



# Foster Care & Adoption

**TOOLKIT**



# Foster Care & Adoption Toolkit

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## Foster Care & Adoption Toolkit

## A Note from the Pastor

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*“He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will” (Ephesians 1:5).*

When God wants to give us a sense of our security in salvation, He speaks in the language of adoption. That’s one reason why Christians have always led the way in the ministry of adoption. Having been received into the family of God on terms of grace, what could be more natural than to receive others?

You are holding in your hands a resource for considering this costly and glorious privilege. This guide is not exhaustive, but it can push the first domino over in a larger process of prayer and decision. God is going to call some of us to the ministry of foster care and adoption. Others of us will be called to support those God calls. And all of us are called to pray.

Please join me in asking the Lord to make His name great in the world today through the ministry of foster care and adoption. If we can help you further, it would be our privilege to do so. May the Lord guide you, as you live to make the real Jesus non-ignorable in our city and far beyond!

Pastor T.J.

## Foster Care Programs & Eligibility

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**Domestic foster care:** Tennessee Department of Children’s Services’ description of foster care (and adoption): [www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption.html](http://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption.html)

*When children are not able to stay safely in their own homes and there isn’t a relative who can care for them, they often have to come into state custody. The department’s first goal for children is to work toward a safe return home to their families. Foster parents provide nurturing and supportive homes in which the children’s emotional, physical and social needs can be met, while issues and concerns in the immediate family can be addressed....*

*Foster care is meant to be a temporary service until the family and in some cases, the child, can address the problems that made placement necessary. But, when parents cannot, or will not, make their home safe for the child’s return, other permanent options are sought....*

*It is important to note, Tennessee Foster Parents are dually approved to adopt, which means they have the first option of adopting a child they have fostered, or another child who has become eligible for adoption.*

**Safe families for children:** Helping families through times of crisis — Safe Families for Children provides temporary placement of children in your home for parents that are going through a temporary crisis, allowing parents to take necessary steps for stability. The hope is that this program prevents kids from entering into the foster care system, with a 95% reunification rate. The primary need for this program is children ages 0-5 years, and most placements range from 30 days to 3 months. The main difference between Safe Families and foster care is that it is a voluntary program with families reaching out for help, parents retain rights, and there is no compensation as with foster care.

If you are interested in temporarily hosting a child in need through Safe Families, this is the process you can expect:

1. Application
2. Screening (background checks, references, home visit)
3. Placement
4. Reunification

For more information, please visit: [www.bethany.org/help-a-child/emergency-care/safe-families](http://www.bethany.org/help-a-child/emergency-care/safe-families)

**Transitional foster care:** Imagine facing violence, extreme poverty, unexpected separation from family, gang extortion, or sex trafficking—all before the age of 12. That’s the reality for many unaccompanied migrant children coming to the U.S without a parent or guardian to keep them safe. As a transitional foster parent, you provide a safe, temporary home for a child until they can be reunited with a family member.

## Eligibility requirements for foster care

Foster parents can be: single or married, and with or without children of their own.

- Must be at least 21 years of age
- Must be fingerprinted and pass a background check
- Must be able to meet the financial needs of your family
- Must complete a health exam
- Must participate in an Informational Meeting
- Must complete a training program called TN-KEY
- Must participate in a home study
- *Private agencies may have additional criteria*

Find the list of requirements here: [www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption/foster-care/become-a-fp.html](http://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption/foster-care/become-a-fp.html)

# HOW TO BECOME A TN DCS FOSTER PARENT

Fill out and submit the Inquiry Form for Potential Foster Parents at [tnfosters.gov](http://tnfosters.gov) or call 877-DCS-KIDS and leave a message.



## Inquiry

## Callback



DCS will call within five business days to discuss minimal requirements and answer questions.

Attend required Informational Meeting (IM) then complete self-assessment.



## Informational Meeting

## Train



If interest remains, complete TN-KEY pre-service training.

Home Study begins during training and will include extensive criminal history check and other paperwork and will provide a recommendation on approval or denial.



## Home Study

## Approval



If approved, your home will be assigned a Foster Parent Support Worker and you'll be ready to accept placements!

## Foster Care Agencies

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Please note that this is by no means an exhaustive list but rather several agencies that Immanuel families have worked with in the past.

### Agape

Website: [www.agapenashville.org](http://www.agapenashville.org)

Phone: (615) 781-3000

Address: 4555 Trousdale Dr, Nashville, TN 37204

Programs: Foster care – [www.agapenashville.org/how-to-become-a-foster-parent](http://www.agapenashville.org/how-to-become-a-foster-parent)

Faith based agency that places children (ages 0-17).

