

A decorative dotted line forms a large rectangle. A light blue square is attached to the left side of the top-left corner, and a darker blue square is attached to the right side of the bottom-right corner.


Adoption Journeys

in Massachusetts

Parents' Guide to Services

Child and Family Services, Inc.

66 Troy Street, Suites 4 & 5
Fall River, MA 02720
1-800-97-CARE-4 (800-972-2734)

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• • • • • *Your Guide to Adoption Journeys* • • • • •

Adoption Journeys Agency:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail _____

Notes/Scheduled Appointments:

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The Massachusetts Department of Children & Families provides funding for the
Adoption Journeys in Massachusetts program

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What is Adoption Journeys?

Adoption Journeys in Massachusetts is a post-adoption service of Child and Family Services provided through regional agencies throughout Massachusetts. It is a network of services and supports for adoptive families, after an adoption has been finalized, or guardianship has been granted. This network is built at all levels, across the state, in each region, and in communities. **Adoption Journeys** supports families in building their own networks. **Adoption Journeys** services are funded and supported by the Department of Children and Families.

Adoption Journeys services are provided to families who have adopted children (i.e. the adoption has been finalized) or who have been designated permanent legal guardians by a court order.

Why Are Post-Adoption Services Important?

All families experience varieties of events which call for adjustment and change, including births and deaths, marriage and divorce, the first day of school to 'empty nest', among many others. Families also grow and change as family members grow and change. The family with two toddlers and a preschooler is very different from the same family 10 or 12 years later, with 3 teenagers. In a sense, a family journeys through life, and at points along the journey, families must stop and consider what direction their next steps will take.

Adoption is both an event and a process. When a family's journey includes adoption, all family members have to learn to live as a new family, where each member brings her or his own history, preferences, strengths and needs. This experience can be filled with joy, wonder and learning. It includes aspects non-adoptive families usually do not experience, such as the legal processes of adoption.

Adopted children: Not all children who join families through adoption have been abused or neglected. But some children do bring to adoption their own histories of disappointment, hurt, injury, loss and trauma. They may have experienced physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse; inadequate physical care, food, clothing and shelter; violence, substance abuse and/or parental mental disorders.

Children who are removed from their birth homes due to abuse or neglect often experience a number of foster home placements.

As a result of these experiences, some children learn that adults are not to be trusted, that relationships will not last, and that life is full of danger requiring constant vigilance. Some children have not learned how to calm themselves, nor how to accept soothing and calming from others. Having experienced little care and compassion themselves, they may have little empathy for others. Children with challenges like these may have great difficulty in forming attachments within the family and in making and maintaining friendships.

These experiences are often reflected in children's behavior, which may include frequent, severe tantrums, injury to self and others, destruction of property, lying, violence, withdrawal and isolation.

Adoptive Parents: Parents, too, bring their own histories, as well as hopes, expectations, concerns, strengths and needs. When embarking on their adoption journey, parents may hope to embrace a new family, to be able to love and care for a child, to form a caring attachment for the child, and to experience the child's attachment to them. Parents also have childhood histories which may affect their beliefs about family relationships. They have their own stories in creating their own families, which may include disappointment in attempts to conceive birth children. Birth and adopted children in the family will also have hopes and fears about the change in their family, and these changes may be profound – for example, the oldest child may no longer be the oldest!

Extended Family and Community: Family members, friends, and the community are also engaged in this process. The community (such as school or medical personnel) may not comprehend the choice and process of adoption. When seeking supports, adoptive families may find that extended family and friends question their choices, and that not all social services or community agencies have expertise in adoption or the challenges and rewards adoption presents to families.

Adoption Journeys is based on an understanding of the joys and challenges adoptive families face, as well as of the strengths and resources families have to cope with these challenges. **Adoption Journeys** is designed to support adoptive families in exploring and understanding their strengths, resources and needs.

Who Provides Adoption Journeys Services?

Adoption Journeys services are provided through Child and Family Services, Inc.

Adoption Journeys services are available throughout Massachusetts and can be accessed through a state wide phone number: 1-800-97-CARE-4 (800-972-2734). Child and Family Services coordinates services in each region of the state. You may also call the regional site listed below, during normal business hours.

