



FAMILY TIES COUNSELING & CONSULTING, LLC.

**Application Agreement for
Trauma Informed Partnering for Safety and Permanence- Deciding Together (DT)
and Adoption Home Study**

As a prospective adoptive parent, you are about to embark upon an exciting and sometimes nerve-racking experience. At times, it will be difficult to remember all the details and information we have provided to you. We have found it helpful to put some of this information in writing so that you can refer to it throughout the adoption process.

Adoptive Parent Training is one of the first steps in the adoption process. The DT course will provide 17 hours of adoption education to prepare individuals and families to make an informed decision about becoming a prospective adoptive family. The DT curriculum is used with individuals and couples who are unable to participate in a group process because of their schedules. The philosophy of DT is based on child welfare staff, foster parents and adoptive parents working together as a team.

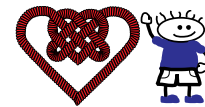
The decision to become an adoptive family is made with the private trainer in the home setting and is based on the capability and willingness of the individual/ family to take on the “role” and develop the skills needed to adopt. Adoptive families who make responsible decisions and grow in their new roles work best with the agency, foster families and others. These partnerships assist children and youth in having stability and permanency with a family.

Successful adoptive parents must be able to:

1. Know their own family so they can assess their individual and family strengths and needs.
2. Communicate effectively.
3. Identify the strengths and needs of children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect and recognize how the past trauma impacts the way they experience the world around them.
4. Build on strengths and meet needs of children and youth who are placed with them.
5. Develop partnerships with children and youth, birth families, the agency, and the community to develop and carry out plans for permanency.
6. Help children and youth develop skills to manage loss and attachment and minimize the risk of a child being traumatized again.
7. Help children and youth identify the need and emotion behind their behaviors. Adoptive parents will respond in ways that will teach the children healthy ways to stay safe.
8. Help children and youth maintain and develop relationships that keep them connected to their pasts.
9. Help children and youth build on positive self-concept and positive family, cultural and racial identity.
10. Provide a healthy and safe environment for children and youth and keep them free from harm.
11. Assess and plan for how adoption will impact their family.
12. Make an informed decision regarding becoming an adoptive parent.

The DT course requires the prospective adoptive parent(s) to:

- attend and participate in seven, one on one adoption education sessions in the home lasting 2 ½-3 hours each
- a minimum of one week must pass between each scheduled session



- complete various “homework” prior to the next one on one session

An Adoption Home Study is one of the many steps in the adoption process. It is a mutual process by which a trained assessor and the prospective adoptive parents determine the prospective adoptive parents' appropriateness and readiness for adoption. The trained assessor will interview the prospective adoptive parents for an identified period of time. In addition, a walkthrough of the prospective adoptive parents' home is conducted. The home study helps the court system determine if a stable environment exists for a family to receive an adoptive placement.

An Adoption Home Study includes but is not limited to:

- signed releases from the identified adult(s)
- prospective adoptive parents' self-assessment of strengths and limitations
- the determination of safety and well-being of the prospective adoptive child(ren)
- prospective adoptive parents' family of origin information, employment, education, marital history, criminal history, emotional status, financial status, parenting experience and feelings regarding adoption

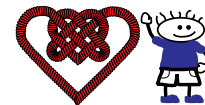
The length of time in which it takes to complete an adoption home study varies; typically it takes 8 to 12 weeks however this time frame is dependent upon the speed in which supporting documents are provided to the agency. As a prospective adoptive family, you are required to gather certain documents for the home study. These documents are necessary to legally establish your identity for the courts. A list of these required documents will be provided by the assessor. Upon receipt of your application and all required supporting documents, an agency representative will review the documents and contact you. You will either receive verification of your acceptance or you may be contacted to discuss your application further.

Prospective adoptive families who attend DT training and request an Adoption Home Study from FTCC will pay a total of **\$3000. These fees are non-refundable.**

A payment of \$1500 is due prior to scheduling the 1st day of class. A second and final payment of \$1500 is due prior to scheduling the adoption home study interview.

Regarding Deciding Together education; it is important to note:

- If more than one month goes by between scheduled sessions, the participant will be dismissed from the course without receiving a refund.
- Married couples or cohabitating couples must take the course together.
- The completion of DT training is the first step in the adoption process.
- The completion of the DT training does not guarantee a private adoption agency or the Community Based Care agency will complete your adoption home study.
- This DT training meets the requirements of Florida Administrative Code 65C-13. Through the Department of Children and Families Family Tyes Counseling and Consulting, LLC was granted a waiver to provide adoption education per Order for Case No. 18-021W.



Regarding the Adoption Home Study; it is important to note:

- Prospective adoptive families are responsible for the fee for the required fingerprint reports for all occupants in the household age 18 and over if there are more than two adult household members. These fees are non-refundable.
- If the prospective adoptive parent(s) have begun working with this agency and a period of six months goes by without hearing from you, after attempts to contact you, this agency will consider the home study file to be closed. If a period of twelve months lapses, a new appropriate fee will be collected.
- The completed home study will be returned to the prospective adoptive family only after all scheduled meetings with the writer have been completed and all home study documents have been received by FTCC. The completed home study will be returned to the client in a timely fashion after approval.
- The determination regarding approval or disapproval of the prospective adoptive family is within the sole discretion of FTCC. The adoptive family does have the right to make a complaint and if not satisfied with the decision, follow with an appeal.

This Application Agreement for Trauma Informed Partnering for Safety and Permanence-Deciding Together (DT) and a subsequent Adoption Home Study is made and entered in to on this _____ day of _____, 20____ by and between Family Tyes Counseling and Consulting, LLC (herein known as "FTCC") and _____ (client names). The mailing address for FTCC is: P.O. Box 8010, Clearwater, Florida, 33758. The mailing address for _____ is:

_____. FTCC shall provide DT training in order to determine the prospective adoptive family's suitability for adoption of a child (or children) under applicable standards as governed by the laws and regulations of the State of Florida. The prospective adoptive family will pay FTCC for its time in conducting the DT training.

The certification of completion will be provided to each participant only after all required training documents and classes are completed.

The determination regarding approval or disapproval of the participant is within the sole discretion of FTCC. In the event the participant is not satisfied with the decision to deny approval, FTCC does not offer an appeal process.

The prospective adoptive family shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless FTCC from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, costs, expenses, actions or causes or actions arising from or related to (a) FTCC's conduct of the trainer, unless such claims, liabilities, damages costs, expenses, actions or causes of action sole arise from or relate to FTCC's gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

The prospective adoptive family understands that in the course of the adoption process, certain documents, considered to be confidential, may need to be made available to persons for specific purposes related to the adoption process. The prospective adoptive family authorizes FTCC to release such information as deemed necessary.

The prospective adoptive family further acknowledges that the certification of completion of DT is valid for a period of 5 years from the date on the certification. As well, the prospective adoptive family understands they