Foster Care Informational Meeting: [www.agapenashville.org/inquiry-and-calendars](http://www.agapenashville.org/inquiry-and-calendars)

### Bethany Christian Services

Website: [www.bethany.org/locations/us/tennessee/nashville](http://www.bethany.org/locations/us/tennessee/nashville)

Phone: (615) 242-0909

Address: 230 Great Circle Rd #229, Nashville, TN 37228

Programs: Safe Families for Children, Transitional Foster Care

Safe Families for Children: Macy Pate; e-mail: [mpate@bethany.org](mailto:mpate@bethany.org); phone: (615) 487-1784

Transitional Foster Care: Faith Vines, email: [fvines@bethany.org](mailto:fvines@bethany.org); phone: (615) 917-5128

Places children with experienced foster parents and assigns a support team (specialists, supervisors, doctors, therapists, etc.).

Bethany Foster Care Info Meeting: Discover current needs for foster families, what to expect, and the licensing process. Register at: [www.bethany.org/locations/us/Tennessee/Nashville/events](http://www.bethany.org/locations/us/Tennessee/Nashville/events)

Bethany Transitional Foster Care Info Session: Register at: [www.bethany.org/locations/us/Tennessee/Nashville/events](http://www.bethany.org/locations/us/Tennessee/Nashville/events)

### Department of Children's Services

Programs: Foster care

Davidson County Foster Parent Training: Joye Duvall; e-mail: [joye.g.duvall@tn.gov](mailto:joye.g.duvall@tn.gov); phone: 615-854-1819

Training Information: [www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/fpt/potential.html](http://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/fpt/potential.html)

Inquiry Form: [www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption/foster-care/form.html](http://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption/foster-care/form.html)

Registration: [www.stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/tnkey\\_reg](http://www.stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/tnkey_reg)

### Youth Villages

Website: [www.youthvillages.org/about-us/locations/tennessee/middle-tennessee/](http://www.youthvillages.org/about-us/locations/tennessee/middle-tennessee/)

Phone: (615)-250-7200

Address: 3310 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

## Foster Care & Adoption Toolkit

Programs: Therapeutic and traditional foster care and adoptions

Foster Parent Training: Carly Coryell; e-mail: [karly.coryell@youthvillages.org](mailto:karly.coryell@youthvillages.org); phone: 615-250-7300

Youth Villages places children of all ages. They provide 24/7 care, a counselor, training classes, and support groups. Their mission is to help children and families live successfully. Inquiry form:

[www.youthvillages.org/services/adoption/adoption-inquiry-form/](http://www.youthvillages.org/services/adoption/adoption-inquiry-form/)

### Other Agencies

If you are looking for more options, here is a list of some of the other foster agencies in Middle TN: Camelot, Centerstone, Chambliss, MillerRich, Monroe Harding, Omni Visions, Palmer Home (includes Jonah's Journey), StepStone, Tennessee Baptist Children's Home, and Therapeutic Interventions, etc.

Some of them are faith based and many of them focus on different aspects of foster care (i.e. Jonah's Journey at Palmer Home places young children of incarcerated women, and MillerRich places "medically fragile" children, etc.).

## Support organizations

### TN Kids Belong (TKB)

Website: [www.tnkidsbelong.org](http://www.tnkidsbelong.org)

Their goal is to educate and support the community. They are not a child placing agency. Goals of the organization include: Increasing number of foster families in the community, supporting social workers in the community to prevent burnout, and ensuring foster families feel well-supported.

Foster Care Q&A Monthly Panels: hear from foster families, social workers, and foster youth. RSVP at: [www.tnkidsbelong.org/events-1](http://www.tnkidsbelong.org/events-1)

### TN Alliance For Kids

Website: [www.TNallianceforkids.org](http://www.TNallianceforkids.org)

Their goal is to "engage the community to meet the emergent and ongoing needs of the children in foster care, those at risk of coming into foster care, and those aging out."

### TN Foster and Adoptive Care Association

Their goal is to encourage and motivate foster and adoptive parents. Advocacy Support Group; membership fee to join.

## Adoption Quick Facts

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### Who may adopt in Tennessee?