- **Southeast Region:**

66 Troy St., Suites 4 & 5, Fall River, MA 02720 (508) 676-5708

- **Boston and Metro South Region:**

265 Medford St., #604, Somerville, MA 02143 (617) 776-8030

- **Northeast and Metro North Region:**

439 So. Union St., #203B, Lawrence, MA 01843 (978) 687-5852

- **Central Region:**

21 Cedar St., Worcester, MA 01609 (508) 753-5425

- **Western Region:**

28 No. Maple St., #4, Florence, MA 01062 (413) 320-4680

Staff of **Adoption Journeys** include licensed social workers, counselors, child welfare and human services workers, as well as adoptive parents.

What Services and Supports are Available?

*T*his section describes the range of services available through **Adoption Journeys**. However, because families have different strengths and needs, you and your **Adoption Journeys** worker will work together to design supports and services which meet your own needs. The range of services are:

Information and Referral

Adoption Journeys can respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the toll free number: 1-800-97-CARE-4 (800-972-2734). Families, service providers, therapists and others call the I&R line, and connect directly with **Adoption Journeys** staff. Callers may be seeking specific information, or may not be sure exactly what they seek. The first step is to assess the caller's need. Responses may be one or more of the following:

Information: The **Adoption Journeys'** I&R staff have extensive knowledge of the resources available for adoptive families and maintain a list of services available to adoptive parents and families locally, statewide, and nationally. Information may include:

- **Adoption Journeys** services
- the time and location of support groups for adoptive families
- names and locations of other local, state, and national organizations and agencies that provide services for adoptive families.
- available educational materials on adoption
- issues related to search for the child's birth parents
- legal resources for adoptive families.

Brief Assessment: Parents and service providers may call the I&R line seeking information about adoption and resources related to adoption. Or they may call hoping to discuss issues related to a specific adopted child with someone knowledgeable about adoption. The first step, then, is a

discussion with the I&R staff to determine what is needed. When the issue is related to a specific child, I&R staff will engage in joint problem solving discussions with the caller. As a result of this discussion, the parent and the I&R staff may decide a referral to the regional **Adoption Journeys** agency, or other service providers is called for.

Referrals: Referrals are provided for **Adoption Journeys** services, other agencies and organizations, and for therapists or counselors with expertise in adoption.

Follow Up: Occasionally it happens that information the caller needs is not readily available. In that case I&R staff will research the request and call back with the information.

Identifying Risk: If the I&R staff learns anything during a call that indicates a child or adolescent is at risk of harming himself or others, staff assist families in connecting with mental health crisis intervention services. **Adoption Journeys** staff follow up on these calls to ensure that timely intervention linkages occur. When the crisis is resolved, **Adoption Journeys** offers follow-up services needed to provide stabilization to the family.

If I&R staff become aware during a call that a child has been abused by a caretaker, the I&R staff are required to make a report to the Department of Children & Families.

NOTE: I&R services are also available directly through regional agencies listed above.

What kind of issues do people call about?

*Parents, service providers and other professionals call the **Adoption Journeys** I&R line for a number of reasons. For example, parents may call to obtain information about: support groups, issues related to education, disability and health, or in locating specialized summer camps. Families may need information about the range of 'normal' adolescent behaviors they might expect, or help with solving problems such as obtaining adoption sensitive school assignments. They also call as a result of challenges such as behavioral and mental health concerns, adjustment issues, attachments and relationship concerns. Sometimes these issues may undermine the stability of the family, and put the adoption at risk.*

Regional Response Teams:

More often than not when parents contact **Adoption Journeys** they are seeking information and support on challenging issues which are causing some stress in the family. At least half of the families who contact **Adoption Journeys** are facing behavioral, relationship or other issues related directly to the adopted child. The Regional Response Team is a component of **Adoption Journeys** which provides a brief, comprehensive response to families experiencing increased stress. There is one team at each regional agency, providing a response within 24 hours of a call to the I&R line. The response may be made by telephone, or, depending on the family's need and request, at the family's home, or other community location.

The team is composed of a Response Team Leader, a Response Worker and an Adoptive Parent Liaison (an experienced adoptive parent). The family's needs and desires determine which members of the Team meet with the family, as well as where meetings occur. Meetings tend to occur more frequently during periods of increased stress.

The Family is the Expert: **Adoption Journeys** recognizes that families are the experts in knowing their strengths, resources and needs. At times of stress, though, it may be difficult for families to recognize and apply their own expertise. Regional Response Teams aim to join with families to develop plans to support the strengths and resources of a family, and to enlist additional resources where needed. Regional Response Teams aim to help families identify and connect with their own networks of supports and services.

