

Adoptive Family Resources

BOOKS ON NAVIGATING ADOPTION

Before You Adopt, Christa Jordan

After countless conversations with other pre-adoptive parents, this workbook was developed to help others ask the important questions that will guide them through the complicated process. Written by an adoptive mom and blogger, with background and experience in social work and the child welfare system.

The Open-Hearted Way to Open Adoption, Helping Your Child to Grow up Whole, Lori Holden with Crystal Hass

This highly recommended book offers readers the tools and the insight to navigate open adoption. More than a how-to, this book shares a mindset, and a heartset, that can be learned and internalized, so parents can choose to act out of love and honesty throughout their child's growing up years, helping that child to grow up whole.

Adopting Sound Choices, Strong Families, Patricia Johnston

Comprehensive book on all aspects of the adoption process. A great read for anyone considering the adoption process.

Attaching in Adoption: Practical Tools for Today's Parents, Deborah D. Gray

A comprehensive guide for adoptive parents on how to understand and care for their adopted children and promote healthy attachment. The book includes a wide range of personal vignettes illustrating attachment-related situations.

Secret Thoughts of an Adoptive Mother, Jana Wolff

Using honesty and humor, this book addresses the thoughts, feelings, and questions that adoptive mothers may have and are often afraid to express.

Thriving as an Adoptive Family, David and Renee Sanford

Good overall book on adoption covering many topics from a Christian perspective. Focus on the Family resource.

BOOKS ON ADOPTION GRIEF AND LOSS

Adoption Wisdom: A Guide to the Issues and Feelings of Adoption, Marilou Russell

A great book for anyone wanting to have a better understanding of the lifelong impact of adoption. Offers insight and understanding on adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents.

Being Adopted: The Lifelong Search for Self, David M. Brodzinsky, Marshall D. Schechter and Robin Marantz Henig

A must read for adoptive parents. This book uses the poignant voices of adoptees and adoptive parents to explore the experience of adoption and its lifelong effects.

Talking to Young Children About Adoption, Mary Watkins and Susan Fisher

Accounts from 20 adoptive parents on how they talked to their children about their adoption stories. Includes research on when and how to tell children about their adoption.

Telling the Truth to Your Adopted or Foster Child, Making Sense of the Past, Betsy Keefer and Jayne E. Schooler

While many adoptive parents are reluctant to communicate openly about birth histories, silence only adds to the child's confusion and pain. Using age-appropriate guidelines, Keefer and Schooler answer questions such as: How

do I share difficult information about my child's adoption in a sensitive manner? When is the right time to tell my child the whole truth?

Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parents Knew, Sherrie Eldridge

A guide to the complex emotions that take up residence within the heart of the adoptive child and within the adoptive home. Powerful insights from children, parents, and experts in the field.

Lifebooks: Creating a Treasure of the Adopted Child, Beth O'Malley

This book gives simple instructions on how to create a Lifebook for your adopted child.

Before You Were Mine, Susan TeBos and Carissa Woodwyk

How to discover and share your adopted child's birth story and integrate that into a Lifebook. A good book on the importance of a child's birth history.

BOOKS ON TRANSRACIAL/TRANSCULTURAL ADOPTION

Risk and Promise, Ira Chasnoff, Linda Schwartz, Cheryl Pratt, and Gwendolyn Newberger

A comprehensive handbook that includes the risk factors of adopting a child internationally. It gives specific, scientific information that is valuable in assessing the issues in adopting a child with various risks in adoption.

Black Baby White Hands, Jaiya John

A biography of the life of Jaiya John who was an African American adopted by a white family. Real insights into racial bias and the effect on Jaiya being raised by a family who did not deal properly with racial issues.

Cross-Cultural Adoption, Amy Coughlin and Caryn Abramowitz

An invaluable tool for anyone whose life is touched by international adoption. Provides accessible and extremely useful information in response to some of the most common—and toughest—questions asked about cross-cultural adoption.

