

ADOPTIONS FROM FOSTER CARE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL

A study by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute indicates rather surprisingly that children adopted from foster care have enjoyed stable placement over time. Many of these children are classified as special needs children who have had temporary care in one or more foster homes, have had losses of parents and loved ones that have some level of deprivation in their short lives. Yet, the number of disrupted or dissolved adoptions have not been great for these challenged children.

Admittedly, gathering of accurate statistics on the subject of adoption disruption (adoptions that fall apart before finalization) and adoption dissolution (adoptions that fail and cause the child to be outplaced and adoption nullified) are not well tracked. The sampling used by the Institute was relatively small but did show that for a two (2) year time period in 1999 and 2000, approximately 5% of adoptions planned ended in disruption while 1% of those adoptions finalized ended up in a legal dissolution at a later date.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act provided financial incentives to finalize and make permanent placements of children beginning in 1997. The statistical data gathered has not taken into consideration longer term effects of ASFA. Nevertheless, recognition of and attention to certain risks can and probably has helped diminish the number of adoption disruptions and dissolutions. There will be a follow-up article on the risks.

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