

## A Strengths/Needs Worksheet for Foster Families Considering Adoption

This worksheet is designed to be completed by foster parents who are considering adopting a child who has been living with them. If there are two parents, it is helpful for both to complete the worksheet separately, then compare their strengths and needs. Designed as a self-assessment tool, the worksheet should provide some ideas for next steps in the decision making process towards a foster parent adoption. Strengths will indicate some resources available to the family. Needs will indicate tasks to be accomplished.

<b>Foster Parent Adoption Task</b>	<b>Strengths</b> What I have done to accomplish this task:	<b>Needs</b> What remains to be accomplished:
1. I have discussed the entire placement history of my child with at least one caseworker and believe I have all information that is available.		
2. I have identified several strengths and several potential problems with this adoption.		
3. I have discussed ways to problem-solve the potential difficulties with those I consider to be family.		

<b>Foster Parent Adoption Task</b>	<b>Strengths</b> What I have done to accomplish this task:	<b>Needs</b> What remains to be accomplished:
4. I have all information that is available about this child's birth family and have determined ways to help this child maintain positive connections with his or her roots.		
5. I have considered levels of "openness" in adoption and have planned for a level of openness that will meet the needs of this child and work for our family.		
6. I have discussed the difference between attachment and commitment with those I consider to be family. Those close to me understand that I am making a lifetime commitment to a child who may later in life have challenges and difficulties as a result of early experiences.		

<b>Foster Parent Adoption Task</b>	<b>Strengths</b> What I have done to accomplish this task:	<b>Needs</b> What remains to be accomplished:
7. I have considered the ways this child expressed loss earlier in life and have anticipated and planned for ways this child may grieve at the time of adoption and at other important milestones during life (developmental grieving.)		
8. I have planned ways to help this child maintain a tie to his or her cultural, racial and ethnic roots.		
9. I have planned ways to talk with other children in the family about this adoption, including ways to help the family understand the differences between foster care and adoption.		

<b>Foster Parent Adoption Task</b>	<b>Strengths</b> What I have done to accomplish this task:	<b>Needs</b> What remains to be accomplished:
10. I have talked with an attorney about the legal aspects of adopting a child through foster care.		
11. I have identified people who will support me if I become discouraged.		

<b>Foster Parent Adoption Task</b>	<b>Strengths</b> What I have done to accomplish this task:	<b>Needs</b> What remains to be accomplished:
12. I have talked with at least one family who has adopted through the foster care system.		
13. I have considered this decision for several months and believe that adoption of this child is important for the well-being of this child, my family and myself.		