

An Adoption Inclusive Culture

Introduction

- National Council For Adoption: Passionately committed to the believe that *every* child deserves to thrive in a nurturing, permanent family, NCFA's mission is to meet the diverse needs of children, birthparents, adopted individuals, adoptive families, and all those touched by adoption through global advocacy, education, research, legislative action, and collaboration.

Why We Need Family

- Child Brain Development: The Serve and Return Relationship
- Serve and Return Example
- Family Care vs. Institutional or Temporary Care
 1. One or two caretakers provides strong, trusting relationships
 2. Caretakers responsible for many children do not have time to give the necessary amount of individualized attention
 3. When a child's caretaker changes the trust relationship needed to develop through serve and return must be recreated
- Child Welfare Spectrum: Finding the best, permanent solution for children
While this chart may not be perfect and each child's individual needs must be considered, I believe that generally, the child should be placed as near to the top of this
 1. Biological Parents
 2. Biological relative or closely connected individual
 3. Domestic Adoption (as close to the child's original community and culture as possible)
 4. Intercountry Adoption
 5. Temporary, Changing Foster Care
 6. Institutionalization
- United States Adoption Statistics
Foster Care:
Children in foster care: 397, 122
Children available for adoption: 101,666
Children adopted: 52,039
(www.adoptuskids.org or <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport20.pdf>)
Infant Adoption: 18,078
(https://www.adoptioncouncil.org/images/stories/Adoption_Factbook_Press_Release_Extended.pdf)
Intercountry Adoption: 8,668
(www.adoption.state.gov)
Total Domestic Adoptions: 133,737
(includes step-parent, adult adoptions, or other independent arrangements)

Building a Culture of Adoption

- Public Education & Awareness
 - **Goal:** Adoption: A normal, acceptable answer for children living outside family
 - Tell true stories
 - Use accurate, neutral language
- Systems and Laws
 - **Legal possibility:** If a child cannot be raised by their biological parents it is right to create a way to make it legally possible for them to be completely part of another family.
 - Laws should be child-focused

- Laws should be clear, but flexible to allow the unique needs of each individual child to be met.
- **Equal rights:** Adopted children should have the same opportunities as children in biological families
- **Financial and Service Support:** Tax credits, support of medical and legal costs, providing special services for children and families who need special support