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	<p>Topics that will be covered in this Workshop</p>

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|  | <p><b>ABC's of Post Adoption<br/>Services</b></p>   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Respite Care Assistance</li> <li>■ Oklahoma Children's Services</li> <li>■ College Tuition Waivers</li> <li>■ Adoptive Couples Retreats</li> <li>■ Lending Library</li> <li>■ Mutual Consent Voluntary Registry</li> <li>■ Confidential Intermediary Search</li> <li>■ Mental Health Services</li> <li>■ Adoption Assistance Benefits</li> </ul> |

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## Adoptive Parenting

Even in the midst of the unbearable agonies...there are those who choose to help-to give to others: bread, shoes, comfort, whatever. These acts of compassion are the shining, diamond-tough confirmation of human dignity. This is keeping our affairs in order at the highest level. This is communion in it's highest form. The ritual of keeping of the living flame. Held daily in the unfinished cathedral of the human spirit.

Excerpt, From Beginning to End, by Robert Fulghum

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## Post Adoption Services Toolkit- Resources and Services in the State of Oklahoma

Karen A. Poteet, Programs Manager II  
Children & Family Services Division  
Oklahoma Department of Human Services



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## OKDHS Post Adoption Services

Each year, thousands of children in foster care who are unable to return to their birth parents find new families through adoption. In most cases, foster children who are adopted enter care because of serious abuse, neglect or abandonment. Adoptive families take on the responsibility for healing these children, but in many cases, because of their children's serious needs, families cannot shoulder the task alone.

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	<b>Other Services and Suggestions</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ College Cost and Reduction Act</li> <li>▫ Federal Adoption Tax Credit</li> <li>▫ Development Disabilities Services Division</li> <li>▫ Grandparent Services provided by OKDHS Aging Services and OASIS</li> <li>▫ OKDHS website</li> <li>▫ Authors of pertinent adoption books</li> <li>▫ Helpful Tips</li> </ul>

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	<b>Respite Services</b> <small>Vouchers are awarded based on availability of funds</small>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Call 1-888-771-4550 to request an application</li> <li>■ One Time Yearly –</li> <li>■ Vouchers are good for three months</li> <li>■ \$0 – 44,999.99            \$400.00</li> <li>■ \$45,000.00 - \$59,999.99    \$300.00</li> <li>■ \$60,000.00 &amp; over            \$ none</li> </ul>

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	<small>(Cont...)</small> <b>Respite Services</b> <small>Vouchers are awarded based on availability of funds</small>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Vouchers can be used to purchase respite service from a provider of your choice. Providers must be 18 years of age and can be anyone except immediate family living in the home.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Oklahoma Children's Services</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Comprehensive <i>Home Based</i> Services available statewide to support and strengthen families. (CHUBS)</li> <li>■ Services are child focused.</li> <li>■ Adoptive families can access these services through Swift adoption staff or Post Adoption staff.</li> </ul>

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	<b>College Tuition Waivers (State legislation)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ College and/or Vo-Tech tuition Waivers for children placed from OKDHS or tribal custody who had been in foster care for 9 months between the ages of 16 and 18</li> <li>■ Waivers are valid until youth reach age 26 or complete degree, whichever comes first.</li> <li>■ Contact Person is Cathy Connelly, OKDHS (PH: 405-521-3778)</li> </ul>

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	<b>Adoptive Couples Retreat</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Funded through a Federal Grant. Services are to strengthen marriages of adoptive couples that have adopted through OKDHS.</li> <li>■ Are FREE – hotel accommodations and food are provided free of charge. Child Care vouchers are also provided.</li> <li>■ Are FUN and informative.</li> <li>■ Are held during a weekend so as to not interfere with your work schedules.</li> <li>■ Create an adoptive support group from the attendees.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Lending Library</b>
	<p><b>Adoption related books are available for loan. Perspectives covered are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adoptee experiences</li> <li>■ Adoptive Parent experiences</li> <li>■ Adoptive Parenting for special needs children coming out of the foster care system.</li> <li>■ Fetal Alcohol syndrome/effects, attachment and bonding, and</li> <li>■ Adoptive grandparents</li> </ul>