Eyes Wide Open, Adoption Learning Partners

Workbook that helps families make the decision to adopt from another country. Things to consider in adopting and helping adopted children adjust to a new home.

I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla, Marguerite A. Wright

Teaches parents and educators alike how to deal with concepts of race/racism in ways that promote positive development and self-esteem. Sensitive issues are addressed with practicality and hope.

Struggle for Identity: Issues in Transracial Adoption

A thought-provoking 20-minute video presenting a group of adoptees who discuss their experiences growing up in transracial adoptive families. They delve into complex issues such as confronting stereotypes, fitting in with their culture of origin and learning to define themselves in terms of race and culture. Included in the video are interviews with several adoptive parents who discuss the obstacles they faced in raising children of a different race.

Transracial Adoption and Foster Care, Joseph Crumbley

Real insight into the issues children feel in transracial adoption. Gives specific ways families can ensure their children develop racial and cultural identities.

BOOKS ON PARENTING/UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

W.I.S.E. UP Power Book, The Center For Adoption Support and Education

Praised by parents around the world, this simple, effective book helps adopted children learn that their story is unique, personal and theirs to share (or not). This workbook delivers easy-to-follow choices to help adopted children decide when and how to share information and respond to others' questions/comments.

The Connected Child, Karyn Purvis, David Cross, and Wendy Sunshine

A necessary read for adoptive parents striving to connect and correct their child. Offers real insight and understanding for adoptive parents of children who experienced early deprivation or trauma, and have attachment issues.

The Connected Parent, Karyn Purvis and Lisa Qualls

Practical advice and powerful tools you can use to encourage secure attachment in your family. This book offers real-life demonstrations of how you can successfully implement these strategies in your home.

The Whole Brain Child, Daniel Siegel and Tina Bryson

A very helpful and enlightening book that offers strategies for parenting children considering their whole brain. This is a highly recommended read.

Parenting From the Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive, Dr. Daniel Siegel

An empowering book that shows what parents can do to help their children just by being aware of what gifts and baggage they bring to the table. It includes practical, hands-on exercises at the end of each chapter.

Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control: A Love-Based Approach to Helping Attachment-Challenged Children With Severe Behaviors, Heather T. Forbes

This book goes beyond the theory of why some children struggle to attach and offers a guiding hand and a heavy dose of hope for loving and parenting these children. The first four chapters help parents clearly understand the neurological research behind "The Stress Model". The next seven chapters are individually devoted to seven behaviors typically seen with attachment-challenged children, including lying, stealing, hoarding and gorging, aggression, defiance, and lack of eye contact.

The Body Keeps the Score, Brain, Mind, Body in the Healing of Trauma, by Bessel van der Kolk

Trauma is a fact of life. Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world's foremost experts on trauma, uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma literally reshapes both body and brain. *The Body Keeps the Score* exposes the tremendous power of our relationships both to hurt and to heal—and offers new hope for reclaiming lives.

The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog, Bruce Perry and Maia Szakavitz

Excellent book on how trauma affects the brain, and how to work and re-train a child's traumatized brain. Great information on any child suffering trauma from abuse or neglect.

When Love is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting Children with RAD- Reactive Attachment Disorder, Nancy Thomas

Gives an overview of helping children with attachment disorder to attach. Brings hope and healing tools to those parenting and working to help challenging children.

God Made All Of Me, A Book to Help Children Protect Their Bodies, Justin S. and Lindsey A. Holcomb

This book helps two-to eight-year-olds understand why their bodies matter and distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch. *God Made All of Me* gently opens a conversation that every family needs to have.

Listening to My Body, Gabi Garcia

Help your child build their capacity to engage more mindfully, self-regulate, and deepen their sense of well-being.