Making a Plan: The first step for the Regional Response Team is to get to know the family, the family's experience, current level of stress, and hopes. Together, then, the Response Worker and the family can identify goals aimed at reducing stress, and supporting the family's strengths and resources. For some families, stress is reduced with greater understanding of the range of normal, expected experiences after adoption. In some instances, stress is so intense that the adoption itself is at risk, and more intensive interventions are called for, such as intensive family treatment or temporary out-of-home placement.

Putting the Plan in Place: Once the family and the Response Worker have developed a plan (which may, but not always, be done at the first meeting), the family and Response Worker together put the pieces of the plan in place. During periods of intense stress, Response Workers may visit with the family one or more times a week, depending on the family's request and need.

Strengthening Family Supports: While Regional Response Team services are intended to be relatively brief, one aim of the Response Team will be to help the family strengthen its own resources, and enhance its network of supports. This effort may include referral for other **Adoption Journeys** services, such as Respite Services and Family Support Services.

Why do people call the Regional Response Team?

Every call, like every family, is unique. However, families often face similar issues and challenges. Some families may experience stress when adopted children enter adolescence and struggle to discover who they are in the world, not only as a teenager but as a young adopted person. Other families seek support when younger school aged children resist getting on the school bus at a time when an older brother or sister is going off to college. At times, families are dealing with behavioral, mental health or other issues so severe that they wonder if their adopted child needs the intensive services of a temporary out-of-home residential care. Regional Response Teams can support families directly and through referrals and advocacy to obtain resources such as developmental evaluation centers, therapists with expertise in adoption, Department of Mental Health services, and linkages to other state agencies.

Respite Services:

As the word '*respite*' implies, these services are intended to provide a break for families, sometimes from the normal or increased stress of family life, sometimes simply from the normal routine.

Adoption Journeys Respite Services are not intended as a response to or intervention for a mental health crisis.

Sometimes, respite comes through the provision of child care for the adopted child, and at other times by providing adopted children and their parents with opportunities to meet other children and/or families with similar experiences. The type, intensity and duration of the Respite Service are planned based on the needs of the family, and are limited by the availability of funding.

Respite Services fall into three categories: child care respite, child recreational respite, and family social/recreational respite:

Child Care Respite: This service involves care of the adopted child in the parents' absence in the family's home, in the child care provider's home, or in another designated setting, for a period of hours (including a full day) and/or overnight. Child Care Respite providers are selected in one of two ways. In the first, the regional agency screens providers (including a criminal record check), matches providers to needs of family, and pays providers directly.

The second way is for the parents to hire their own child care provider, who is paid by voucher from the regional agency. The frequency and amount of time for child care respite are determined with the family, according to the family's needs, and the availability of resources.

Ways of Using Child Care Respite: Families use Child Care Respite in all sorts of ways: An adoptive grandparent, in the hospital following surgery, needed someone to bring her granddaughter to the hospital several times to visit her. A couple was able to find someone with exactly the right kind of behavioral training to take care for their very challenging adopted child for a few hours, so they could attend a school conference for another child.

Child Recreational Respite: **Adoption Journeys** organizes and sponsors a host of activities for groups of adopted children, supervised by agency staff or agency approved providers. These

activities can include picnics, trips to see children's shows, learning activities (such as music groups, pottery making), overnight adventures (such as hiking or 'sleepover' at the Children's Museum). Parents do not attend these activities. Some of these activities may have a small fee to offset expenses.

Family Social/Recreational Respite: These activities are designed for adopted children and at least one parent (and often other family members as well). Organized and sponsored by **Adoption Journeys**, these family events include outings and activities such as apple picking and hay ride in the Fall, day passes to a "water park" in the Summer, learning how maple syrup is made as part of a "sugaring brunch". Some of these activities may have a small fee to offset expenses.

Matching: Parents and **Adoption Journeys** staff work closely to determine which form of respite (or combinations of respite) would be most supportive for the family, and most appropriate for the child. For example, at times parents may feel their relationship is enduring a great deal of strain as a result of challenges arising from their adopted child. Child care respite may provide the opportunity for a night out as a couple. Or, an adopted child may believe herself to be "different" and isolated from other children. Social gatherings with other adopted children may help the child to cope with those feelings, and understand she is not alone.

It is also very important if, for example, a family is interested in social/recreational respite services, to know if a child has any medical, physical or behavioral issues that will need to be monitored during a social/recreational activity.

