

Talking to Your Child About Adoption

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4 Key Parental steps to prepare themselves to talk to their child about adoption:

Adoptive parents have the dual task of claiming their child as their own and accepting that their child has birth parents.

- Get comfortable talking about adoption so that you can help their children with adoption issues over the life cycle.
- Claim your child and feel entitled to parent your child.
- Emotionally accept that your child has a history.
- Always remember that your child is curious about himself, not looking for other parents.

6 key tools for parents to use when talking to their child about adoption: Talking about adoption will occur throughout the adoption life cycle. Children's understanding develops as they develop.

- Go slowly, share bits & pieces of information as your child develops.
- Clarify children's questions before you answer them.
- Sometimes parents need to initiate adoption topics once they understand which issues are hard for children to articulate, and which issues tend to occur at particular ages/stages of cognitive development.
- Emotional validation is more important to your child than facts.
- Your tone is as important as the facts.
- Learn to create a holding environment in your home for your child.

If you can create a safe, open, empathic family atmosphere in which adoption issues can be discussed within the security of your home, your child will feel its ok to talk to you about adoption issues and not feel so alone and confused as these issues come up throughout their life. Laying an early foundation will serve you and your child later if you have more difficult information to share or if your child has more difficult emotions to deal with. Talking about adoption teaches your child about intimacy and good relationships, and gives your child a sense of self-confidence. Family is the safe place to talk.

Infertility and Adoption Counseling Center

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