BOOKS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS

***Adopting the Hurting Child: Hope for Families with Special Needs Kids*, Gregory C. Keck and Regina M. Kupecky**

A frank and poignant portrayal of the sad and often difficult reality of adoption; it also has real hope for children and their families. A valuable read for parents, social workers, teachers, therapists, and all who interact with these children.

***Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child*, Trish Maskew**

Written by an adoptive mother, this book shares the challenges and joys related to adopting an older child. It is a collection of practical tips, advice, and real-life stories.

***Toddler Adoption: The Weaver's Craft*, Mary Hopkin's-Best**

A wonderful and thorough resource for families who are considering adopting a toddler. Includes information on toddler development, toddler adjustment, dealing with grief, attachment, and behaviors.

***Born Broken, An Adoptive Journey*, Kristen Berry**

A must-read for prospective adoptive as well as those already in the trenches of caring for a child affected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and substance abuse, early childhood trauma, abandonment, and attachment issues. This book is an eyes-wide-open look into one family's adoption journey.

***Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood Through Adulthood*, by Dr. Edward M. Hallowell**

A benchmark work on ADHD that looks at the various forms of ADHD, from hyperactivity to daydreaming; contradicts common myths, offers practical coping tools, and discusses all the different treatment options. This is an invaluable tool and a must-read for anyone parenting a child with ADHD.

BOOKS FROM THE ADOPTEE PERSPECTIVE

***A Long Way Home*, Saroo Brierley**

A very moving story about an Indian boy who gets separated at age five from his family and is eventually adopted by an Australian family. After years of trying to track down his biological family, he is able to reunite with his mother after 25 years. To note: the award-winning movie *Lion* is based on this book and is also an incredibly poignant film.

***Left to Tell*, Immaculee Ilibagiza**

Autobiography of Immaculee's survival of the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and her healing and forgiveness of the person who murdered her family. Amazing story in understanding Rwanda's past.

***Open, An Adoption Story in Three Voices*, Alaina O'Connell, Alex Porter, and Sara O'Connell**

A true story of two women whose voices will ring true, raw, and triumphant, and whose love for one child will change their world forever. This book brings honest humanity to the people affected by open adoption, revealing the fragility and courage of the human spirit.

***All You Can Ever Know*, Nicole Chung**

What does it mean to lose your roots—within your culture, within your family—and what happens when you find them? With warmth, candor, and startling insight, Chung tells of her search for the people who gave her up. This book is a profound, moving chronicle of surprising connections and the repercussions of unearthing painful family secrets.

***She is Mine: A War Orphan's Incredible Journey to Survival*, Stephanie Fast**

Abandoned at a young age by her mother due to her bi-racial identity, this incredible story details Stephanie's survival in the bleak, war-ravaged countryside of South Korea for three years, and was finally left for dead. But the Creator had other plans and revealed them through the words, "She Is Mine."



There is No Me Without You: One Woman's Odyssey to Rescue Her Country's Children, Melissa Fay Greene

The powerful story of one woman working to save her country's children. After losing her husband and daughter, Haregewoin Teferra, an Ethiopian woman of modest means, opened her home to some of the thousands of children in Addis Ababa who have been left as orphans. Written by two-time National Book Award nominee Melissa Gay Greene, who herself is an adoptive parent.

The Waiting Child: How The Faith and Love of One Orphan Saved the Life of Another, Cindy Champnella

Adopted by an American family at age four, Jaclyn goes to her new home with the burden of leaving behind a little boy who had been under her charge at a Chinese orphanage. She inspires two families, several agencies, and two governments to cooperate to reunite her with "her baby." An extraordinary story of human resilience in the face of tremendous odds.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN TO READ

A Mother for Choco, Keiko Ksaza

Family is about love no matter how different parents and children may be, adopted or not. Choco wishes he had a mother, but who could she be? Keiko Kasza's twist on the "Are you my mother?" theme has become one of the most highly recommended stories about adoption for children.

