

How to Assess an Agency

When interviewing prospective agencies, you may want to ask the following questions:

- Who can adopt from the agency?
- What kind of children does the agency place (ages, backgrounds, etc.)?
- Where do the agency's children come from, and how many are legally free for adoption?
- How long, on average, must one wait for a child? What is the time lapse between certification and placement?
- What are the agency's homestudy requirements (paperwork, classes, fees, home visits, etc.)?
- How much does a completed adoption cost?
- Can the agency help applicants locate sources of financial aid, including subsidies?
- What are the homestudy requirements?
- What types of pre- and post-adoption support services does the agency offer?
- What is the agency's policy on matching children with families?
- Can the agency provide references from parents who have recently adopted from the agency? Also, check with your State Adoption Specialist to see if any complaints have been filed against the agency.

The first step to choosing an agency is to attend an informational meeting. At the meeting you will:

- Meet social workers and learn about policies and practices regarding adoption
- Learn what types of children are available for adoption through the agency
- Be asked to examine your feelings about adoption, and judge if adoption is the right choice for you
- Gain insight into the challenges and rewards of adoptive parenting
- Obtain application materials