

A Guide for Kids

Going Through

Adoption



Adopt Kansas Kids

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Welcome to Your Adoption Guide	3
1.2. Let’s Check In	4
1.3 Exploring Your Feelings	5
1.4 Let’s Talk About Your Family	6
2 Understanding Adoption.....	7
2.2 What is Adoption?	7
2.3 Who are Adoptive Families	8
3. Meeting Your Case Team.....	11
4. Understanding the Adoption Process.....	15
4.1 Who Chooses My Adoptive Family	15
4.2 Meeting Your Adoptive Family	16
5. What Happens Next.....	17
5.1 Staying in Touch	17
5.2 What if I Have Worries?	18
5.3 Coping with Big Feelings	19
5.4 Court and Finalization	20
6. Conclusion.....	21
6.1 You are Not Alone	21
6.2 Exploring Your Feelings	22
6.3 Certificate of Completion	23

Welcome to your adoption guide!

Hey there!

We know adoption can sometimes be a bit tricky to talk about, even for us kids. That's why this guidebook is here – just for you!

This guide is like your special code to make understanding and talking about adoption a lot easier

If a cool grown-up you trust, like a worker or a friend, is using this guidebook with you, they'll throw in some fun questions and prompts. Don't worry! It's not a test and there are no wrong answers, it's just a way for us to chat about adoption together.



We want to hear all about your thoughts and questions on adoption, or anything else you want to share. This way, we can make sure you're in the loop and feel super supported no matter what!

And here's the best part – you're the leader here! You don't have to do this all at once. Take your time –no need to rush! We want to make sure you have plenty of time to understand everything we talk about.

Okay?

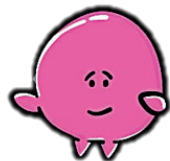
Before we get started,



Uh, what is adoption?



I think I know what adoption is...



I know what adoption is, but not what it means for me



I know what being adopted means, but I still have some questions



I have a pretty good understanding about the adoption process



I am an adoption expert! Do you have any questions for me?



Write any questions you have here!

How do you feel about being adopted?



Color all that you feel

What about adoption makes you feel this way?



Lets talk about your family!

This family tree is super special – because it's your tree!
You get to include anyone in your life who's important to you. We're talking
bio family, foster family, neighbors, and friends – ANYONE!
It is all about making sure they stick around in your amazing life.



What is adoption?

If staying at home with your family isn't possible, you might become part of a new family through adoption.

Adoption is when you join another family where you're safe, loved, and taken care of.

You'll have a new home with your adoptive family, and guess what? You could even get more awesome family members like brothers, sisters, grandparents, cousins, aunts, or uncles for loads of fun adventures together!



But why are kids adopted?

Sometimes kids can't live with their families for different reasons. Your family might not be able to take good care of you or keep you safe. Maybe they got sick or had a hard time making the right choices to protect you.

When this happens, adoption might be a best option for you. But don't worry! There's a team of people called your case team, and their job is to make sure you're really well taken care of in the meantime!

Don't forget, your voice is super important too! We're a team, and we get to figure out together what's the absolute best for you!



What are adoptive families like?

Adoptive families come in all shapes and sizes!

Some of us have one parent,



while others have two.

Some of our families have two moms or two dads,



and some have cool brothers and sisters, who may have even been adopted too!

Some of us live in big cities,



while others call the countryside their home.



And you know what's really awesome?



Some families include furry friends like cats and dogs who join in on the fun!

Draw a picture of what you want your adoptive family to be like!



What is a case team?



They're like a bunch of cool people who really want to help kids and families. They team up to make sure you're safe and happy.

And guess what? They can even help find adoptive families for kids who need one. Your team might have a case worker, a therapist, a GAL, and other awesome grown-ups who really care about you.

Let's meet your case team and learn more about what each of them does to help you!

Case Team Word Search

	S	Y	P	W	J	N	K	E	O	B	D	H	H	V	W	G	P	H	I	I
Judge	G	U	A	R	D	I	A	N	A	D	L	I	T	E	M	E	H	E	R	C
	E	R	S	W	H	E	B	E	J	Z	Q	L	H	W	C	R	I	C	D	A
Guardian ad Litem	H	L	R	R	A	B	I	Y	T	D	T	O	H	I	P	T	V	H	F	S
	B	I	H	R	T	X	Y	C	Y	X	G	Y	T	I	H	N	J	B	T	E
Case Worker	S	Z	C	S	P	V	L	L	H	P	P	L	J	F	A	W	L	Y	N	W
	T	H	E	R	A	P	I	S	T	W	O	J	U	Y	J	A	V	B	Y	O
Therapist	G	Q	P	H	H	J	I	D	V	Q	K	V	D	M	U	N	X	Y	H	R
	H	Y	P	P	M	K	T	N	O	Q	F	E	G	J	G	Y	B	S	F	K
CASA	O	E	P	J	D	B	O	E	C	X	O	Y	E	Q	Q	O	B	J	T	E
	E	B	Z	Q	Z	R	M	N	M	A	A	W	N	S	Z	U	X	Y	P	R
Case Team	O	P	L	G	W	V	S	V	D	P	S	R	F	K	L	A	I	G	X	L
	R	E	J	I	R	H	H	W	M	C	I	A	O	I	B	Z	J	Q	O	T
You	L	X	P	T	I	O	R	A	J	Z	P	L	K	U	R	H	D	S	J	I
	U	Y	M	A	E	T	E	S	A	C	G	E	N	D	W	F	O	N	L	G

