

**CHRISTIAN ADOPTION SERVICES
HOME ASSESSMENT SELF-REPORT
For Adoption Applicants**

Why we approve your home.

As a licensed adoption agency, we are required to approve you as “prospective adoptive parents” prior to placing a child in your home. Under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act, only applicants who have been approved by a licensed adoption agency may receive placement of child.

Why we are required to do a detailed assessment.

Before we approve your home, we must ensure that it meets all the standards for an adoptive home. We must be sure that we have told you about all the special skills you will need. You must be confident that you are prepared to take on everything that will be required of you to adopt.

Home Assessment Reports are designed to assist families in learning more about the adoption process while determining their ability and willingness to parent an adopted child. Social workers have the responsibility of making the recommendations regarding the applicants’ suitability to parent adopted children. Adopting families are encouraged to take an active role in the assessment process and may contribute directly with their written comments, family albums and occasionally videotapes.

In the open adoption process, the birthparents choose the family with whom they wish their child to be matched. The birth parents by law have the right to read the home assessment before making an adoptive placement. A profile is written about you, based on the information found in the home assessment to provide enough information for a birth parent to choose a family.

Why we use this self-report.

The self-report allows you to participate fully in the assessment of your family. Much of the assessment process is for your own self-discovery. Your involvement should facilitate an understanding of yourselves and your skills in order to make knowledgeable decisions regarding the type of child you feel most capable of parenting.

What else goes into the assessment?

In addition to your self-report, your social worker completes an assessment of your family. Personal references are obtained and everyone in your home is interviewed. The self-report gives the worker a starting point on which to base interviews. The worker will visit your home as often as needed to make an accurate assessment and a recommendation regarding approval.

How to complete the self-report.

There are three steps to complete the self-report:

1. Complete the personal description separate from each other.
2. Work together to write the rest of your report.
3. Sign and date your report and provide it to your home assessment worker on her/his first visit in your home.

It is important to cover all topics listed. You can add any information that may be useful. If you don’t understand a topic or find it hard to write about, call your worker to discuss how to cover that area.

Please complete this report on separate paper, we prefer if possible that you type the information as it is easier to read. This self-report must be completed before your social worker can begin your interviews.

Personal Description

1. Describe your personality.

Please use examples to help us get to know you better. Please include in your description:

- your strengths and weaknesses
- your sense of humor
- what you do when you feel angry or stressed
- how you settle disagreements with others

2. Please describe your health, including:

- Any outstanding physical characteristics
- Any physical, emotional or mental illnesses and treatments you or your family has, (please include yourself, spouse, children, your parents and your siblings)
- Any illnesses, disabilities or infertility issues and how they could affect caring for an adopted child
- Any regular medication or treatments
- How much you smoke or drink alcohol
- Any drug or alcohol problems and treatments you have had, and when they occurred

3. Your education including:

- What education and training you have completed
- How you found your school experiences
- How important education is to you
- The educational expectations you have of your adopted child

4. Your employment history and current job including:

- History and current job
- How long you've had this job
- How much time and energy it takes, how satisfying it is
- How your employment could affect caring for a child
- Will you continue to work after placement? What will the child care arrangements be?

5. Your religion, including:

- Your religious affiliation and church membership
- Any previous religious affiliations and reason for changing
- How it affects your day to day life
- How active you are in your religious community
- Your plans for religious training of a child placed in your care

6. Family history for each applicant

- Where you were born, where you grew up, describe your life as a child
- Your childhood and current relationship with each family member
- How much contact you have with your family members
- Special memories of childhood, special events, family traditions or customs
- The role of culture and heritage in your childhood
- Significant childhood experiences including losses, traumas
- Your parents' parenting styles-what will you do the same as your parents, what will you do differently?
- Your extended family's views on adoption

Family

1. Please describe your present family from both your points of view.

- Who makes up your immediate family? Give a brief description of each member.
- When do you spend time as a family, how much time do you spend together?
- Describe activities you do as a family.
- Describe any family traditions and customs you have.
- Describe your exposure to traditions and cultures other than your own. What importance do these experiences have for you?
- In what ways do you see yourselves as traditional and in what ways are you more modern?
- How are important decisions made in your family? How are these topics discussed?

- Describe your approach to child rearing. What is the job of a parent?
- What are important rules in your home? How are these rules made and who may question them? Who may change them? How and who enforces the rules?
- How does your family control the behavior of its members (both children and adults)?
- How is discipline handled?
- What is your view on physical discipline?
- What behaviors, social skills and values are most important to you?

Relationships

1. Describe your current marital relationship.

Be sure to describe these areas from both of your points of view. Include:

- How you met. What your first impressions were of each other?
- When and why you decided to create a home together, what was the biggest adjustment?
- Describe your partner. What do you like most about your partner?
- Goals and interests you share
- What individual interests, hobbies, volunteer, and leisure activities do you enjoy as individuals and as a couple?
- Areas of your relationship you find most satisfying
- Areas that cause you the most stress
- How you express caring towards each other?
- How your emotional needs are met both as individuals and as a couple?
- How you settle differences?
- Have there been any separations in your relationship?
- Have there been any violent incidents in your home? If so, briefly describe and explain what has changed since then.
- Who you turn to for support outside the family, including friends, groups and professional agencies? How do these people or groups help you?

- Any previous marriages or common-law relationships including:
 - Reasons the relationship ended
 - How your present relationship is similar and different
 - Where do the children of the relationship live, what is your relationship with them now
 - Any involvement you've had with the Criminal or Child Welfare systems. If you have had any involvement, please provide the specifics in as much detail as possible.

Home and Community

1. Please describe your home and community. Include:

- A description of your house and yard, sq. footage, age of house, number of bedrooms, bathrooms, etc. Will your house accommodate a child? Do you have future plans of moving?
- Are there any people living in your home other than your family members such as boarders, friends or renters? Do you have any pets?
- What kind of community do you live in? What is unique about it?
- What agencies and facilities are nearby? How far are you from schools, hospitals, shopping and recreation?

Motivation to Adopt

1. Comment on your family's decision to apply to adopt. Include:

- How you came to the decision to adopt. What is each member's point of view about adopting?
- What you think it will be like to have an adoptive child come into your family.
- How do you think it is different from having a birth child?
- Describe any training experiences that have particularly prepared you to adopt.
- Have you had any involvement, knowledge, or experience with a child who is learning disabled, mentally challenged, developmentally delayed, gifted, abused, or disabled?
- How you would meet the cultural needs of a child with a different background from your own?
- Your interest in being involved in ongoing training or support groups.
- Any previous adoption or similar experiences.

2. Describe in detail the child your family would like to adopt.

- What kind of child would fit in with your family's strengths, interests and activities.

3. Discuss whether you agree to the child having ongoing contact with birth parents, birth siblings, or extended family.