Adoption is for Always, Linda Walvoord Girard

Story about a little girl who has known she was adopted, but didn't understand what it meant. This book helps weaves in information that can help a child understand adoption and is a great resource for children looking to navigate their feelings on adoption.

And That's Why She's My Mama, Tiarro Nazario

Mamas come in all different shapes, colors, and ages, but they all have one thing in common. They love you! Enjoy the multiple characters in this children's story which explores the loving tasks of what makes a mama.

The Day We Met You, Phoebe Koehler

An adoption story for young children. The author uses simple, affectionate words to create a way for parents to explain the adoption experience to even the youngest children.

Forever Fingerprints, Sherrie Eldridge

Great children's book on explaining birth parents and adoption to children in a very positive way.

God's Gift of Family, Brenda Jank

This book invites you to celebrate God's gift of family, no matter how it is formed.

God Found Us You, Lisa Tawn Bergren

As Little Fox gets ready for bed, Mama Fox tells him the miraculous story of his special arrival. This heartwarming and tender tale captures the immensity of looking at God through a young child's eyes and the profoundness of the blessings that adoption brings to both parent and child.

I Love You Like Crazy Cakes, Rose A. Lewis

This book is based on the author's adoption of her daughter from China. This book is beautifully illustrated and offers abundant reassurances of love to adopted children.

I Wished For You, Marianne Richmond

Thus begins this beautiful story follows a conversation between a little bear named Barley and his Mama as they curl up in their favorite cuddle spot and talk about how God chose them to be a family. Barley asks Mama the kinds of questions many adopted children have, and Mama lovingly answers them all.

One Wonderful You, Francie Portnoy

This book is a cute story to read to your child about being adopted. Gives an explanation of how an adopted child is part of two families.

Over the Moon, Karen Katz



An affirming story about international adoption, based on the author's own experience with her daughter. This book is a magical, reassuring story of one adoptive family's beginnings, told in words and pictures that are just right for the youngest child.

Rosie's Family: An Adoption Story, Lori Rosove

Rosie's Family is a story about belonging in a family regardless of differences. Rosie is a beagle who was adopted by schnauzers. She feels different from the rest of her family and sets forth many questions that children who were adopted may have.

Tell My Again About the About the Night I Was Born, Jamie Lee Curtis

A tender and funny picture book for every parent and child. In asking her parents to tell her again about the night of her birth, a young girl relives a cherished tale she knows by heart. Focusing on the significance of family and love, this is a unique and beautiful story about adoption and the importance of a loving family.

Waiting for May, Janet Morgan Stoeke

Written from the perspective of a brother awaiting the adoption of his new little sister from China, this book can be used to introduce siblings to the idea of adoption or explain the Chinese adoption process to a child adopted from China.

We Chose You: A Book About Adoption, Family, and Forever Love, Tony and Laura Dungy

God forms families in many different ways and sizes, but all are equally important and special. When adopted son Calvin needs to tell about his family for a class assignment, he discovers his parents were praying for him long before they chose him. Let this book give you the words to tell your child about your family's unique story.

W.I.S.E. UP Power Book, The Center For Adoption Support and Education

Praised by parents around the world, this simple, effective book helps adopted children learn that their story is unique, personal and theirs to share (or not). This workbook delivers easy-to-follow choices to help adopted children decide when and how to share information and respond to others' questions/comments.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS THAT CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Creative God, Colorful Us, Trillia Newbell

Written with grade-schoolers in mind, this book highlights that those in God's family can actually use our differences to help each other. Here's some more great news: There are no rules about how we look or sound to be in His family. We have a delightfully different family on purpose. Every person is made by God, in His image, and therefore is equal in value and worth.

Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut, Derrick Barnes

This book is a celebration of the self-esteem, confidence, and swagger black boys feel when they leave the barber's chair—a tradition that places on their heads a figurative crown, beaming with jewels, that confirms their brilliance and worth. The fresh cuts. That's where it all begins.

