



FAST FACTS: Important Considerations & Parenting Tips for Multi-Cultural Families

- Support your child's sense of identity by encouraging them to use their original ethnic or cultural name. It helps validate their identity and foster a more positive sense of self-worth.
- Support your child by educating yourself about historical racism, interracial conflict & unhealed traumas experienced by people of color in your community.
- Initiate conversations about ethnic and race related issues to model open dialogue.
- For transracial international adoptee's, expose them to authentic people of their birth culture/country.
- Adoptee's may experience loss and grief related to their adoption story regardless of the age of the adoption. Parents can support adoptee's by allowing them to dictate adoptee's narrative and to avoid inserting saviorism themes.
- Expose and cultivate authentic relationships with people who represent the adoptee's race or culture, especially outside of a homogeneous white environment.
- Allow children to have input in grocery shopping and meal planning as food is representative of culture and directly relates to feelings of safety. Please keep in mind & be understanding that children may not be familiar with your food preference. They may not like it, it may be outside their cultural or religious background, i.e., pork or meat in general. Some children may hoard and/or hide food.
- Rituals offer structure and a sense of connection within families. Adoptive parents and foster parents and Kinship care givers should be sensitive to incorporate rituals reflective of the birth family and birth culture.
- Parents, guardians & kinship care givers should avoid taking rejection of food, mannerisms, language, traditions, and in-home norms personally. Be compassionate and compromise these cultural expectations when possible.
- The narrative around child's foster care/adoption experience will impact their cultural/racial identity. Honor who they are and the culture from whence they came.
- Regardless of past conflict, separation, or abuse a child/ may have experienced by their birth family, it is normal for the child/adolescent to still have loyal feelings to birth parent(s).
- Parents/Guardians should speak with neutrality about birth family in front of child.

Resources:

A poem by Sha'Condria Sibley called "To All the Little Black Girls with Big Names"

The Center for Adoption Support and Education, www.adoptionsupport.org

Books: (For younger children)

With You Always, Little Monday, by Genevieve Cote

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst and Joanne Lew-Vriethoff

Families Change: A book for children experiencing termination of parental rights, by Julie Nelson

Information presented by:



Yaneth Cunningham, MA, LMFT has been working in the mental health field in a variety of roles which have enriched my clinical practice and further fueled my passion for helping young people navigate the challenges of childhood. These experiences include working as an Eating Disorder Technician at the Emily Program, a School-Based Therapist for Nystrom & Associates, and a Youth Counselor for Catholic Charities. I draw upon a strength based, resiliency building & collaborative style of therapy to empower families and individuals to find inner healing while providing tools to enhance their daily life functioning.

To learn more about Foster Adopt Minnesota and our efforts to ensure each child will have a permanent family, call 612-861-7115 or visit www.fosteradoptmn.org.