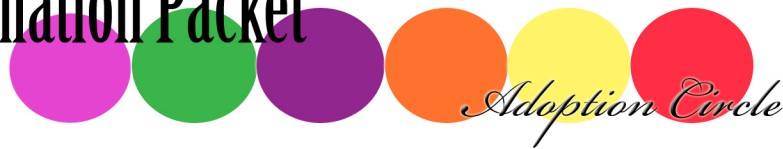


Information Packet



V. Adoption Process

a. Application

You have now received ADOPTION CIRCLE's Information Packet that provides you with introductory information explaining the Agency's mission statement, philosophy, programs, and procedures. This packet includes the Agency's Application and the JFS 01691 "Application for Adoptive Placement". If, after review of this material, you wish to pursue adoption with our Agency, the Application and JFS 01691 must be completed and returned to ADOPTION CIRCLE's Columbus office with a \$250.00 **non-refundable** application-processing fee.

b. Selection

All completed applications received for the Infant Adoption Program will be reviewed and then scheduled to begin the adoption process by attending the Orientation and Education Meeting. A letter of receipt of the application and an invitation to the appropriate Orientation and Education Meeting will be sent within 15 (fifteen) days of the Agency receiving the application. Orientation and Education Meetings are scheduled quarterly in the months of February, May, September, and December. ***Please note:** *Room space is limited for the Orientation and Education Meetings. If your applications and/or reservation is received after reaching room capacity, you will be invited to the next scheduled Orientation and Education Meeting.*

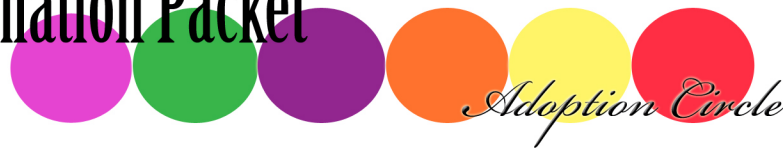
1. Applications received on January 10th through 5:00pm April 9th will be invited to the May Orientation and Education Meeting.
2. Applications received on April 10th and through 5:00pm August 9th will be invited to the September Orientation and Education Meeting.
3. Applications received on August 10th through 5:00pm November 9th will be invited to the December Orientation and Education Meeting.
4. Applications received on November 10th through 5:00pm January 9th will be invited to the February Orientation and Education Meeting.

ADOPTION CIRCLE makes every effort to provide services to anyone interested in beginning the adoption process. ADOPTION CIRCLE will offer each applicant the opportunity to adopt. **However, the Agency cannot guarantee that a placement will occur or the length of time that it may take for the placement to occur.** ADOPTION CIRCLE provides its services in full

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Information Packet



accordance and compliance with the Federal and State Laws including the Multi-Ethnic Placement as Amended.

c. Orientation and Education Process

An applicant is invited to begin the adoption process by attending the Orientation and Education meeting held in Columbus. This meeting is scheduled during the workweek. It is a full day group meeting designed to provide you with adoption information that will orient you to the many facets of adoption. Topics to be addressed include Agency philosophy, programs, procedures, services, legal issues, birthparent information, and types of adoption. Applicants will hear birthparents and adoptive parents who have worked with ADOPTION CIRCLE relate their adoption experiences. Openness in adoption is discussed so that all applicants will eventually make informed decisions as they design their adoption plans. This meeting also provides the applicant with the opportunity to talk with other applicants and learn of support groups. ADOPTION CIRCLE hopes this will be a time to allow the applicants to become better informed, educated and comfortable with the adoption process.

After attending the Orientation and Education meeting applicants are scheduled for the next required training meeting. ADOPTION CIRCLE holds this a six-hour small group meeting in the agency office training room. This meeting gives you the opportunity to explore and question issues such as genetics, bonding and attachment, myths and fantasies in adoption, parenting the adopted child, culture, and child development.

Additionally, all applicants without children or who have children older than five years of age, must complete a childcare class. Please visit www.adoptioncircle.org and go to education and training for specific childcare classes. All prospective adoptive parents must have current certification in infant CPR. The Agency also provides applicants with additional training resources i.e. reading lists, on-line education and may require you to read specific books prior to approval for adoption. ADOPTION CIRCLE encourages you to become involved in adoption support groups and educational workshops in your community.

