

TTT National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative

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Focus on Module 8:

Promoting Family Stability



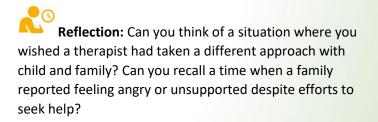
SUPPORTING SUCCESS

Module 8, the final module in the NTI Child Welfare Curriculum, examines ways in which child welfare professionals can help adoptive and guardianship succeed long-term.

ADOPTION & DEVELOPMENT

Experts agree that there are certain adoptionrelated issues that surface again and again for adoptees, adoptive parents, and birth parents as they address various aspects of adoption. Life events can trigger adoption-related feelings that may be laying beneath the surface, such as the death of loved one, or a holiday.

Review Handout – Post-Adoption or Guardianship-related Developmental Tasks. It identifies unique developmental tasks related to stages of the adopted child's psychosocial development.



Helping the Helper:

As an adoption competent child welfare provider, you have a unique opportunity to educate clinicians who are working with children and youth in adoption/guardianship families. Print out the Handout – Parents' Responses Related to Qualities of Therapists to share with a family. This provides a list of the characteristics and skills that an adoption competent therapist possesses. How might you use this in your work with families and therapists?





PROTECTIVE FACTORS

There are qualities parents possess that support positive adjustment after adoption or guardianship, including:

- **Realistic expectations**
- Appropriate parenting skills
- Capacity to manage responses •
- Unconditional commitment to the child

How might you use this list in your assessment of and interactions with families post-permanency?

Become a Coach:

Module 8 Lesson 3 is rich with resources relevant to these protective factors. Provide a listing of the resources to families and coach them to adjust expectations, learn new parenting skills, and make an unconditional commitment to their child. Welcome questions and validate their experiences and efforts. Convey to them that their fears and stresses are normal, and that seeking help is not a sign of failure – but rather strength. Open dialogue will feel supportive and will benefit everyone.

POST ADOPTION SERVICES

Handout - Finding and Using Post Adoption Services is a valuable resource to keep and use with families. Although resources may have been provided in preadoption training, they often get lost along the way. Make copies of this handout and distribute at parent meetings, home visits, etc.

Are there additional resources that your families typically seek out? Take time in a team meeting to develop a list of needs that your adoptive and guardianship families have identified and brainstorm resources that others have found useful. Share positive experiences as well as those providers who were less than helpful.

NTI Training Improved Competence

Reach Out:

NTI's Training for Mental Health Professionals is also available. Encourage mental health partners with whom you work to enroll?

The more adoption competent therapists in your community, the better the outcomes and experiences will be for children and families!



nurture. inspire.

empower.



Contact NTI for more information: ntiadmin@adoptionsupport.org

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