

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 10: Adoption/Permanency	Effective Date: July 1, 2018
	Section 4: Resource Parent's Role in Preparing the Child for Adoption	Version: 3

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will partner with the resource parent 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 parents' decision regarding their 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

[IC 31-9-2-99.2 Prospective Adoptive Parent](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Discuss with the resource parent if they wish 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 the planning and implementation of the adoptive placement process, regardless if they wish to pursue adoption;
3. Assist the resource parent in explaining the decision regarding adoption to the child in a manner that is appropriate based on the child's age and developmental level;
4. Utilize the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting and/or Case Plan Conference when appropriate;
5. Seek a recommendation from the child's therapist, if applicable, regarding the appropriate time and setting to discuss with the child, the resource parents' decision regarding adoption; and
6. 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:

1. Assist the resource parent in encouraging the child to accept the decision;
2. Allow the resource parent to express his or her feelings relating to the child's new placement;
3. Prepare the resource parent for possible changes in behavior in the child prior to the adoption placement; and
4. Help the child prepare a [Lifebook](#).

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Assist the FCM and provide input and recommendations whenever necessary; and
2. Ensure actions are documented in the case management system.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Lifebook](#) – Available in Hard Copy

[10.A Tool: Termination of Parental Rights \(TPR\) / Adoption Checklist](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Prospective Adoptive Parent: A prospective adoptive parent is a person who has filed a petition for adoption of a child under [IC 31-19.2.2](#).

Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks

Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks come pre-packaged and can be ordered by contacting the Adoption Program Manager. The FCM may also contact his or her Regional Indiana Adoption Program Liaison to place an order for Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks. The Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks will be mailed to the FCM in the DCS local office.

Note: The use of **pre-packaged** Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks is not mandatory. The FCM, therapist, family member or foster parent may create a unique Lifebook 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 Lifebooks and Adoption Workbooks (described by [Adoption World Publishing](#))¹:

My Adoption Workbook

My Adoption Workbook is a kid-friendly workbook that guides the social worker and child through the adoption process. This workbook provides 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.

¹ [Adoption World Publishing](#) (2014)

The One & Only Me

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

The Real Me

The Real Me teen Lifebook is a 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