- Must be over the age of 18
- Must be a resident in the state of TN for 6 months prior to filing for adoption
- Must be fingerprinted and pass a background check
- Must be able to meet the financial needs of your family
- Must go through adoption training, paperwork, and home study
- *Private agencies may have additional criteria*

### Who are most of the children waiting to be adopted in Tennessee?

- Children with special needs
- Sibling groups
- Children 10 years of age and older

### What about international adoption?

Adoptive parent requirements vary with each country

### What are the costs associated with adoption?

- Foster Care (Foster-to-Adopt): \$0 - \$2,500
- Licensed Private Agency Adoptions: \$5,000 - \$40,000+
- Independent Adoptions \$8,000 - \$40,000+
- International Adoptions \$15,000 - \$50,000+

Anticipate the ongoing expense of counseling / therapy after adoption.

**Public Agency:** Adopting through the foster care system is the least expensive means by far, as many fees are waived in hopes of placing children into homes or covered by the state. In some cases, children are provided with a monthly stipend by the State even after adoption. However, families should be prepared to pay out of pocket for various expenses not covered by the state prior to adoption while the child is still in foster care (better or more frequent therapy, daycare, specific needs, etc.).

**Private Agencies:** Private agency adoptions conducted outside the public child welfare system vary widely in costs, as they are based on the agency used and the individual adoption circumstances. Overall costs may include the home study, court and legal fees, pre-adoption and post-adoption counseling for birth parents, birth parent medical and legal expenses, adoptive parent preparation and training, social work services, and interim care for a child.

**International:** Depending on which countries are involved, there may be additional costs as well, including: medical care for children, translation fees, foreign attorney & foreign agency fees, passport &

visa processing fees, visa medical examinations, travel & long-term stays in a foreign country, and counseling & support after placement.

## Questions to consider when choosing an agency

### All Adoptions:

- How many children have been successfully placed?
- What is the average placement time?
- How soon after I apply will my home study begin?
- How long will it take from home study approval to the referral of a child?
- What services do you offer birth mothers?
- What services are available to us, the adoptive family?
- What is your disruption rate?
- What will the total cost of adopting be? Does the organization provide a breakdown of fees in writing? Are there any hidden fees?
- Does the organization have a report of fiscal accountability? (how do they spend their money?)

### International:

- How long has the agency been involved in inter-country adoptions?
- In which countries does the agency have inter-country adoption programs?
- How many children has the agency placed? [country of interest and overall]
- Has the agency ever been denied accreditation?
- What are the agency's minimum requirements for prospective parents?
- Does the agency have overseas staff or use the services of facilitators or lawyers?
- How do the agency's contacts that work abroad identify children needing families?
- Do they provide financial assistance to the orphanages that children come from?
- What, if any, is the refund policy in the event that an adoption does not occur?
- What services are provided after your child comes home? For how long are these services available?
- What training or support does the agency offer to help parents as they prepare to adopt?
- Do they help prepare clients for the adoption trip/travel plans?

## Adoption Agencies

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Please note that this is by no means an exhaustive list but rather several agencies that Immanuel families have worked with in the past.

### Local agencies

#### Agape

Website: [www.agapenashville.org](http://www.agapenashville.org)

Phone: (615) 781-3000

Address: 4555 Trousdale Dr, Nashville, TN 37204

Programs: Infant adoption, independent adoption

#### Bethany Christian Services

Website: [www.bethany.org/locations/us/tennessee/nashville](http://www.bethany.org/locations/us/tennessee/nashville)

Phone: (615) 242-0909

Address: 230 Great Circle Rd #229, Nashville, TN 37228

Programs: Domestic infant adoption (as of spring 2022, not currently accepting new applicants at this time), independent adoption

#### Department of Children's Services

Phone: (615) 741-9701

Programs: Foster care and adoption

Approximately 80% of children who are adopted from foster care in Tennessee are adopted by their foster parents. If a child in DCS custody becomes available for adoption, after kinship the foster family caring for that child is the first option for adoption (see DCS's description of foster care under "Foster Care Programs & Eligibility above"). This helps ensure the child already has a relationship with adoptive parents who have helped him or her navigate change, trauma and uncertainty and already offered the child comfort, safety and love.

#### Miriam's Promise

Website: [www.miriamspromise.org/adoption](http://www.miriamspromise.org/adoption)

Phone: (615) 292-3500

Address: 3701 Hillsboro Pike, Nashville, TN 37215

Programs: Domestic adoption, independent domestic adoption, international adoption

#### TN Kids Belong (TKB) *(not an adoption service provider)*

Website: [www.tnkidsbelong.org](http://www.tnkidsbelong.org)

TKB's gallery of TN kids who are legally available to adopt – [I Belong Project™](#)

## Small World Adoption

Website: [www.smallworldadoption.com](http://www.smallworldadoption.com)

Phone: (615) 754-6540

Email: [info@smallworldadoption.com](mailto:info@smallworldadoption.com)

Address: 9695 Lebanon Road, Suite 120, Mount Juliet, TN 37122

Programs: Domestic adoption, international adoption

Small World is a Christian, nonprofit agency founded in 1985 in Nashville, TN for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the lives of children at home and around the world.