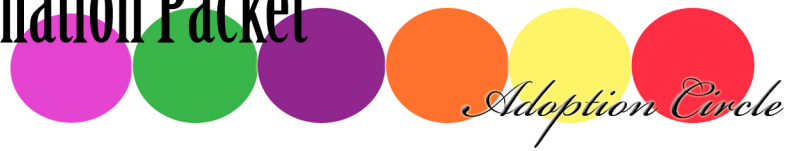
d. Adoptive Homestudy

After you attend the Orientation and Education and Small Group Meetings, the process will continue with the Individual Adoptive Homestudy Assessment. You will be assigned a state certified adoption assessor who will visit with you to conduct your homestudy. These meetings will include interviews and discussions on a variety of adoption and parenting related issues. You and your homestudy assessor will discuss your social, medical, psychological and family history and other areas that relate to your decision to adopt.

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Information Packet



Your social worker/assessor will assess your home to make certain that it meets the standards set by the State of Ohio and the Agency. You will have the opportunity to candidly discuss your motivation for adoption and your anticipated strengths and weaknesses as a parent. ADOPTION CIRCLE views the homestudy process as an opportunity for **you to assess your ability to successfully parent an adopted child**. The goal of the homestudy is to educate and prepare you to reach a realistic decision regarding the adoptive placement of a child in your home.

Applicants will be given a list of specific documents that must be completed and given to the assessor/social worker during the homestudy process. Among the required forms are background checks i.e. state and federal criminal, driving records and child abuse clearances, financial statement, medical form and four reference letters. ADOPTION CIRCLE will provide to you all forms required by the State of Ohio. All documents will be reviewed by your social worker/assessor to determine the readiness of an applicant to parent an adoption child. ADOPTION CIRCLE reserves the right to request and require other documentation deemed necessary for the assessment of an adoptive applicant on an ongoing basis throughout the homestudy and adoption process. This may include reports on consultation with medical, psychological, and/or legal professionals. The homestudy cannot be completed if any requested documents are absent from your file.

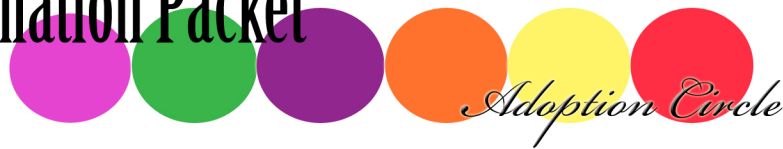
The Agency's goal is always to be supportive and helpful in guiding you through your homestudy. We will lend a helping hand whenever possible. Your social worker/ adoption assessor will schedule appointments and phone calls with you at mutually convenient times but you must be prepared to dedicate a substantial amount of time to the process. The adoption process will likely require you to take time off from work. ADOPTION CIRCLE will complete a written homestudy report and notify you in writing the results in accordance with Ohio law.

ADOPTION CIRCLE encourages you to complete all required aspects of the homestudy in an organized and timely manner. Delays in completing your homestudy without Agency approval may result in the termination of the home-study process. Additionally, the information that you will provide may become outdated and the process will have to begin again at your expense.

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Information Packet



e. Homestudy Update

A Homestudy may be updated every two (2) years from the date of approval of the initial Homestudy. Applicants seeking to adopt another child as well as those who have not received a placement during the 24-month period will need to update their original Homestudy if they desire to continue in the adoption process.

Homestudy updates include personal interviews and provision of current documentation. Paperwork required (but not limited to) includes a professional reference as well as medical, financial and background clearances. Additional documents are required depending on each applicant's individual changes since the original Homestudy i.e. changes in residence, employment or number of household members.

f. Family Profile

You will be asked to write a family profile that once you are approved to adopt may be shared with birthparents upon their request. Your profile is the tool by which you are initially introduced to the birthparents considering an adoption plan. This four-page document should describe you and your spouse, if you are adopting as a married couple. If there are other children living with you, they should also be included. Details about your life, including age, religion, values, life experiences, occupation and home environment should be incorporated into your family profile. Agency staff members will be available to assist you with this assignment. When your homestudy has been approved, ADOPTION CIRCLE will begin circulating your profile to Birthparents working with the Agency. Adoption Circle offers each approved adoptive applicant the opportunity to share their profile on the agency's website.

g. Surrender and Placement

No sooner than seventy-two (72) hours after the birth of a child a Birthparent may relinquish his or her parental rights and legal custody to ADOPTION CIRCLE by voluntarily signing a ODJFS 1666 Permanent Surrender of Child. The Agency will never accept surrender from a Birthparent until the Birthparent appears to be making an informed and voluntary decision, free of all duress and pressure. Shortly after accepting a surrender, ADOPTION CIRCLE will place the child in the approved home of the adoptive family and shall perform post-placement supervision.