More than One: It is also important to know that families can receive more than one type of Respite Service from **Adoption Journeys**.

Family Support Services:

Adoption Journeys provides a range of group and one-on-one support services for parents and adopted children. Group services provide opportunities for parents or adopted children to meet with other parents and children to explore common concerns and interests, through a course of regular meetings. Regular meetings allow adults and children to share common experiences, learn from, and support each other. Parents meeting in a support group may learn how other parents have successfully coped with behavioral challenges. Adopted children can form friendships and learn that other children have had similar experiences.

Adoption Journeys provides group services through regional agencies and through other agencies and organizations. There are five types of group services:

Parent Support Groups: Parent support groups focus on the interests and concerns of group members, with guidance provided by a trained facilitator. Parents may meet to share concerns about their adopted children, about what has worked, or what has not worked, in responding to emotional and behavioral challenges. Support groups address a wide range of family issues, including areas such as: parenting adolescents, sibling rivalry, behavior concerns, family transitions, open adoption, adoption searches, and handling their child's first meeting with birth parents and/or family.

Usually, support groups meet for an hour, or an hour and a half, once or twice a month. They may meet for a set period of time (e.g. for six months) or for a longer, or indefinite period of time – depending on the needs and interests of the group members, and the availability of resources.

Psycho-Educational Parent Groups: Psycho-educational groups usually focus on a specific issue, and meet for a set number of times. For example, a series of six sessions may focus on the adopted child in adolescence, or on specific behavioral issues that may arise in children who have been abused. The educational component is provided by **Adoption Journeys** staff or by an expert recruited and hired through **Adoption Journeys**. Psycho-educational groups include time for participants to discuss their own experiences in relation to the information presented.

Special Project Groups: At times parents and/or, **Adoption Journeys** staff, initiate a special project for groups of parents or adopted children. Often these groups focus on an activity (such as scrap booking or quilting) which allows participants to create something meaningful while sharing their experiences with peers. These groups usually meet once a month for 6 to 8 months.

Children's Groups: Children, as well as adults, can benefit from talking with their peers about their experiences. **Adoption Journeys** provides several different types of children's groups where children can discuss their own feelings and experiences in a safe and supportive environment. These groups are facilitated by trained **Adoption Journeys** staff. Some children's groups are developed to address specific issues or populations, such as a project for children to develop their own story book, or groups for children adopted from other countries. Most groups are an hour or an hour and a half long, and meet for 6 or 8 sessions.

Adolescents' Groups: In many ways, adolescents need their own space and time. **Adoption Journeys** provides groups specifically for teens whose experience of the normal changes of adolescence is entwined with their experiences of adoption. For example, most teens explore their identity, often experimenting with different identities over a period of time. For teens who are adopted, identity has additional dimensions related to birth families and places. Adolescent groups allow teens an opportunity to explore these issues, as well as to develop and strengthen social skills. Adolescent Groups are facilitated by trained staff, and meet for one to one and a half hours, usually once a month, for 6 to 10 months.

How to find a group: Information and referral for all **Adoption Journeys** group services are available through the I&R line, regional agencies or with the Response Worker. **Adoption Journeys** also promotes the development of independent support resources for parents and adopted children.

Parent Liaisons: **Adoption Journeys'** staff have trained a small group of volunteer adoptive parents to provide one-on-one peer support to other adoptive parents on an as-needed basis. In some cases, **Adoption Journeys** have hired parent liaisons as either full-time or part-time employees to provide support to families. Whenever possible, **Adoption Journeys** staff match parent liaisons with families by language, culture, and specific adoption circumstances.



Training Services:

Sometimes, when families seek help in their communities (from social service agencies, schools, etc.) they encounter misunderstandings and myths about adoption. Otherwise skilled professionals may misdiagnose an issue, or label parents as failures because the professionals are not well informed about adoption. **Adoption Journeys** provides training to professionals who are interested in becoming more informed and enhancing their expertise in helping families deal with issues related to adoption. For example: training may be provided to therapists on attachment issues; or to educators on which classroom strategies are not successful with adopted children; or for service providers in general on how to include parents as true partners in planning and team meetings. Trainings frequently include less formal one-on-one consultations to individual and family therapists, school adjustment counselors and court personnel.

How it Works: Using Adoption Journeys

Call early and call often!

