Description of MAPP Programs

Criteria for Mutual Selection of Foster and Adoptive Parents

The MAPP Group Preparation and Selection Program is designed to prepare individuals and families to make an informed decision about becoming foster, adoptive or foster/adoptive families. The decision is made with the child welfare agency and is based on the capability and willingness to take on the “role” and develop the skills needed to foster and/or adopt. Foster and adoptive families who make good decisions and grow in their new roles work best with the agency, birth families and others. These partnerships help children and youth have stability and permanency with a family.

Successful foster and adoptive parents must be able to:

1. **Know your own family.**
   - Assess your individual and family strengths and needs; build on strengths and meet needs.

2. **Communicate effectively.**
   - Use and develop communication skills needed to foster or adopt.

3. **Know the Children.**
   - Identify the strengths and needs of children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect and recognize how the past trauma impacts the way they experience the world around them.

4. **Build strengths; meet needs.**
   - Build on strengths and meet needs of children and youth who are placed with you.

5. **Work in partnership.**
   - Develop partnerships with children and youth, birth families, the agency, and the community to develop and carry out plans for permanency.

6. **Be loss and attachment experts.**
   - Help children and youth develop skills to manage loss and attachment and minimize the risk of a child being traumatized again.

7. **Teach healthy behaviors.**
   - Help children and youth identify the need and emotion behind their behaviors. Foster and adoptive parents will respond in ways that will teach the children healthy ways to stay safe with themselves and others.

8. **Build connections.**
   - Help children and youth maintain and develop relationships that keep them connected to their pasts.

9. **Build self-esteem**
   - Help children and youth build on positive self-concept and positive family, cultural and racial identity.

10. **Assure health and safety**
    - Provide a healthy and safe environment for children and youth and keep them free from harm.

11. **Assess impact**
    - Assess the ways fostering and/or adopting will affect your family.

12. **Make an informed decision**
    - Make an informed decision to foster or adopt.