## National agencies

### All God's Children International

Website: [www.allgodschildren.org](http://www.allgodschildren.org)

Phone: 503-282-7652

Address: 1400 NE 136th Ave., Suite 201, Vancouver, WA 98684

Programs: Domestic adoption, international adoption

All God's Children International is a Christian orphan care ministry answering God's call to provide the love and care that every child deserves.

### American Adoptions

Website: [www.americanadoptions.com](http://www.americanadoptions.com)

Phone: 1-800-ADOPTION

Address: 7500 W 110th St. Suite 500, Overland Park, KS 66210

Programs: Domestic infant adoption

With involvement in more than 300 domestic adoptions each year, American Adoptions is currently one of the largest domestic adoption agencies in the United States. For information regarding their services or to request an adoption information kit, you can email [adoptions@americanadoptions.com](mailto:adoptions@americanadoptions.com) or fill out a form here: [www.americanadoptions.com/adopt/free\\_info](http://www.americanadoptions.com/adopt/free_info)

### Lifeline Children's Services

Website: [www.lifelinechild.org/adoption](http://www.lifelinechild.org/adoption)

Phone: (205) 967-0811

Address: 100 Missionary Ridge Birmingham, AL 35242

Programs: Domestic adoption, international adoption

Lifeline's mission is to bring gospel hope to vulnerable children through adoption. They have a successful history with 3,100 international placements and 1,200 domestic placements to date.

## Lifetime Adoptions

Website: [www.lifetimeadoption.com](http://www.lifetimeadoption.com)

Phone: 1-800-923-6784

Lifetime Adoption is a Christian domestic adoption agency with over 30 years of experience.

## Nightlight Christian Adoptions

Website: [www.nightlight.org](http://www.nightlight.org)

Phone: (502) 423-5780

Programs: Domestic adoption, international adoption

The word “Nightlight” connotes a warm, safe place for children. We are lighting the path home for children in need. We are lighting your adoption journey. And we are working in the name of Jesus, the light of the world, who made it possible for us to be adopted into God’s family. We offer that light to the birth parents, children, and adoptive parents we serve. Nightlight is affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals, and a member of the National Christian Adoption Fellowship. Inquiry form: <https://rb.gy/8gjlt>

## Youth Villages

Website: [www.youthvillages.org/about-us/locations/tennessee/middle-tennessee](http://www.youthvillages.org/about-us/locations/tennessee/middle-tennessee)

Phone: (615)-250-7200

Address: 3310 Perimeter Hill Drive, Nashville, TN 37211

Programs: Domestic adoptions

Youth Villages’ mission: Youth Villages helps children and families live successfully. Inquiry form: [www.youthvillages.org/services/adoption/adoption-inquiry-form/](http://www.youthvillages.org/services/adoption/adoption-inquiry-form/)

## Support for Foster & Adoptive Families at Immanuel

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At Immanuel, we want to think of fostering and adopting as an opportunity for all of us to show hospitality in even more radical ways. As the body of Christ, we are here to help sustain, encourage, and bear burdens as you and your family change and grow into something new that helps make Jesus non-ignorable to our church, city, and far beyond. Below is a list of ways that we hope to rally around and support you through your foster and adoption journey.

### 1. Community Group

Using the framework already built into the church, Community Groups are one of the best ways to get connected and are a crucial avenue of support. They are a place where you can say, "I belong"; where people can come with honesty and not feel weird for sharing the real state of their heart; a place where you can make gospel friendship, grow as a disciple in Christ, and find real help for the day to day good works of being a Christian.

Practically, when a specific need for a family arises, a family's Family Partner (below) will first reach out to the Community Group leader to see if the Community Group can meet the need. However, more importantly, your Community Group is a frequent, ongoing system of emotional and spiritual support who you share life with on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

If you are not currently part of a group, you can go to: [www.immanuelnashville.com/groups](http://www.immanuelnashville.com/groups) to learn more and sign up. For any questions, you can email: [groups@immanuelnashville.com](mailto:groups@immanuelnashville.com).

### 2. Family Partners

Family partners are a family's go-to support person. As your primary support person, we hope for *every* family who is in the process or has already fostered or adopted to be matched with a Family Partner. We recognize that your needs as a fostering or adoptive family can change from minute to minute, day by day. Your Focus Partner will check-in with your family at least weekly, or more frequently if needed, to know how others can best care for you. They are responsible for distributing needs, setting up meal trains, sending out prayer requests, etc. so the burden is off you, and you can fully focus on your family.