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	<b>Mutual Consent Voluntary Registry</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Est by State Statute In 1997</li> <li>■ Focus: adult adoptees placed from OK public and private agencies and other individuals separated from birth family members by adoption.</li> <li>■ Allows individuals and their birth family relatives to indicate willingness to have their identity and whereabouts disclosed to one another.</li> <li>■ If both adoptee and a birth family member register, a "match" can result in a reunion</li> <li>■ If a "Match" does not occur, must remain on the Registry at least 6 months before requesting a search.</li> <li>■ Can request non-identifying medical and background information exclusive of requesting a reunion.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Confidential Intermediary Search</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Established for the same population as Mutual Consent Voluntary Registry</li> <li>■ Contact with the birth family members is totally a voluntary decision</li> <li>■ All parties must consent in writing before contact is initiated</li> </ul>

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## Other Helpful Services

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## College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Federal legislation)

The law, enacted in September 2007, expands the definition of independent student, effective July 1, 2009, to include:

- An orphan, in foster care, or a ward of the court at any time when the person was 13 years old or older
- An emancipated minor or person in legal guardianship as determined by a court in the person's state of legal residence
- An unaccompanied youth who is homeless, or at risk of homelessness and self-supporting  
Contact your school financial aid office

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## Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

(a component of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999)

- The ETV program provides:
- Funds up to \$5000 per academic year for post secondary endeavors.
- Funds can be used for tuition, books, fees, supplies, services, room and board, and transportation.
- Funds can be accessed until age 21, but if youth participating in the ETV program on their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday can remain eligible until age 23.

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(Cont....) **Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program**

- Youth eligible for the ETV program are:
- Youth who remained in foster care until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, and
- Youth adopted from foster care after attaining their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

To obtain more information or to make application contact OKDHS Independent Living Program at (405) 521-3778

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**Federal Adoption Tax Credit**

- The Federal Adoption Tax Credit is one of the best financial incentives for adoptive parents. This is a dollar-for-dollar reimbursement. Eligible families subtract a maximum of \$11,390 per child for specific adoption related expenses from the tax dollars they owe that year.
- The Adoption Tax Credit is a valuable benefit for adopting families, but one of the most complicated tax law provision applicable to middle-income families.

**WWW.NACAC.ORG**

You will need to consult a tax advisor for the details of the Tax Credit.

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**Developmental Disabilities Services (DDSD)**  
**(an OKDHS Service)**

- Provides services to persons ages 3 and older who have a primary diagnosis of mental retardation (IQ of 69 or below) The persons served may also have other developmental or physical disabilities in addition to mental retardation.
- A developmental disability is a term that includes disabilities which occur in the developmental years (before the age of 22). It may be caused by a physical or mental impairment or be a combination of both. Developmental disabilities cannot be cured – they are life-long and chronic.

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## Developmental Disabilities Services

(an OKDHS Service)

- A person with a developmental disability will have substantial functional limitations in three or more areas of major life activities: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living and economic self-sufficiency.
- Children adopted from the agency of OKDHS may receive both subsidy and selected DDS services.
- Application is through your area DDS office – Area offices are listed on OKDHS website

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## Sooner Start

- SoonerStart is Oklahoma's early intervention program designed to meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays. This service is for infants and toddlers through 36 months of age who have developmental delays or have a physical or mental condition.

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## Aging Services Division

- Has a manual; "Starting Points for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren," To receive the manual contact OASIS. OASIS serves as the grandparent clearinghouse for information in Oklahoma. The OASIS contact numbers are: 1-800-426-2747 or (405) 271-6302.

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(cont.....) **Aging Services Division**

- Presents two conferences per year to give grandparents information about resources and services. To find the dates contact: Claire Dowers at (405) 522-4510
- The number of support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren is increasing in Oklahoma. Many of them offer child care so that both grandparents and their grandchildren have a chance to participate in the group. To find a support group contact OASIS at 1-800-426-2747 or (405) 271-6302.