God's Very Good Idea: A True Story of God's Delightfully Different Family, Trillia Newbell

This book celebrates diversity and will help children see how people from all ethnic and social backgrounds are valuable to God and how Jesus came to rescue all kinds of people. It will also excite them about being part of church - God's delightfully different family.

I Don't Have Your Eyes, Carrie A. Kitz

Family connections are important to children as they begin to find their place in the world. For adopted children and children in foster care or kinship placements, celebrating the differences within their families as well as the similarities that connect them is the foundation for belonging.

It's Okay To Be Different, Todd Parr

Targeted to young children first beginning to read, this book will inspire kids to celebrate their individuality through acceptance of others and self-confidence. This book is designed to enhance emotional development, celebrate multiculturalism and diversity, and promote character growth.



***The Colors of Us*, Karen Katz**

Through the eyes of a little girl who begins to see her familiar world in a new way, this book celebrates the differences and similarities that connect all people. Karen Katz created this book for her daughter, Lena, whom she and her husband adopted from Guatemala.

***New Clothes for New Year's Day*, Hyun-joo Bae**

This is not an adoption book, but a great way to introduce Korean culture. This beautiful picture book shows a young Korean girl welcoming the New Year in classic Korean style. It's nice to have a book that features the Korean New Year celebration rather than the Chinese New Year.

***We're Different, We're the Same*, Sesame Street**

This enduring, colorful, and charmingly illustrated book offers an easy, enjoyable way to learn about differences—and what truly matters. *We're Different, We're the Same* is an engaging read for toddlers and adults alike that reinforces how we all have the same needs, desires, and feelings.

MEDIA RESOURCES

***Creating a Family*, <https://creatingafamily.org>**

This is a wonderful website that has a wide variety of adoption resources, including book lists. The podcast is also fantastic, and includes a large range of topics. Some of our favorite learning tools to share with our families come from *Creating a Family*.

***Empowered to Connect*, <https://empoweredtoconnect.org>**

ETC's resources and trainings are especially helpful for caregivers of children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), toxic stress, and maltreatment. This organization fundamentally believes that every human being has great capacity to grow and overcome adversity when cared for in supportive, connected, and nurturing environments. Check out their podcast as well.

***Karen Purvis Institute of Child Development*, <https://child.tcu.edu/#sthash.6UhLxBjB.9l2Uj7s0.dpbs>**

The Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development strives to help children suffering from the effects of early trauma, abuse, and/or neglect. Check out their animates on YouTube; they are fantastic.

***Honestly Adoption*, <https://honestlyadoption.com>**

According to their website, Honestly Adoption has been voted in the Top 5 out of 100 best adoption blogs, and best adoption podcasts, on earth 5 years in a row from 2016 to 2020 by Healthline.com and Feedspot. The Honestly Adoption Company is fiercely committed to helping parents gain insight into their child, change their parenting approach, and in turn, transform their family.

***LavenderLuz*, <https://lavenderluz.com>**

Another great resource. This blog has been listed by *Adoptive Families* magazine, *Circle of Moms* and by *Grown in My Heart* to be one of the top adoption blogs. Check out the podcast, *Adoption: The Long View Podcast*. <https://www.adopting.com/adoption-podcasts/adoption-the-long-view>

***Replanted*, <https://www.replantedministry.org/about>**

A community of support, encouragement, and celebration for adoptive and foster families, kinship families, and Safe Families. Replanted also offers annual conferences that are highly recommended. Also, check out the book, *Replanted*, by Jenn Ranter Hook, Joshua N Hook, and Mike Berry. It takes an honest look at the joys and hardships that come with choosing this journey and provides a model of faith-based support made up of three parts to help families thrive: *Soil*, *Sunlight*, and *Water*.

***Adopt Well*, <https://adoptwell.libsyn.com>**

This podcast provides an educational community for anyone touched by adoption. Each episode exists to educate and encourage. We know that adopting well is a lifelong mission. It means learning from those around us - adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents.