We know it's hard to ask for help (we all struggle with this!), but you have a church family who deeply desires to care for you in this weighty, beautiful, and messy role. Don't be afraid to ask for help — clothing, furniture, meals, assistance with errands, housework, babysitting — whatever it may be!

If you don't already have a Family Partner and want to be matched with someone, please reach out to Madison Knowe at [madisonhohman@gmail.com](mailto:madisonhohman@gmail.com)

### 3. Foster Care and Adoption Group

The Foster Care and Adoption Group at Immanuel is an affinity group of families and support people who care about foster care and adoption at Immanuel. We gather once monthly on the first Sunday of the month in the Immanuel Gym for a time of encouragement and fellowship, an opportunity to get

updates from families, and to pray. We also send out invites to gatherings, requests for needs from families that can't be met through Community Groups, or updates about fostering families through the Foster Care and Adoption Group email list.

To be added to the list, fill out the "Get More Info" form at [www.immanuelnashville.com/groups](http://www.immanuelnashville.com/groups) (scroll to the bottom of the page).

### 4. Mentorships

Mentorships are a supplemental support system for families walking through the same process and can share in their experience. For example, families partnered may both be fostering through DCS, doing domestic infant adoption, transitional foster care, or have adopted internationally. It is important to note that this is *not* to replace a family's Family Partner. A Family Partner is not actively fostering or adopting and their primary role is support. The mentorship relationship is very flexible and is on your own terms. Email Madison Knowe at [madisonhohman@gmail.com](mailto:madisonhohman@gmail.com) if you'd like to be connected with a mentor or are interested in being a mentor.

### 5. Financial Assistance

Please see the "Finances" section for information on how we would love to support you in this way.

## Opportunities to Support Families at Immanuel

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*“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2*

At Immanuel, we think of fostering and adopting as an opportunity for all of us to make the real Jesus non-ignorable by making Immanuel an endlessly hospitable and generous place for families involved in foster care or adoption. We see an example of communities of support banding around people doing work that the Lord has called them to in Nehemiah 4. In this passage, Judah was called by the Lord through the prophet Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The builders of the wall faced much opposition and *“the strength of those who bear the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall”* (4:10). As a result, the Jews who lived nearby returned to the area, and Nehemiah stationed them at the base of the wall *“with their swords, their spears, and their bows”* (4:13) to protect those who were building the wall and he told them to *“remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes”* (4:14).

We model our support after this passage. Many Immanuel families are called to do the hard work of fostering and adopting. These families are committed to this work, but their strength can often fail by the weight of the burdens from this huge undertaking. As a part of a family’s system of support you have the privilege of defending those doing the hard work of fostering and adoption by bearing one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). And all the while, we remember the greatness of our God, pressing on diligently to the work that He has called us to.

Below are some specific opportunities:

### 1. Pray

Praying is the most significant way that you can intercede for families who are engaging in foster care or adoption. Check out this link for a guide for specific ways to pray for children in foster care or adoption, fostering or adoptive families, biological families, the system of foster care and adoption, and for Immanuel as we support children in foster care and/or adoption: <https://rb.gy/tcqkl>

### 2. Join a Community Group

Community groups are the most direct and impactful route for loving and supporting other members of Immanuel. If you want to love and support a family who is fostering, join a community group and get to know the families in your group, love them sacrificially, and seek them out as you live your lives together: [www.immanuelnashville.com/groups](http://www.immanuelnashville.com/groups)

Become a Family Partner! Family Partners are typically connected through Immanuel Community Groups and are a family’s go-to support person. We want to take the burden off the family for reaching out for help - that’s where the Family Partner comes in! Our hopes for this role include weekly check-ins, distributing needs to your Community Group or to Immanuel as a whole, training and/or learning how to specifically love fostering/adoptive families. Learn more here: <https://rb.gy/rdfc9>

### 3. Join the Immanuel Foster and Adoption Care Email List

By joining the CCB group you will have access to important emails that are sent out, need requests that arise, meal trains, and prayer opportunities. Sign up at [www.immanuelnashville.com/groups](http://www.immanuelnashville.com/groups) (scroll to the bottom of the page).

Help meet needs when they come across your email. Note that CCB emails sometimes go to your “Junk” file, so you may have to change some settings.

Attend our monthly lunch gatherings which are a time of fellowship and encouragement. This is a great way to get plugged in and get to know families, their journeys, and where support opportunities could be! You could also provide child care for monthly meetings.

