



Adoption Home Study Process:

- Pre-service training (21 hours) if the child has not been placed in the prospective adoptive parent's home for 6 months or longer.
- Minimum of 2 visits to the home by an Adoption Case Manager to gather pertinent information about the family's capacity for adoptive parenting.
- Prospective parents will be asked to provide information about their childhood experiences, motivation for adopting, parenting philosophy, discipline techniques, current lifestyle and the impact that adopting will have on their family.
- Background screening process that includes child abuse and neglect checks, local and state law enforcement checks as well as having fingerprints screened at the federal level.
- References will be requested from the applicant's employers, school officials if they have children, and character references from individuals who have known the family.

Children's Network of Southwest Florida, LLC is a community-based care lead agency contracted with the Department of Children and Families.

Children's Network of Southwest Florida, LLC (FEIN 20-4968228) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and a division of Camelot Community Based Care (FEIN 31-1559302).

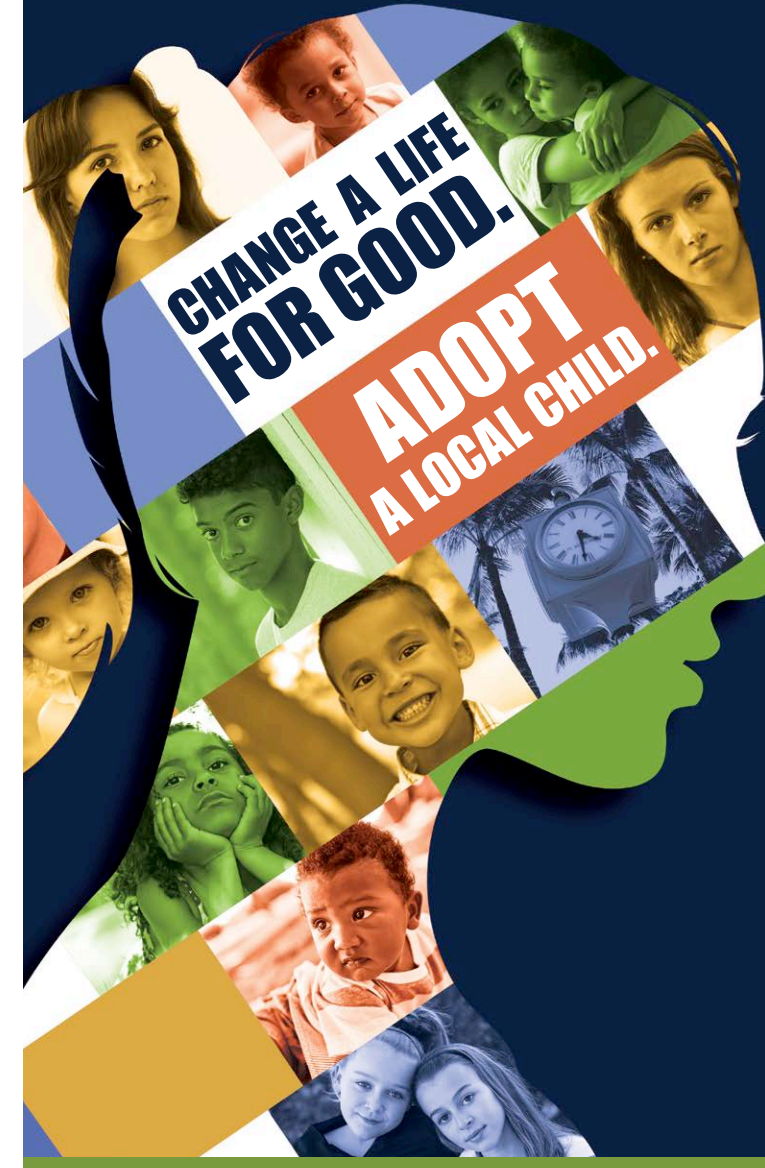


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ADOPTION INFORMATION GUIDE



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Who Can Adopt?

Most adults who can provide a stable, loving home are eligible to adopt. You may be married or single, already a parent or never a parent before, in your 60s or in your 20s, a person of modest means or significant wealth. If you can care for a child, meet their needs, and make a lifelong commitment, you can be an adoptive parent.

Eligibility Requirements:

Child meets criteria of difficult to place, which includes:

- Permanent custody has been awarded to DCF or to a licensed child-placing agency, and who has established significant emotional ties with his or her foster parents or is not likely to be adopted because he or she is:
 - Eight years of age or older;
 - Developmentally disabled;
 - Physically or emotionally handicapped;
 - Member of a minority group;
 - Member of a sibling group, provided two or more siblings remain together for purposes of adoption;

Adoption Benefits:

- **Maintenance Adoption Subsidy** — Monthly payment made for support and maintenance of a difficult to place child until age 18. The standard subsidy is \$417 per month but, at any time, the adoptive parent can request an increase based on the child's needs or changes in the family's circumstances.
- **Medicaid** — Available until age 18. If the child was 14 at the time the adoption agreement was signed, Medicaid continues until age 21.
- **Medical Assistance** — The child's current or projected medical need must be documented before finalization. Medicaid or private insurance must be used prior to requesting medical assistance. This benefit must be pre-approved by the Case Manager before use by families. Payments are made directly to the medical provider.
- **Tuition Waiver** — Applies to children adopted after May 5, 1997 through DCF. This provides for exemption of tuition and student fees at Florida public postsecondary educational institutions until age 28.
- **Post-Adoption Services** — includes a Post Adoption Case Manager, a local adoption support group, and a toll-free support line to help parents. Available until the child reaches age 18.
- **Reimbursement of Non-Recurring Expenses** — Up to \$1000 for one-time expenses related to adopting a difficult to place child. Example: attorney's fees.
- **FASFA (Federal Application for Student Financial Aid)** — Children adopted from foster care at the age of 13 or older are given special consideration when applying for student financial loans or grants. (FAFSA.ED.GOV)
- **Post-Secondary Services & Supports (PESS)** — Monthly financial assistance if youth was at least 14 years of age when adopted out of foster care, has reached 18 years of age but is not yet 23 years of age, has earned a standard high school diploma or its equivalent, is enrolled as a full-time student in a postsecondary institution that is Florida Bright Future eligible and has applied for financial aid, grants and other scholarship.
- **EMAS** — Extension of subsidy benefits if the youth was at least 14* years of age when adopted and, following his or her 18th birthday but is not yet 21 years of age, is involved in a qualifying activity.
- **Qualifying Adoptive Employee Benefit Program** — The program provides employees of state agencies, veteran, active military service members, law enforcement officers, school district employees, employees of the State Universities or Community Colleges, charter school employees, instructional personnel employed by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, tax collector employees, and healthcare practitioners (*healthcare practitioners are not eligible if their gross income exceeds \$150,000*) a one-time benefit of up to \$25,000 per difficult to place child who is adopted.
- **Potential Tax Credit** — for the year in which the child is adopted.
- **The Child Becomes the Legal Heir** — to the adoptive parents.

* Based on availability of state funding for youths adopted at age 14 or 15

CONTACT CNSWFL FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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