*The best way to make use of the full range of **Adoption Journeys** services is to make contact to talk about your family's interests and needs. A full discussion is the first step in deciding which **Adoption Journeys** resources are best for you. This discussion will start on the phone, and while sometimes the information you need can be provided in one phone call, you should always feel free to call again. An important element of **Adoption Journeys** services is advocacy and coordination, in assisting families to build their own support networks, and you can use the I&R resources to design your own network of services and supports. In many cases, however, the initial discussion can lead to a visit with an **Adoption Journeys** Regional Response Team.*

Assessing Your Strengths and Needs: **Adoption Journeys** staff will gather information about your family (family members, experiences, ages, strengths, needs) as part of an assessment. This may mean staff will meet with parents, adopted children, and other family members as needed, to develop a full understanding of your family. This is essential for any service, since it allows the family and **Adoption Journeys** to identify family strengths and needs, and design plans best suited to the family.

Using the Regional Response Team: The Regional Response Team is designed to respond to families who are experiencing a high level of stress as a result of issues arising from adoption. Families may decide they need additional resources to manage or understand a particular issue, or families may feel such extremes of stress that the adoption may be in jeopardy. Regional Response Teams provide service at the family's home, or at other places in the community designated by the family. There are three members in the Team: a Team leader, response worker and adoptive parent liaison. The Team's goal is to connect with parents, with the adopted child, and with other family members as needed. The Team will work out with parents how often they visit, where they visit, and for how long. Any one or all members of the Team may meet with the family. Usually one or two Team members are involved.

Using Respite Services: Respite services are designed to respond to the needs of each family, so it is important to consider all the ways it might be used. For example, parents may use respite to have a night out as a couple; to attend to the needs of another child or family member; to take advantage of the opportunity to meet other adoptive families (and strengthen their own support networks). Whatever type or combinations of respite services families use, it is essential that the **Adoption Journeys** staff get to know the family and the child, so that respite services can be planned and matched most effectively. This may involve one or more meetings with **Adoption Journeys** staff, and/or child care respite providers.

Using Family Support Services: Families may use group or one-to-one support services after an initial call to the I&R line or regional agency. Parents may seek information, or the opportunity to talk to other adoptive parents, in order to navigate the process of post-adoption adjustment. Parents and children often seek the benefits of an organized way to connect with others who have similar experiences and concerns.

Many families start attending support groups after working with the Regional Response Team through a stressful situation. Many of these families continue to participate in and benefit from support groups long after they no longer receive services from the Regional Response Team.

Similarly, when families are in the midst of a challenge, one-to-one support relationships with other adoptive parents and adopted children, who have successfully coped with similar challenges, can help get through the rough spots.

MORE THAN ONE?

*Because services are designed to meet unique family needs, families can receive all of **Adoption Journeys** family services [Information and Referral, Regional Response Team Services, Respite Services, and Family Support Services] or any combination of these services simultaneously. Families can also participate in more than one type of support group if they would benefit from doing so. For example, during any given year, parents in one family might participate in both a Parent Support Group and Special Project Group and their children might also participate in a Children's or Adolescents' Group.*

Other Resources

The following listings represent the information available at the time this guide was printed. Contact information may change.

- **Adoptive Families Together (AFT)**

Provides a network of support, including groups, social events, and special events.

MSPCC/AFT
99 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02110

Phone: 617-587-1563
www.mspcc.org
go to link entitled "Programs & Services"

- **Dept. of Early Education and Care (EEC)**

EEC was created by consolidating the former Office of Child Care Services with the Early Learning Services Unit of the Department of Education to oversee early education and care and after-school services for families

EEC's Central Office address is:
EEC
51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210

Phone: 617-988-6600
Fax: 617-988-2451 TTY: 617-988-2454

<http://www.eec.state.ma.us/index.aspx>

- **Adoption Community of New England, Inc. (ACONE)**

ACONE is a New England based organization whose purpose is to provide education, information, advocacy and support for all who are touched by adoption and foster care.

ACONE
45 Lyman Street #2
Westborough, MA 01581

Phone: 508-366-6812 or
800-93-ADOPT (800-932-3678)
Fax: 508-366-6813
<http://adoptioncommunityofne.org/index.php>
Email address: info@adoptioncommunityofne.org

- **Tapestry Books**

Tapestry specializes in adoption. We understand the adoption process and are knowledgeable about the literature, and we are committed to making it easier for families to find appropriate resources

<http://www.tapestrybooks.com/about.asp>

- **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

A service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, we provide access to print and electronic publications, websites, and online databases covering a wide range of topics from prevention to permanency, including child welfare, child abuse and neglect, adoption, search and reunion, and much more.