### 4. Provide Specialized Support

Join the list of people at Immanuel who can provide specialized support by filling out this form: [www.forms.gle/gxRVTwm3bRf2NAaMA](http://www.forms.gle/gxRVTwm3bRf2NAaMA)

Specific needs that families at Immanuel have right now include:

- Trauma informed child care and respite care
- Medical and mental healthcare
- “Exceptional Education” training

### 5. Help Financially

Finances can be one of the greatest fears and barriers for families wanting to adopt. While adoption in particular can be quite costly, there are costs associated with paperwork, home studies, therapy, and kid-specific needs across the board for programs. Supporting a family financially in their adoption journey, or for support once a child has been placed is a huge blessing.

Many adopting families create fundraising pages — these will be posted on CCB.

Gift cards (Target, Wal-mart, and Amazon) are welcomed to help cover specific needs that arise for home studies and once a child is placed (bedroom furniture, clothing, car seats).

If you are gifted in fundraising, event planning, and rallying groups of people, our families would love your help.

### 6. Learn How to Intentionally Care for Families



*Tennessee Kids Belong Training (1-hour Video at the bottom of the page):* helpful for those in close relationships with the family or who may be interacting with the child/children directly. Also consider checking out this powerpoint with great, quick tips: <https://rb.gy/6edt1>

[www.americaskidsbelong.org/lp/tn\\_foster-family-wrap-resources](http://www.americaskidsbelong.org/lp/tn_foster-family-wrap-resources)

## Foster Care & Adoption Toolkit



*Show Hope's Conferences and Resources:* A great place to start for a helpful list of books (for parents, support folks, and children), articles, YouTube videos, DVD materials, Show Hope Conference and training information, etc.

[www.showhope.org/recommended-resources](http://www.showhope.org/recommended-resources)

## Finances

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At Immanuel, we recognize the wonderful, yet weighty call of entering into the foster care and adoption world. We know that finances can be one of the greatest fears and barriers when it comes to adopting, and we are here to help. We have always been amazed at the generosity of the Immanuel congregation — you have a church family who eagerly wants to rally around you in this process.

### Fundraising pages

If you create a fundraising page, please send it to Madison at [madisonhohman@gmail.com](mailto:madisonhohman@gmail.com) so that it can be distributed church-wide, or so we can spotlight your journey and family before the church.

### Adoption grants

For additional assistance, please check out this list of adoption grants that can be applied for.

**Abba Fund**, Offers interest free loans and an Adoption Grant Fund for Christian families. [www.abbafund.org](http://www.abbafund.org)

**A Child Waits Foundation**, This organization provides grants up to \$7,000, as well as loans for families adopting internationally. They typically approve more than half of the qualified families that apply. [www.achildwaits.org](http://www.achildwaits.org)

**Associates Home Loan**, This organization awards \$1,000 grants to home-study-approved families twice a year. [www.associateshomeloan.com/adoptiongrant](http://www.associateshomeloan.com/adoptiongrant)

**Brittany's Home**, Brittany's Hope believes all children deserve the right to grow up in a nurturing family environment. They provide financial assistance to make adoptions possible for some of the most high-risk, special needs children. [www.brittanyshope.org/adoption-grants](http://www.brittanyshope.org/adoption-grants)

**The CMomA Gifting Program**, The CMomA Gifting Program objective is to give up to twenty \$5,000 CMomA Grants per year to eligible new parents adopting older children in need (age 3-17) or special needs children of all ages, both domestically and internationally. [www.cmoma.org](http://www.cmoma.org)

**Families Outreach, Inc.**, [www.familiesoutreach.org/adoption-grant-program](http://www.familiesoutreach.org/adoption-grant-program)

**The Gift of Adoption Fund**, The Gift of Adoption Fund is a non-profit foundation funding donations and fundraising events. Gift of Adoption Fund is established to assist adoptive parents by providing cash grants to subsidize a portion of the costs of adoption. Grants are awarded on a monthly basis with sums ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000. The grants are available to single parents, families with previous children, and prospective adoptive parents who are adopting internationally, independently or through an agency. [www.giftofadoption.org](http://www.giftofadoption.org)

**God's Grace Adoption Ministry**, This organization provides grants for Christian families that meet income guidelines. [www.ggam.org](http://www.ggam.org)

**HelpUsAdopt**, This organization provides grants for domestic and international adoptions. Families must demonstrate a financial need and have a completed a home study to apply. [www.helpusadopt.org](http://www.helpusadopt.org)

**Katelyn's Fund Orphan Ministry**, [www.katelynsfund.org](http://www.katelynsfund.org)

**Laila Rose Foundation**, Provides financial assistance to meet the medical and/or surgical needs of foreign-born adopted children and their adoptive families.