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**OKDHS WEBSITE**

- [www.okdhs.org](http://www.okdhs.org)
- Standard email format. Persons first name – .(dot) - last name @okdhs.org  
Example [Joe.Smith@okdhs.org](mailto:Joe.Smith@okdhs.org)
- All OKDHS policy is open to the public and available on the website.

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**Helpful Books  
Listed by Authors**

**Adoption from the Foster Care System:**

- Richard J. Delaney, Ph.D
- Janet Clayton Glatz
- Nancy L. Thomas
- Foster W. Cline, M.D. and Cathy Holding
- Daniel A. Hughes

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### Helpful Books Listed by Authors

#### In utero exposure to drugs/alcohol

- Ira J. Chasnoff, M.D.
- Brenda McCreight
- Susan B. Edelstein

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### Helpful Books Listed by Authors

#### Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

- Sylvie de-Toledo
- Deborah Doucette-Dudman

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Use the Internet- It's  
like having a library in  
your home  
[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

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### Helpful Tips

- Keep the disclosure you were given
- Keep your adoption agreement
- Keep a copy of anything you sign.
- Keep a log of conversations. Include the 'who-when-where-what and why'

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### ABC's of Adoption Assistance Benefits

- Jacquelyn Hill-Anderson, MSW  
Programs Manager 1  
Children & Family Services Division Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- Ann Kent, Programs Field Representative  
Children & Family Services Division Oklahoma Department of Human Services

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### Adoption Assistance Benefits

- Medicaid coverage
- Monthly assistance payment
- Reimbursement of non-recurring expenses
- Special services
- Any combination of these benefits

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	<b>Purpose of Adoption Assistance Benefits</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To help secure and support safe and permanent adoptive families for children with special needs</li>   <li>■ Provide adoptive families of any economic stratum with needed social services, and medical and financial support to care for children considered difficult to place.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Purpose of Adoption Assistance Benefits</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Benefits are designed to supplement the resources of the adoptive family. An example is: Day Care expenses will fall to the adoptive parent.</li>   <li>■ Unlike the foster care program, adoptive parents assume primary responsibility for the child's support</li> </ul>

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	<b>Adoption Assistance Funding</b>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Adoption Assistance Funds come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Federal Government – often referred to as IV-E funding or;</li> <li>■ The State of Oklahoma</li> </ul> <p>The source of the funding occasionally will create a difference in services. An example would be in the Medical Benefits area. We will look at this more in a moment but first will talk about Medical benefits in general.</p>

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	<b>Medical Benefits</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Children who are approved for adoption assistance are eligible for services within the scope of the Oklahoma Medicaid program.</li> <li>■ Children Who are not eligible for monthly assistance payments but were in the legal custody of OKDHS or a federally recognized Tribe will be able to receive Medical benefits.</li> <li>■ Coverage includes pre-existing conditions prior to finalization.</li> </ul>

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	<b>(cont....) Medical Benefits</b>
	<p>If the adoptive family moves out of state their adopted children will be eligible for services within the scope of the receiving states Medicaid program with the exception of the following States: District of Columbia; Hawaii, Illinois, Nebraska, New Mexico, and New York <u>WHEN</u> the medical is State funded rather than federally funded.</p>

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	<b>(cont....) Medical Benefits</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There are 50 different Medicaid programs. Each state has a pick list provided by the Federal Government</li> </ul>

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	<b>(cont....) Medical Benefits</b>
	<p>The agency <b>Oklahoma Health Care Authority</b> oversees Oklahoma Medicaid benefits. For information about what your children's Medicaid plan covers contact the Oklahoma Health Care Authority either by phone or on the web. The Oklahoma Health Care Authority also issues and distributes the medical cards.</p>

