

PRE-ADOPTION COUNSELING PARTICIPATION

There is value in having a counselor/specialist who is knowledgeable and experienced in working with the adoption circle— birth parents, adoptive parents, and adopted children – and who plan treatments that include a unique lens to the adopted family.

WHY SEEK AN ADOPTION COMPETENT COUNSELOR NOW?

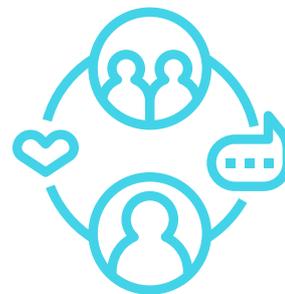
- 1 **Adoption Counselors** acknowledge the impact of adoption on families while honoring the reality that we can't focus on adoption as the only defining aspect of our family.
- 2 **Adoption Counselors** help us normalize the adoption issues we face as adoptive parents and support our need for alternative approaches to improving attachment and enhancing our children's development.
- 3 **Adoption Counselors** are competent adoption experts with extensive training that can help parents who are striving to be proactive in creating "new norms" of healthy adoptive family life with the support to help promote these new norms.
- 4 Most importantly, **Adoption Counselors** address the ongoing issues of grief and loss in adoptive families over the lifespan.

Adoptive family counseling often works best when the family and the counselor create a relationship that can move and adjust according to adoption needs, and the ebb and flow of everyday life family experiences.

[Learn More About Adoption
Counselors & Counseling.](#)

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From our experience working with pre-adopt parents, we know that you may have many questions about the changes that may occur as a result of finalization. When you meet with your counselor, we invite you to ask your questions and express your concerns.



THE FOLLOWING AREAS YOU MAY WANT TO ADDRESS CAN INCLUDE:

- What to expect after finalization: what are some of the universal emotions parents and children experience?
- How do you feel about the changes in your contact/relationships with your child's birth family that will occur after finalization? For example, for some families, contact with birth family will decrease or be discontinued; for others, there will be ongoing visitation but without agency support.
- How do you help your child with ongoing feelings of loss and grief?
- How do you talk with children/teens about adoption? How do you help them make sense of their adoption story - the reasons for placement, etc.
- What do you need to know about the impact of trauma on your child - the lifelong effect of having experienced neglect, abuse, violence, etc. What are the emotional and behavioral manifestations of having experienced trauma? How can you help your child?
- What do you need to know about how the distressed attachment that your child experienced before you became their parent may influence their behavior.
- Will or how will a finalized adoption affect the other children in my home (adopted or biological)?
- What needs does my child have that I will need continued support around throughout his/her life span, and where can I go to get the assistance I need?
- What emotional needs should I focus on with my child in the first six months they are home? What will be helpful for me to do?

We hope you will feel open to discuss any concerns you may and find the help and support you need. Your Adoption Counselor will call you to schedule your first meeting.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO CONNECT WITH YOU.

For more information or to get started you may call us at 301-664-9664 or visit our website barkeradoptionfoundation.org