**Lifesong for Orphans International**, Offers grants and loans. Will also work with your church in providing grants and loans through donations. [www.lifesongfororphans.org](http://www.lifesongfororphans.org)

**Lydia Fund**, Provides financial assistance to Christian couples who are adopting internationally. [www.lydiafund.org](http://www.lydiafund.org)

**The National Adoption Foundation Grant Program**, The grant program is open to all legal adoptions including public or private agency adoptions, international, special needs or adoptions facilitated by an attorney. There is no income requirement. There is a simple one-page application and the only requirement to apply is to have completed a home study, or have one in progress. Grants can range from \$500-\$2,000 depending on the needs of the family and circumstances surrounding the adoption. [www.fundyouradoption.org/adoption-grants](http://www.fundyouradoption.org/adoption-grants)

**Open Hearts for Orphans**, Their primary goal is for children with special needs to be adopted into loving homes. [www.openheartsfororphans.org/adoption-grants](http://www.openheartsfororphans.org/adoption-grants)

**Sea of Faces Foundation**, Grants are available to Christian couples, with a completed home study and who are working with a licensed and accredited agency. Grants are given up to \$5,000 and are given in the months of March, June, September and December. Families must have a referral before grants is given. A \$5 donation is requested at time of application. [www.seaoffaces.org](http://www.seaoffaces.org)

**Show Hope**, Steven Curtis Chapman's organization — this excellent organization is devoted to the ministry of orphans around the world through donations and mission opportunities. [www.showhope.org](http://www.showhope.org)

**Sparrow Fund**, The Sparrow Fund cares for caregivers, supporting families in foster care and adoption, as well as those who care for vulnerable children. They offer grants for families to receive individualized support as they build their family via adoption, often children with medical needs. [www.sparrow-fund.org](http://www.sparrow-fund.org)

**WAT! (We Adopt Too!)**, Black Family Adoption Assistance, Inc is an organization that provides adoption grants to black families seeking to adopt. Their mission is to help increase the number of black adoptive families through financial assistance and increase adoption awareness in the black community. [www.watadoptions.org](http://www.watadoptions.org)

**Zoe Foundation**, This organization assists families who are adopting children with Trisomy 21. [www.zoefoundation.org](http://www.zoefoundation.org)

## Additional loans & subsidies

**Adoption Tax Credit**, The Adoption Tax Credit grants adoptive families a maximum income tax break to cover adoption expenses. For more information visit the official webpage for the IRS adoption tax credit at [www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html](http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html)

**Employer Adoption Benefits**, A growing number of companies and government agencies are offering adoption benefits to their employees. Check with your employer to find out your company's policies. Benefits may include:

- Adoption information and referral services
- Legal expenses
- Agency fees
- Medical expenses
- Post-adoption counseling
- Paid or unpaid leave time for the adoptive parent
- Financial reimbursement

**Military Reimbursements** — The Department of Defense Adoption Reimbursement Program reimburses military adoptive parents up to \$2,000 per child.

**Lifesong For Orphans**, Interest-free loans of \$5,000 to \$10,000 help couples overcome the initial “cash flow crunch” of adoption expenses. Couples enter a covenant agreement to repay the loan through manageable payments. Repayments are used to help the current needs of new adopting families. For more information visit, [www.lifesongfororphans.org](http://www.lifesongfororphans.org)

**Pathways For Little Feet**, Pathways for Little Feet has created a designated account called the Family Fund that receives donations and provides interest-free loans to eligible families. As loans are repaid, the money is put to work in new loans. [www.pathwaysforlittlefeet.org/ministries/#family-fund](http://www.pathwaysforlittlefeet.org/ministries/#family-fund)

## Helpful Resources

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### Books

*Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches*, Russell Moore: “The doctrine of adoption - God’s decision to adopt sinful men and women into his family - stands at the heart of Christianity. In light of this, Christians’ efforts to adopt beautifully illustrate the truth of the gospel. In this popular-level and practical manifesto, Russell Moore encourages Christians to adopt children and to help other Christian families to do the same. He shows that adoption is not just about couples who have struggled to have children. Rather, it’s about an entire culture within evangelicalism—a culture that sees adoption as part of the Great Commission mandate and as a sign of the gospel itself.”

*Be the Bridge Transracial Adoption Bundle: Guide + Journal*, “You may have started out your transracial adoption journey thinking that all of the challenges could be overcome with love. And now you're starting to realize that you need more tools and direction so you can be a healthy parent who is equipped to raise a child of color in a complex, racialized world.”

*Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control: A Love Based Approach to Helping Children with Severe Behaviors*, Heather Forbes & Bryan Post: The authors “have written a profoundly insightful and absolutely critical book for parents and professionals. This book gives us the understanding to truly provide emotional safety for children with trauma histories. By revealing the connection between the body / mind system as it relates to trauma and stress, it challenges all of us to embrace a paradigm shift. It reveals our own fears, invites us to step into our child’s internal world, and demonstrates how to respond to them with love. This book inspires us to perceive all human beings on a deeper level and relate to one another with a higher level of consciousness.”

*The Connected Child: Bring hope and healing to your adoptive family*, Karyn Purvis, David Cross, & Wendy Lyons Sunshine: The Connected Child has helped countless adoptive and foster parents better connect with their children as they seek to love and care for them in a way that honors God.

*The Connected Parent: Real-Life Strategies for Building Trust and Attachment*, Karyn Purvis & Lisa Qualls w/ Emmelie Pickett: This book is filled with “practical advice and powerful tools. ...You will learn how to effectively use simple scripts, nurture your child, combat chronic fear, teach respect, and develop other valuable tools to facilitate a healing connection with your child.”

*Created to Connect: A Christian’s Guide to The Connected Child*, Dr. Karyn Purvis, Michael and Amy Monroe: This book was created to help illuminate the biblical principles that serve as the foundation for the philosophy and interventions detailed in Dr. Purvis’ book, “The Connected Child.”

*Foster and Adoptive Parenting: Authentic Stories that Will Inspire and Encourage Parenting with Connection*, Kenneth Camp: “This encouraging and inspirational book will give you

hope to keep parenting with connection to help your wounded child heal” In this book you will find “techniques to parent with connection, real life experiences, and tips and advice.”

*Loving Our Kids on Purpose: Making a Heart-to-Heart Connection*, Danny Silk: “Rather than traditional approaches, this book teaches parents how to train children to manage their freedoms and protect their important heart-to-heart relationships.” This book “introduces paradigms, perceptions, skills, and ideas that help parents reduce fear by eliminating the tool of punishment...”

*No-Drama Discipline: The Whole-Brain Way to Calm the chaos and Nurture Your Child’s Developing Mind*, Daniel Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson: “Highlighting the fascinating link between a child’s neurological development and the way a parent reacts to misbehavior, No-Drama Discipline provides an effective, compassionate road map for dealing with tantrums, tensions, and tears - without causing a scene.”

*Until Every Child is Home: Why the Church Can and Must Care for Orphans*, Todd Chipman: “A wise and experienced guide, Todd Chipman offers practical direction on how local congregations can do better in our quest to care for those Jesus calls ‘the least of these my brothers.’” –Russell Moore

*When Love Isn’t Enough: A Guide to Parenting With RAD-Reactive Attachment Disorder*, Nancy Thomas: “When Love is Not Enough: A Guide to Parenting Children with RAD-Reactive Attachment Disorder brings hope and healing tools to parents and professionals working to help challenging children. Effective interventions, a full step-by-step plan, clearer insight and understanding make a powerful difference in helping children heal.”

*The Whole Brain Child*, Daniel Seigel & Tina Payne Bryson: “The Whole Brain Child provides 12 strategies to promote healthy brain development and help integrate our children’s right brain (emotional) and left brain (logic). It teaches parents how to connect with their children when emotions are high and then practice with their children a different, healthier way to process those difficult feelings.”

*Wounded Children, Healing Homes: How Traumatized Children Impact Adoptive and Foster Families*, Jayne Schooler, Betsy Keefer Smalley, Timothy Callahan: “Wounded Children, Healing Homes” addresses the reality of unmet expectations that many have experienced in the adoption journey. Early attachment injuries create unique circumstances, and working through these circumstances doesn’t always go as planned. This book offers encouragement, validation, and solutions for some of the challenges of parenting. Many have found glimmers of hope in its pages.”

## Children’s books

Foster Care and Trauma Related Children’s books – check out this Amazon collection of children’s books: <https://rb.gy/sx63u> by Laura from Foster Parent Partner ([www.fosterparentpartner.com](http://www.fosterparentpartner.com))

## Podcasts

*The Adoption Connection: A Podcast by and for Adoptive Parents*, Lisa Qualls and  
Melissa Corkum

*Adoption Now*, April Fallon

## Facebook group

Tennessee Foster Parents

## Instagram accounts

Foster.Parenting

PostAdoptionResources

TNKidsBelong

TennesseeAllianceForKids

TN\_DCS

