

## APPENDIX 2: ADOPTIONS

03/2018

### **GUIDELINE FOR AN ADOPTION SUMMARY- DETAILED HEALTH HISTORY AND GENETIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY**

Before placement for adoption, the Division shall compile and provide to the prospective adoptive parents a detailed, written health history and genetic and social history of the child which excludes information which would identify birth parents or members of a birth parent's family. The detailed, written health history and genetic and social history shall be set forth in a document that is separate from any document containing information identifying the birth parents or members of the birth parent's family. The detailed, written health history and genetic and social history shall be clearly identified as such and filed with the clerk before the entry of the adoption decree. Upon order of the court for good cause, the clerk may tender to a person identified by the court a copy of the detailed, written health history and genetic and social history.

#### **Adoption Summary of Child**

- A. Birth Information: Prenatal care, birth date, measurements at the time of birth, a description of the delivery, any complications that occurred, alcohol/drug and tobacco involvement of birth parent during pregnancy and how it affected the infant, and any birth defects. Describe the nursery progress, discharge weight and recommendations of the doctor on discharge and results of any special health screenings/tests.
- B. Physical Description: Race, weight, height, hair and eye color, complexion, birthmarks, and bone structure. Describe any physical disabilities.
- C. Developmental and Social History: Social, intellectual, emotional and physical development of the child, noting any delays/limitations. Early developmental milestones should be discussed. For example:

##### *Cognitive Development*

- 1) Recognition of significant others
- 2) Comprehension of fact vs. fantasy
- 3) Language development
- 4) Comprehension of concepts such as time, space, quantity, etc.

##### *Motor Development*

- 1) Head control
- 2) Kicking -- pushing feet
- 3) Lifting chest
- 4) Rolling over
- 5) Holding toys
- 6) Reaching for objects
- 7) Waving bye-bye
- 8) Sitting up
- 9) Eye movements
- 10) Walking
- 11) Crawling
- 12) Running
- 13) Coordination
- 14) Ability to skip
- 15) Ability to catch ball

##### *Social/Emotional Development*

- 1) Smiling - Laughing
- 2) Cooing
- 3) Ability to respond appropriately in social situations
- 4) Self-help skills

D. Health History:

- 1) Medical history (diseases, conditions, disabilities, allergies, hospitalizations, serious injuries etc.), present problems/needs, future problems/needs
- 2) Genetic history
- 3) Dental history, present problems/needs, future problems/needs
- 4) Mental health history, present problems/needs, future problems/needs
- 5) Type of mental health counseling and frequency of sessions
- 6) Sickle cell test results for a child with African American heritage
- 7) Medications (name, dosage, and reason)
- 8) Status of immunizations
- 9) How health problem affects child's life
- 10) Child's attitude about health problems
- 11) List of special health care providers and frequency of appointments
- 12) Parental demands in relation to providing for child's special health care needs
- 13) Special appliances necessary to meet special needs
- 14) Statement whether female's menstrual periods have begun, feelings about, hygiene practices, any complications
- 15) Statement whether male is circumcised

E. Personality: general personality; for example, quiet, outgoing, withdrawn, depressed, angry, sad, happy, alert, shy, talkative, questioning, active, etc.

- 1) Interests, likes, dislikes, talents, special skills
- 2) Causes of depression and how expressed
- 3) Causes of anger and how expressed
- 4) What makes child happy
- 5) How child gives and receives love/affection
- 6) Child's self-esteem
- 7) How child relates to adults, peers, younger and older children
- 8) How child relates to siblings
- 9) Type of people the child likes/dislikes
- 10) Description of what is enjoyable about parenting the child
- 11) Description of what is difficult about parenting the child
- 12) Child's hopes, wishes, and desires
- 13) Fears and worries
- 14) How child relates to parental/authority figures
- 15) Behavioral problems (state whether child has displayed: lying, stealing, fire setting, running away, aggression, destruction, withdrawal, bed wetting, encopresis, self-harm, suicide attempts, depression, abusiveness to animals, cursing, defiance, sexual acting out (be specific), alcohol/substance abuse, etc. and, if so, explain)
- 16) How easy or difficult is the child to discipline -- what works, what doesn't
- 17) How child responds to discipline; what rules is the child accustomed to following
- 18) What rules are easy for the child to comply with, and which ones are difficult for the child
- 19) Eating habits (ability to feed self, table manners, food likes/dislikes)
- 20) Sleeping habits (bedtime routine, nightmares, night light, sleeping difficulties, etc.)
- 21) Grooming/hygiene habits
- 22) How child cares for belongings
- 23) How child relates with pets/animals
- 24) Smoking practices (if tobacco products are used)
- 25) Play habits
- 26) Child's behavior in social situations such as church, restaurants, department stores, etc.
- 27) Knowledge child has about sex
- 28) Experience with sex

F. Daily Schedule:

- 1) Birth to one-year old -- Give detailed information regarding schedule. For example, when discussing sleeping, indicate not only the times the child sleeps but the length of naps; whether child is rocked, patted, etc., to sleep; whether child sleeps with a special blanket, pacifier, or toy; type of bed child sleeps in and the position child prefers to sleep in (i.e., stomach, back, etc.). Indicate the types of food the child likes/dislikes and the amount child eats and intervals between meals. Include the name of the formula.
- 2) Over one-year old -- Briefly describe the child's general schedule on a typical day. Indicate whether the child follows a daily routine or has a flexible schedule.

