



MN ADOPT

A Program Funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services

FACT SHEET

Nesting: What to do while Waiting To Adopt a Waiting Child

by Cathy Bruer-Thompson, Hennepin County Special Needs Adoption Trainer
and Melissa Sherlock, Social Service Program Consultant, MN ASAP

While all prospective adoptive parents want to be thoroughly prepared for the adventure of adopting an older waiting child or sibling group, many are unaware on how to use the “expectant time” to prepare their families and themselves to parent an older waiting child.

Here are some suggestions.

- Volunteer in places with children/youth who are at risk such as a homeless teen shelter
- Provide respite care or childcare for families who have adopted or who are parenting children with special needs.
- Hear adopted and foster youth speak about their experiences. Our Voices Matter, a youth advocacy group from Minnesota Adoption Resource Network (MARN), offers youth panels with insights and suggestions for adults. (612-746-5128 or asnyder@mnadopt.org.)
- If you are adopting trans-racially, attend a Harambee Village Evening sponsored by a community for African American and Pan-African children and their families. Contact: Deb Reisner 763-545-0293. For children adopted from other countries, find one of the many Minnesota support groups specific to the culture and home country of your child. (www.mnasap.org and click on Parent Programs to see groups in Metro area and Greater Minnesota.)
- See if your place of worship supports families who have children diagnosed with special needs... or start up your own support system in your faith community.
- Meet the MN ASAP parent liaison in your area who will be a helpful resource and may facilitate a support group (www.mnasap.org/parents_programs/liasons)
- Attend adoptive family support groups prior to having child in home, such as those listed on www.mnasap.org.
- Attend additional training on specific parenting strategies and topics such as the MN ASAP TIPS and LABS classes. Bookmark the MN ASAP web site (www.mnasap.org/calendar) for updates on MN ASAP offerings as well as statewide adoption and foster care trainings.
- Sign up for *MN ASAP Family Voices* quarterly newsletter (Call toll free 877-966- 2727 or 612-798-4033 or e-mail: info@mnasap.org)
- Attend an adoption support group meeting in either Metro or Greater Minnesota area. For a list: www.mnasap.org/parents_programs/parent_support_groups.html. At the support groups, you will meet people who are successfully parenting children with special needs. Listen to

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their stories. Memorize their techniques. Develop relationships with people who can provide respite, support and understanding who may be just a phone call or e-mail away.

- Do research on the Internet and bookmark informative sites by topic for future reference.
- Increase your knowledge base on the impact of trauma, disrupted attachment and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder on development in children. Learn additional parenting skills necessary in raising children with these issues.
- Read books from the annotated bibliographies handed out in trainings or listed on www.mnasap.org or www.tapestrypressinc.com or www.co.hennepin.mn.us
- Take time for yourself now...you won't have much for quite a while once you adopt.
- Prepare children already in the home for the addition of other children in the home.

-Summer 2002 *MN ASAP Family Voices* issue (available online at www.mnasap.org/information/Newsletter/FamilyVoices_summer2002) has many suggestions regarding ways to support "sibling" friendships.

-www.parentleaders.org has resources and ideas for promoting interaction and getting beyond jealousies common among children

- Get to know the school personnel in your area.

Learn more about Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans through PACER Center, an organization that assists families with children who have disabilities. Call 952-838-9000 or toll-free 800-537-2237 visit www.pacer.org