Caseworker

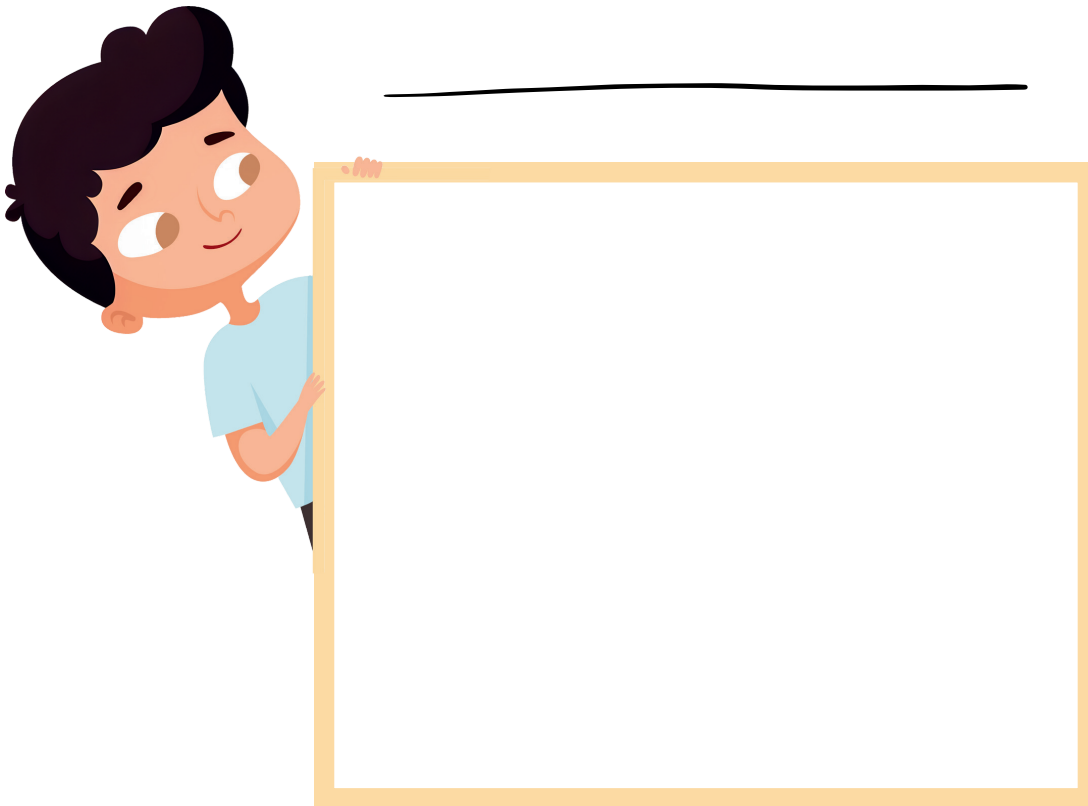
You have probably heard of them before! They might even be looking through this guide with you!

A caseworker is someone who helps kids. They make sure that kids are happy, safe, and healthy. Sometimes, they visit kids' homes to check if everything is going well. If a kid needs help, the caseworker finds a place for them to live where they can be happy and safe.

Some kids have one case worker or lots of different caseworkers.

Their job is to make sure that every kid has a safe and loving home.

My Caseworker's name is:



Here is a picture of us together!

CASA Worker

CASA is short for Court Appointed Special Advocate. Grown ups just say CASA because it is easier to remember.

When a judge needs to decide what's best for you, they might ask a CASA worker for help.

The CASA worker talks to you, your family, and other people who know you well. Then, they tell the judge what they think would be the best thing to do for you.

So basically, a CASA worker is someone who looks out for kids like you and wants what is best for them.

Guardian ad Litem

Guardian ad Litem is kind of tricky to say, so everyone calls them GAL for short.

When important decisions need to be made the GAL's job is to listen to what you want and need. Then, they make sure the judge knows what you want and what they think is best.

