. Allow the resource parent to express his/her feelings regarding the child's new placement;
4. Prepare the resource parent for possible changes in the child's behavior prior to moving to the prospective adoptive placement; and
5. Ensure the [Lifeblog](#) is completed. See Practice Guidance.

The FCM Supervisor will assist the FCM and provide input and recommendations whenever necessary.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE [NEW]

Lifeblogs and/or Adoption Workbooks come pre-packaged and can be ordered by contacting the Program Manager for Adoption, Youth Connections and Guardianship. The FCM may also contact his/her Regional SNAP Specialist to place an order for Lifeblogs and/or Adoption Workbooks. The Lifeblogs and/or Adoption Workbooks will be mailed to the FCM in the DCS local office.

Note: The **pre-packaged** Lifeblogs and/or Adoption Workbooks are not mandatory for the FCMs to use. The FCM, therapist, family member or foster parent may create a unique Lifeblog and/or Adoption Workbook for a child using a photo album, scrapbook materials or any creative idea that would be most meaningful for that child.

DCS currently has the following types of pre-packaged Lifeblogs and Adoption Workbooks:

My Adoption Workbook is a kid-friendly workbook that guides the social worker and child through the adoption process. A sensitive, but forthright explanation of separation, followed by hands-on activities to help prepare a child for change and work through the process.

Nothing raises a child's anxiety more than the unknown. "**My Adoption Workbook**" carefully guides the child and social worker through the entire process from separation to post-adoption. Exercises are designed to reduce the fears and to promote a healthy child-to-parent relationship. Special emphasis is given to helping the child:

- Explore fears or fantasies;
- Work through abuse, trust and love issues;
- Build self-esteem;
- Handle new situations; and
- Adjust to change.

The One & Only Me is a book that helps foster, adoptive and other troubled children connect to his/her current situation, as well as, his/her beginnings. It creates a living history for children dealing with a chaotic past.

The Real Me teen Lifebook is a wonderful tool to use when working with teens. The teenage years are a challenge even in the best situations. For teens in foster care or living in a group setting, the uncertainties about the future can cause additional stress and worry. The chapter *What My Future Holds* provides a framework that youth can use to process the many issues they face. It also prompts them to gather the necessary documentation for job hunting.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Lifebook](#) – Available in Hard Copy

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

Archived 6.30.2018 (Legislation)