Eight Steps to Adopting a Child In Rhode Island.

Below is a step-by-step look at the progression of adopting a child from Rhode Island in state care.

**Step 1 - Attend an adoption information meeting**

Adoption Sessions are found on the Department of Children, Youth, and Families website. When you attend a session, you can learn more about the process, this may be a bit different depending on where you are in the process and/or if your situation was an emergency placement or a traditional adoption track.

**Step 2 - Enroll in a home study/adoPTION preparation class.**

- Prepare you to parent a child who has been in the care of the state foster/welfare system.
- Help you decide on what kind of child may fit best into your family dynamic.
- Connect you to a social worker to help you decide what may or may not be a good match for your family and your child.

More information about classes are held will can be found on the DCFY website or you can download and complete the required application below and return it to (elice.doughty@dcyf.ri.gov or DCYF, 101 Friendship St., Providence, RI 02903): DCYF Training Application

**Step 3 - Meet with an adoption home study writer in your home.**

A home study prerequisite for any adoption and is conducted by a licensed home study writer. This is not about your decorating or housekeeping skills but rather to learn more about you.

**Benefits of a home study:**

- The social worker will get to know you better.
- You can ask questions.
- You can discuss the kind of child you believe will be the best fit for your family.

**Step 4 - Complete a home study.**

After completing the classes, the home study writer will meet with a few times to gather paperwork from you including.

- A portrayal of your family
- Your lifestyle
- The kind of child you wish to parent

* A Home Study Can Only Be Completed Once You Are A licensed Foster Parent
Step 5 - Wait for a match.
DCYF caseworkers who work with the kind of child you are looking for selects the family who she/he believes can best meet the child’s needs. This waiting period vary since all adoptions are unique and decided on a case by case basis.

Step 6 - Learn about your match.
Once your certain it’s a good match for the child or sibling group, and your family; your social worker will meet with you to present:

- Background information on the child or children (medical history, educational records, professional assessments, and other information).

- You will have the opportunity to ask questions and to speak with people who work or live with the child (foster parents, teachers, group home staff, etc).

Step 7 - Meet the child and begin visits.
Once you’ve decided to proceed with your match, you will meet the child or children and begin a series of visits. At first, visits will last a few hours, building up to overnight and weekend stays.

On placement day, the child will officially move into your home!

Step 8 - Finalize the adoption.
After the child has lived with you for at least six months, you will go to Family Court and legally adopt the child or children!

She/he will then be given your last name, and you will have full parental rights and responsibilities as if the child were yours by birth.

Congratulations … a forever home!

Note:
The process is a bit different if the child has been placed with you in an emergency situation. Parents whose children are placed in foster care oftentimes receive supportive services from child welfare as well as a variety of other community providers to make reasonable efforts toward reunification. Reunification is further encouraged by policy mandates and state child welfare performance measures. Please speak with your social worker to learn more about the process.

January 2018