



# JOURNEY

## Post Adoption Support

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Developmental Stages
- Triggers
- Core Issues in Adoption
- Post Adoption Support
- Support Groups
- Spotlight

## A Life Time Commitment

Life Management Center has helped more than 470 children find forever families. And we know our job is not over with adoption finalization. We are dedicated to supporting a successful adoption experience whenever, however, and as long as help is needed.



Our skilled Adoption Specialists provide comprehensive support and guidance throughout the family **journey**. We are there as children and parents learn the true meaning of forever families. Life Management's Post Adoption Services is committed to helping a life long commitment become a lifelong success .

## Families Must Grow



Adoption is a constantly evolving process. As children grow, so does their understanding of the meaning of adoption. Because of the lifelong impact of adoption, members of adoptive families may want or need additional support, education, and other services. Issues related to identity, loss, attachment, medical concerns, and birth relative contact are commonly part of the adoption journey. Post Adoption Services is there to help family members work through passages while helping to preserve a sense of unity.



*“Parenting older adoptive children Requires patience, time and realistic expectations.”*

- Claudia Fletcher; Adoptive Parent

# Remember Erikson...

As parents, it is important to remember that your children will go through developmental stages and that their adoption will influence their development regardless of when they were adopted as infants or older.

Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development are listed below in chronological order. However, it is important to remember that children have different timetables for their development. Some children may move quickly through one stage and more slowly through another.

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Outcome
Infancy (birth to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care, and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feelings of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this stage leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feelings of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.

## Watch For Triggers

Throughout the lives of children that have been adopted, there are events that may trigger changes in their mood and/or behaviors that they are unable to control. Adoptive parents should anticipate these events. They can learn how to accept and support their children during such episodes, for which there is professional help, if needed. Some examples of triggers are:

- Birthdays
- Holidays
- School projects
- Adoptive parents’ pregnancy
- Anniversaries
- Puberty
- Marriage



# 7 Core Issues in Adoption:

There are core issues that every adoptee encounters. Understanding and acknowledging these issues can help the whole family move forward. And when support is needed, specially trained professionals are available to help navigate the family through the challenging times.

## Adoptee Core Issues

**Loss** - loss of biological, genetic and cultural history and fears of abandonment

**Rejection** - issues of self esteem and misperception of others' behavior

**Guilt/Shame**- feelings of unworthiness resulting in defensiveness and anger

**Grief** - lack of "fit" in adoptive family, depression and acting out

**Identity** - confusion leading to extreme behaviors to gain a sense of acceptance by others

**Intimacy**- fear of getting close due to risk of re-experiencing loss

**Mastery/Control**- life course outside of personal control

(Silverstein and Kaplan; 1982)



## What You Can Expect:

Post-Adoption services are designed to offer objective support to the family unit as it continues to grow and develop. Life Management Center offers Post-Adoption Services to families on a voluntary basis from the time of finalization until the child reaches the age of majority. Service available within Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson and Washington County. We are designed to offer:

- Immediate response to your initial inquiry
- A professional and knowledgeable staff that is committed to the family unit
- Linkage to resources in your community
- Assessment of the family's strengths, needs and family support network
- Individualized wrap-around services
- Access to Adoption Competent Therapists
- Adoption Support Groups for parents and teens



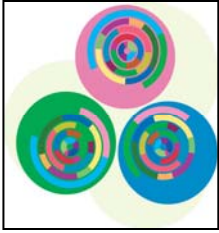
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# Support Group



## COFAM

Circle Of Foster & Adoptive Mentors

**COFAM is an excellent resource for prospective and current Foster and Adoptive Parents who live in Bay & Gulf Counties. They provide support in the following ways:**

- Welcome of new parents
- Help with locating resources (ex. crib, bed, car seats, clothes, etc...)
- Answer questions about realistic experiences as Foster and Adoptive Parents
- Support for families after a child leaves the home
- Post-Adoptive Buddies (sharing tips, etc...)
- Provide a listening ear about foster and adoptive parenting triumphs and concerns
- Provide tips on navigating the child welfare system

The next COFAM gathering will be announced soon. Watch your mail for more details.

**Cathy Harcus/Co-Facilitator**  
819-7902; [blessedcat@yahoo.com](mailto:blessedcat@yahoo.com)

**Jennifer Grant/Co-Facilitator**  
819-4891; [jgrant196819@yahoo.com](mailto:jgrant196819@yahoo.com)

Interested in starting a support group in your area ? Contact Pauline Hughley at 850-522-4485 ext 8369

## Spotlight



**Melissa** – Caucasian/ Female  
Age: 13 Adoption ID# 10411762

Melissa has been described as a very sweet, friendly, and cooperative young lady. Melissa reports that she likes school and her favorite subjects are Math, Science, and Social Studies. Melissa loves to sing and wants to be a singer when she grows up. Melissa loves spending time with her brother and sister and is in need of a family that can help her continue her sibling relationship. She has stabilized emotionally during her stay in her foster home over the last few years and is ready for a family who will commit to her for life.

Contact Candice Stump at 850-522-4485 ext. 8304  
for more information about Melissa

  
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