The GAL's main job is to make sure that your voice is heard in court and that grown-ups are making good decisions for you.

Judge

The Judge is a person who makes sure everyone follows the rules and plays fair.

If there's a problem or a disagreement that's really tricky, people go to the judge to help them make a fair decision. The judge listens to everyone and then decides what is right and what should happen next.

They are kind of like a referee, making sure everyone plays by the rules.

Therapist

A therapist is just a fancy word grown up use for someone who is really good at listening and talking to kids about their feelings.

When you're feeling sad, mad, or worried about something, they're there to help you feel better. They might play games and teach you tricks you to help you understand your feelings and find ways to make you feel happy again.

It's just like when you go to a doctor when you're feeling sick, you can go to a therapist when you're feeling not so great on the inside.

Someone I can talk to about my feelings is:

Who chooses my adoptive family?

You will chat with your case team about what things you want in a family.

Like if you want siblings, where you'd like to live, or what kind of activities you would like to participate in. Then your case team will work on finding a family that is a great fit just for you!

What is one thing that is important to you to have in a family that you want your case team to know?

Sometimes, your adoptive family might even be someone you already know, like a teacher, or a coach, or a friend!

And sometimes, the best family for you is someone you haven't met yet. But don't be scared! We'll talk more about that!

Tell us about any adults you may be close to that you would like for your case team to explore.



? If my adoptive family is someone that I have not met before, will I get to meet them before moving in?

Yes!

You will meet your adoptive family and have the chance to get to know them before moving in with them.

After meeting my adoptive family, will I get to share my thoughts?

Absolutely!

After meeting the family, you can talk to any trusted grown up about your thoughts and questions!



Will I still be able to stay in touch with people who are special to me?

Maybe, it just depends, but you should definitely talk to your case team about it!

When you are adopted it does not mean you forget your family or other important people.

You may have memories of your mom/dad/sisters/ brother/grandparents or foster families who looked after you.

Do you want to make a list of people you want to make sure you keep in your life?



What if I've got some worries about being adopted?



You should totally talk to your case team, family, therapist, or a grown up you trust.

They'll listen to you and make sure you get the answers you need.

It's totally okay to feel worried about being adopted. And it's okay to have lots of feelings about it too.


There's no 'right' way to feel about adoption, you know?

It is important to take care of ourselves and our feelings though!


Lets make a toolkit just for you to help manage your big feelings!




Here are some things we do to help when we have big feelings!




I like to dance and move my body



I like to feel the sunshine and breath fresh air



I like to play and cuddle with my dog



I like yoga! Focusing on my breathing helps me feel calm.



How do I get adopted by my adoptive family?

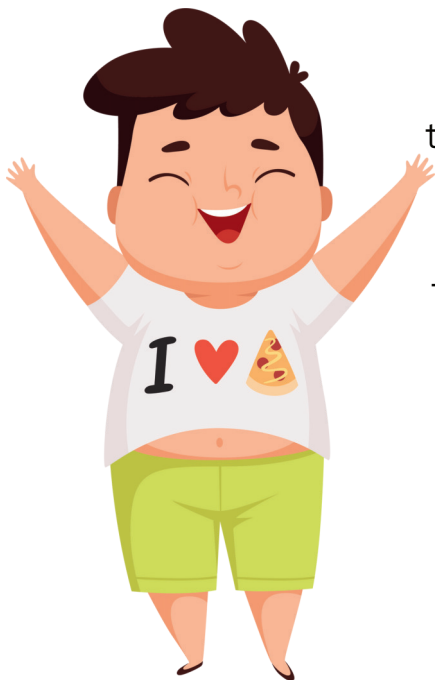
To get adopted by your new family, you and your family have to feel ready. That the most important step!

Then, a bunch of important papers get sent to a special place called the Court. A judge there decides if it's okay for you to officially become part of your adoptive family forever. They just want to look through all the papers and make sure it's the best thing for you and nothing was missed.

But don't worry, at this point, everyone has already talked about it loads and loads of times!

What happens on the day of court?

Sometimes grown ups will call this Finalization day. This is the day your adoption becomes official or "Finalized".



It is like the super coolest moment ever! It's like getting a super cool certificate that says, "You totally belong here, and we're a part of your family now!"

The judge might ask you or your adoptive parents questions to make sure everyone knows what's going on.

If you're feeling nervous, it's totally okay to ask a grown-up you trust about what might happen! They can help you feel better and know what to expect.

You are not alone!
Lots of people have been adopted!



Now that we've completed this guide, how do you feel about being adopted?



Color all that you feel

How is it different from when we started?



CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

We are proud to award this certificate to

for completing their
Guide for Kids Going Through Adoption

