


**BUILDING
FAMILIES
THROUGH
ADOPTION**

WELCOME BACK!

ALASKA
center for
RESOURCE FAMILIES




**SESSION 3:
HOMEWORK
REVIEW**

Homework: Synonyms for the Story
Creating your language

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic Violence
- Drug Addiction

**ZOOM
Chat!**

While you are waiting,
please answer the
following question.
Post your answer in the
chat box.



Question: How would you answer the question:
"Who am I?" in three short statements?

For example:
I am an orphan.
I am a billionaire, Bruce Wayne.
I am Batman.

SESSION 4: IDENTITY IN ADOPTION

Session Objectives

- To explore the meaning of identity in the context of adoption
- To encourage a positive self worth and identity in children who were adopted
- To explore the role of race and culture in identity
- To build skills in answering tough questions and responding to intrusive questions

Questions of Identity in Adoption



1. What is my adoption story? Who am I? What happened to me?

2. Does my voice matter and have power? Is it safe to try and fail?



3. Who am I racially & culturally? What if I'm different than my parents?

4. How do I respond to others when they ask me about adoption?





"The younger the child, the more powerful the negative influence is likely to be. The stronger the foundation of positive identity and sense of self-worth a child has, the more likely they are to overcome these barriers."

1.

What is my personal adoption story? Who am I and what happened to me?



Developing My Adoption Story





**Adoption + Adolescence
= IDENTITY CRISIS**

i-den-ti-ty cri-sis /ɪ'den(t)jəð
.krɪsɪs/

- period of uncertainty and
confusion in which a person's
sense of identity becomes insecure.

**Who am I? The WHOLE story, not the
HOLE story.**



**ZOOM
Chat!**

Post your
answer in
the chat box.



Question:

Where can families get
the information to fill in
the pieces of their child's
story?

Filling in the Missing Pieces

Disclosure Meeting	Caseworkers	Guardian ad Litem
Client History Profile	Former Foster Parents	Current and Past Service Providers

Tools to Help with the Talk

Children's books about ADOPTION



Adoption in Movies


- Superman
- Ninja Turtles
- Star Wars
- Batman
- Martian Child
- Despicable Me
- Instant Family
- Angels in the Outfield
- Blind Side
- Spiderman
- Secondhand Lions
- Juno

2.



Does my voice matter and have power? Is it safe to try and fail?

DEVELOPING
MASTERY AND
CONTROL



**ZOOM
Chat!**

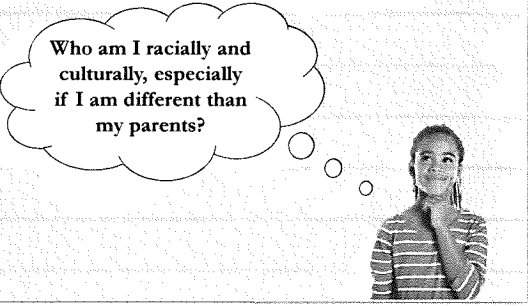
Post your
answer in
the chat box.

Question:
What are some ways children and
youth may demonstrate mastery
and control during:

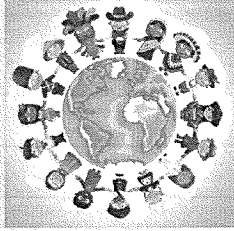
- Infancy
- Toddlers/Preschoolers
- Grade School
- Adolescence

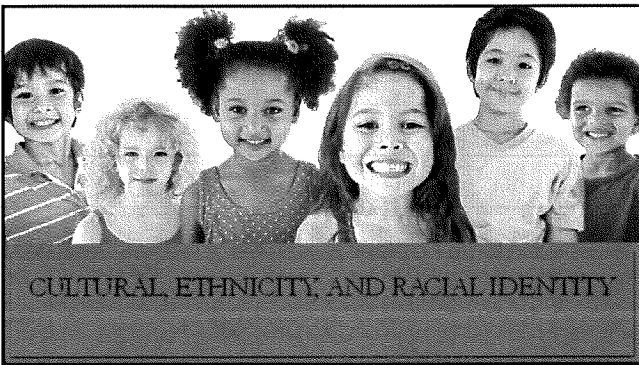
3.

Who am I racially and
culturally, especially
if I am different than
my parents?



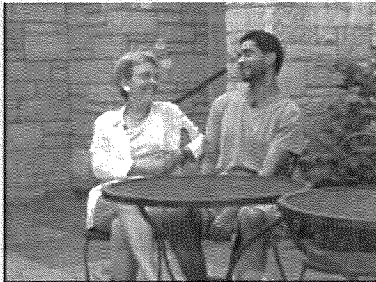
Developing a Healthy Cultural, Racial, or Ethnic Identity





CULTURAL, ETHNICITY, AND RACIAL IDENTITY

Positive Racial Identity



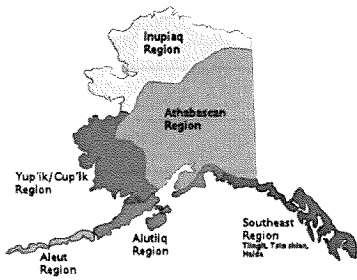
ZOOM Chat!

Post your answer in the chat box.



Question:

What can a parent do to promote a positive racial identity for their youth?



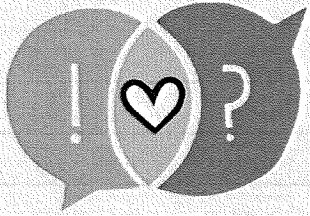
ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES AND CULTURES

4.



How do I respond to others when they ask me about adoption?

Confident Parents, Courageous Conversations



Guiding Principles

- Speak the truth in gentleness and kindness
- Always ask yourself what is the truth of the matter
- This is an ongoing conversation throughout the lifespan
- Speak to the child's emotional not chronological age
- Give time to process and follow their lead
- Stop to help youth regulate as needed

Promote Confidence, Claim, and Empower Your Children



"Teaching your children that they don't need to be victims is empowering. I've taught my children how to respond to uncomfortable comments when they hear them by my own responses. Sometimes I just ignore and sometimes I teach in a non-hateful way."

-Ann Brenoff, Mother of two children adopted from China

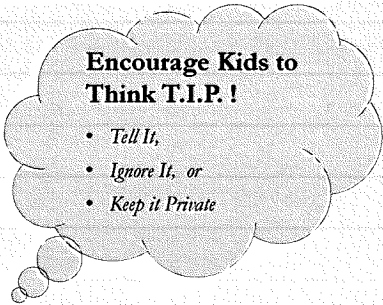
Ready Answers to Intrusive Questions

- Why do you ask?
- That is personal (or private).
- Really? Seriously?
- Did you mean to say? (Reword and Redo)
- Repeat the question.
- Humor
- Using claiming words.
- You need to ask my parents.

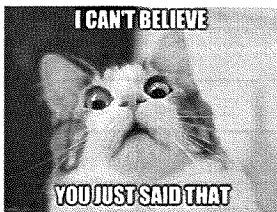


Encourage Kids to Think T.I.P.!

- *Tell It,*
- *Ignore It, or*
- *Keep it Private*



I CAN'T BELIEVE



Group Activity:

How would you teach your child to respond?

Where are your real parents?
To a 10 year old

Why don't you look like your Mom?
To a 4-year-old old transracial child

Did your parents do drugs?
To a 12 year old

Why did your parents give you away?
To a 10 year old

Why didn't your parents fight for you?
To a 13 year old

How come you live with your Grandparents?
To a 7 year old

What are some things that people Have said/asked you?

Review of Identity Tasks

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Questions, Comments, or Observations?