G. Clothing:

- 1) Sizes of clothing and shoes
- 2) Type/preference of clothes
- 3) Amount of clothing
- 4) Quality of clothing (good condition, worn, etc.)
- 5) Any special requirements in relation to clothing

H. Out-of-Home Placement Experiences:

- 1) Date child entered Out-of-Home Placement and for what reasons
- 2) Describe any child maltreatment and who was offender
- 3) Statement as to how many foster homes and/or institutions child has lived in and length of time in each placement
- 4) Description of reasons for moving from each foster home and/or institution
- 5) Brief profile of current foster family or institutional setting -- for example, foster family composition and life style

I. School Experiences:

- 1) Description of the type of school the child is attending -- for example, public school, special school (school for the deaf, blind, etc.) And whether resource classes/special education classes are utilized and its schedule (whole day, half day, or certain classes)
- 2) Grade level
- 3) History of school attendance (past and present)
- 4) Experience with schools; for example, accomplishments, problems, etc.
- 5) Attitude towards school
- 6) Best subject areas as well as weak areas
- 7) Relationship with school mates and teachers
- 8) How teachers view child
- 9) Involvement with school activities, clubs, sports, band, etc.
- 10) Potential in relation to school
- 11) Attitude towards homework

- J. Siblings: Provide a brief description which includes first name, birth date, living arrangement and sibling status (full sibling, half sibling, step sibling, etc.). If siblings are not placed together, explain frequency of contacts.

**Birth/Legal Parent(s):**

Discuss each parent separately. Obtain as much information about the parents as possible. Be objective with descriptions of the parents and give factual information about them. Do not make derogatory remarks.

- A. Physical and Personality Description: Include race, ethnic background, age, height, weight, eye and hair color, complexion, bone structure, outstanding features, general appearance, and dominant physical traits within the larger family group. Describe personalities and any special talents, interests or hobbies.
- B. Health: Discuss any medical and mental illnesses, genetic history, allergies, alcohol/substance abuse and/or physical disabilities. Discuss any medical and mental illnesses within the extended birth family including those of a hereditary nature. Discuss any history of neglect, physical abuse and/or sexual abuse within the

extended family. Discuss any alcohol/substance abuse within the extended family. If the birth/legal parent is deceased, state the cause and date.

- C. Education: State highest educational level achieved. Discuss overall academic performance, best and weak subjects, and extracurricular activities. Discuss any mental retardation and/or learning disabilities in relation to the birth parent(s) and the extended birth family.
- D. Religion: Provide information about religious affiliation.
- E. Employment: Describe employment history.
- F. Other Significant Information:
  - 1) Birth family's lifestyle
  - 2) History of criminal behavior
  - 3) Reasons child can't return to birth/legal family
  - 4) Date child last had contact with birth/legal family, type of contact, and reaction

### **Preparation of the Child for Adoption**

- A. Dealing with Birth/Legal Family Issue
  - 1) Reasons child gives for entering Out-of-Home Placement
  - 2) Reasons child has been given for entering Out-of-Home Placement
  - 3) Reason child gives why the child cannot return home
  - 4) Reason child was given why the child cannot return home
- B. Child's feelings about not returning home
- C. Dealing with Out-of-Home Placement Issues
  - 1) Reasons child gives for placement changes while in Out-of-Home Placement
  - 2) Child's feelings about Out-of-Home Placement experiences and placements
- D. Dealing with Adoption Issues
  - 1) Child's understanding about the difference in birth/legal family, foster family, and adoptive family
  - 2) Child's feelings about accepting an adoptive family's last name
  - 3) Child's understanding of the adoption process (selection of a family, pre-placement visits, post-placement visits, etc.)
  - 4) Child's feelings, fears and worries about adoption
  - 5) Child expectations about adoption/an adoptive family
  - 6) Child's preferences in relation to an adoptive family

### **Recommendations**

- A. The Adoption Specialist may describe the type of family the child needs and state if the child should not be placed in a certain location due to proximity to birth/legal parents/relatives.
- B. The Adoption Specialist may request the child be placed in a home of the same racial or ethnic heritage if indicated by an individualized determination that this placement is needed to advance the best interests of the child.
- C. If there are siblings, the Adoption Specialist will explain whether they should be placed together. If separation is recommended, reasons will be stated.
- D. The Adoption Specialist may state preferences in relation to pre-placement visits between the child and an adoptive family.