Child Welfare Information Gateway
Children's Bureau/ACYF
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20024

Direct questions and comments via Email: info@childwelfare.gov

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/index.cfm>

- **North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)**

NACAC is a national organization offering education, parent support, research & advocacy for parents and professionals.

North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)
970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106
St. Paul, MN 55114

phone: 651-644-3036

fax: 651-644-9848

e-mail: info@nacac.org

<http://www.nacac.org/>

- **ADOPTION SUBSIDY RESOURCE CENTER**

Since 1994, NACAC has operated the national Adoption Subsidy Resource Center to educate parents and professionals on Title IV-E Adoption Assistance in the United States.

Phone 800-470-6665

Phone 651-644-3036

or e-mail at adoption.assistance@nacac.org.

<http://www.nacac.org/adoptionsubsidy/adoptionsubsidy.html>

- **Department of Mental Health**

The Department of Mental Health, as the State Mental Health Authority, assures and provides access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individuals of all ages, enabling them to live, work and participate in their communities.

Department of Mental Health
Central Office
25 Staniford Street
Boston, MA 02114

Phone: 617-626-8000
TTY: 617-727-9842
Email: dmhinfo@dmh.state.ma.us

<http://www.mass.gov>
then enter in the “search” box Department of Developmental Services.

- **Department of Developmental Services (Formerly known as Department of Mental Retardation.)**

The Department offers service coordination and family support services to eligible children with developmental disabilities and their families.

Central Office
500 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02118

Phone: (617) 727-5608
Fax: (617) 624-7577
TTY: (617) 624-7783
Email: Info@state.ma.us

<http://www.mass.gov>
then enter in the “search” box Department of Developmental Services.

- **KidsNet**

Kid's Net offers training, limited family respite and limited campership opportunities, for DCF foster, pre-adoptive and kinship parents.

Boston: 617-983-5800
Metro: 508-753-2967 or 888-754-4535
Northeast: 978-682-9222
Central: 508-753-2967
West: 413-734-4978 or 413-747-0040
Southeast: 508-586-2660

<http://www.mspcc.org>
go to link entitled “Programs & Services”

- **Federation for Children with Special Needs**

The Federation is a center for parents and parent organizations to work together on behalf of children with special needs and their families.

Federation for Children with Special Needs

1135 Tremont Street, Suite 420

Boston, MA 02120

Phone: (617) 236-7210 or (800) 331-0688 (in MA)

Fax: (617) 572-2094

Satellite Offices:

Western Mass.

Phone: (413) 323-0681 or

(866) 323-0681

<http://fcsn.org/index.php>

- **The Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation**

The Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC) was established by the State Legislature in 1983 to ensure that low-income people with critical non-criminal legal problems would have access to legal information, advice and representation.

Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation

7 Winthrop Square, 2nd floor

Boston, MA 02110-1245

Phone: 617-367-8544

Fax: 617-426-0656

<http://www.mlac.org/>

Glossary

Adoption: a court action in which an adult assumes legal, parental and other responsibilities for another person, usually a child.*

Adoption competent: Having expertise in social, legal, familial and cultural aspects of adoption.

Birth family/parent/child: Relationship established through conception and birth and/or through having a common birth parent.

Disruption: Interruption of an adoption prior to finalization.

Dissolution: Termination of an adoption after finalization (requires court action).

Finalization: The final legal step in the adoption process; involves a court hearing during which the judge orders that the adoptive parents become the child's legal parents.*

Guardianship: A guardian is a person who fulfills some of the responsibilities of the legal parent role, although the courts or birth parents may continue to hold some jurisdiction of the child. Guardianship is subject to ongoing supervision by the court and ends at the child's majority or by order of the court.*

At Risk Family: A family experiencing a degree of stress as a result of the adoption which jeopardizes the continuation of the adoption.

* Abstracted from National Adoption Information Clearing House Glossary. Retrieved from <http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/admin/glossary.cfm>

Notes And Numbers

Use this section for recording notes, names, phone numbers and other useful information

Resource Type: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail _____ Web Address: _____

Other contact information (e.g. cell phone) _____

Notes:

Resource Type: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail _____ Web Address: _____

Other contact information (e.g. cell phone) _____

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Other contact information (e.g. cell phone) _____
Notes:

Resource Type: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Fax: _____ E-mail _____ Web Address: _____
Other contact information (e.g. cell phone) _____
Notes: