

Adopted Children Adapting to New Parents

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Adoption is the transferring of a child from their biological parents to individuals that will act as their substitute parents. The child's new parents will have all the responsibility and rights that would be due to biological parents. Unlike guardianship, adoption has a permanent effect on a child. It requires societal recognition either through legal means or a religious permit. Children almost always have a difficulty adjusting to their new environment after being brought to a new home. Like other human beings, children have emotions that get affected due to various changes in their environment. Children tend to retaliate when introduced to new parents and a new home; they refrain from showing affection and they mostly keep to themselves. Trust is an attribute that adopted children take some time to foster in regard to their new parents. Most adopted children have come from places where there is inadequate food. They have been noted to have a tendency to sneak and store food in their rooms of their new households.

Poor grades in school are another defect that adopted children face. This is mainly related to psychological issues. Most adopted children have their minds occupied with their new home and become absorbed in their unfamiliar environment. Some have a problem coping with school and learning since some adopted children may have been street children who have not been acquainted with going to school. Others face challenges such as mockery from other children since they have been adopted. This usually creates a feeling of retaliation and they tend to push themselves away from other people and blame their new parents for being the cause of difficulty in their lives.

Children have a difficult time communicating and socializing with other people and are mostly retrogressive and introverts. Parents try to build a

communication but they still do not open up or share their troubles or joys with them easily. Adopted children often have an arduous time trying to make friends and getting along with their new siblings if the new parents already had other children. This leads to psychological complications later on in their development. Some may grow to be mentally retarded, while others may become extremely unsocial.

Children that are adopted at an older age usually have a negative relationship with their new parents (Clark, 9). Most often, they do not display gratitude to their new parents and show resentment, anger and a lack of trust until the adoption is made official and is continued for a long span of time. Mostly, they test their parents. Even after gaining their trust, they still continue to test them. Acting out and being mischievous and getting themselves into trouble is also a temporary issue that affects children that have been adopted.

It is vital to allow children to have more time to adjust to their new situation. Attempting to understand them is the only way to cope with them. New parents that show their support during challenging times helps build a secure bond between the child and them. Psychologists suggest some ways to help children cope with their environment: for most children, the challenge comes when a parent is putting in the effort to show affection for the child but at the same time demonstrating that they are responsible and have the right to correct the child if they act out (Clark, 9).

Children that have had a large part of their lives under foster care usually have a bond with their caretakers and other children in foster homes; they have mixed feelings towards adoption. They may be excited to have a new home, but again,

they may have an innate anger towards their new parents for having taken them away from their 'home'.

What can a parent do to help a child cope and adapt to their new home? Place familiar objects around them: pictures of familiar faces, dolls or toys. Creating of a life book that explains where the child came from and where they have been gives them a sense of belonging in their new family. Older children may take more time to adapt than newborn children.

Children and parents go through phases of adjustment. There is usually a 'honeymoon' period where the child is given freedom, and they tend to behave well, are usually happy with their new home and try to please their new parents. For parents that have children adopted from different countries, they must give the children time to adapt to the different environment and learn the new language. Children with special needs such as the disabled should receive specialized care and attention from their adoption family. They should be ready to provide both physical and mental help to the child. Adoption is a more complex form of life for both the child and the parent. But like other children, they need affection (Brodzinsky,141).

Child adaptation to adoption is a long, stressful and delicate procedure. It requires patience and understanding of the child in order ensure proper growth and development.

### References

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