

## How Does Adoption Affect the Siblings Already in a Family? Outline

Much of the focus of adoption literature and research is on the adopted child and the adoptive parents with little attention on the children already in the family.

- Tell us your story as the sibling of 7 adopted siblings.
- Research on adopted siblings.
- What are some of the challenges that siblings of the adopted child might face?
  - Feeling invisible
  - Coping with overwhelmed distracted parents
  - Parentification
    - Becoming another parent to your siblings
    - Becoming the emotional support for their parents
  - Trying to keep the peace in the home by acting as a peacemaker
  - Feeling the need to be extra good or accomplished to add less stress to their parents. Or suppressing their own needs so as to not add to their parent's burden. Try to not have any needs.
  - Feeling embarrassed by your sibling's behavior
  - Blaming parent who isn't able to "control" the new child or make them behave better or meet their needs.
  - Mourning the loss of your calm "normal" family
  - Secondary trauma
  - Unwanted public attention on your family because of size, behavior, transracial adoption
  - Jealous of the adopted child because they perceive them as getting all the attention
  - Resentful of the adopted child because of the added burden they brought to the family
- What factors influence the degree of these challenges to siblings in an adoptive family? (age of the children in the family and the children being adopted, degree of trauma, type of behavioral issues, etc.)
- Disrupting birth order.
- What can adoptive parents and professionals do to mitigate some of these challenges of siblings of adopted children?
- How can parents prepare kids already in the family for the adoption of a sibling?

- Tips for parents in reducing the negative impact of adoption on the children already in the family.
- What are some of the benefits of adoption to siblings in the family?