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	<b>Mental Health Services</b>
	<p>Medicaid is an adoption assistance benefit for children adopted from the OKDHS agency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Medicaid in Oklahoma pays for mental health services; both inpatient and outpatient.</li> <li>■ Assessment and Treatment services</li> <li>■ Psychotropic drugs covered</li> <li>■ Listing of providers can be found on the website of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Private Insurance/Medicaid</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ You may have both. Private will become primary.</li> <li>■ Primary will be billed first</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Helpful Information</p> <p>Consider having your primary provider be a Medicaid provider also.</p> <p>If primary is a network system and you choose to go out of network Medicaid will not cover the services.</p>

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	<h3>Reimbursement of Non-Recurring Expenses</h3>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Non-recurring adoption expenses are the reasonable and necessary adoption fees, court costs, attorney fees and other expenses that are directly related to the legal adoption of a child with special needs.</li> <li>■ Assistance is limited to documented actual expenses incurred up to a maximum of \$1,200 per child upon adoption finalization.</li> <li>■ It is not required that the child be in the custody of OKDHS or a federally recognized tribe at the time of finalization.</li> <li>■ The request <b>MUST</b> be approved prior to finalization.</li> </ul>

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	<h3>Eligibility for monthly subsidy payments for children adopted from OKDHS agency</h3>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Child must be in the legal custody of OKDHS or a federally recognized Tribe at the time of adoption.</li> <li>■ Child must be determined to meet the special needs criteria.</li> <li>■ Subsidy must be approved prior to the finalization of the adoption.</li> <li>■ Prospective adoptive parent does not have prohibited felony conviction.</li> </ul>

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	<h3>Negotiation of Benefits</h3>
	<p>Negotiation means a discussion between the adoptive parent and the adoption specialist to determine the benefits to be received for the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explore the needs of the child(ren)</li> <li>■ Consider all current benefits such as SSI, SSA, VA and other benefits.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Modification</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The adoption assistance payment amount may be readjusted periodically when warranted by a change in circumstances and with the concurrence of the adoptive parents.</li> <li>▪ The parent can request a modification of the Adoption Assistance Agreement at any time. All requests must be made in writing.</li> <li>▪ Typical requests are for an increase due to a change in circumstances or for Difficulty of Care.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Modification based on a Change of Circumstances</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age Increases are not automatic</li> <li>▪ There are no OKDHS forms required for this request at this time. Letters are accepted.</li> <li>▪ The request may be stated as a request for "the maximum assistance allowed for a child this age."</li> </ul>

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	<b>Modification based on Difficulty of Care (DOC)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are no OKDHS forms at this time required for this request. Letters are accepted.</li> <li>▪ A request for difficulty of care must include a written statement from the adoptive parent with an explanation of the child's medical condition, behavioral problems, mental illness or disability.</li> <li>▪ A current statement (within 6 months of your request) signed by a licensed medical professional describing the condition, including diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Annual Review</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ OKDHS is required to complete an annual review of each family each year.</li> <li>■ Primary purpose is to determine if the parent(s) remains legally responsible for the child and is providing financial support for the child.</li> <li>■ Annual review form must be returned within 30 days of receipt.</li> </ul>

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	<b>Where to Send Modification Requests</b>
	<p>Oklahoma Department of Human Services          Attn: Post Adoptions 5<sup>th</sup> Floor          P.O. Box 25352          Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73125</p>

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	<b>Notification of Change</b>
	<p>OKDHS needs to be notified within two weeks if one of the following occurs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Change in the family's address;</li> <li>■ Change in the child(ren);s legal guardian;</li> <li>■ Child enters military service;</li> <li>■ Marriage of child;</li> <li>■ Child is no longer in the home</li> </ul>

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	<p>(cont....) <b>Notification of Change</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Child is in inpatient care;</li> <li>■ Death of a child or adoptive parent;</li> <li>■ Adoptive parent is no longer financially supporting child, or</li> <li>■ Adoptive parent is no longer legally responsible for the child</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Termination of Adoption Assistance</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adoption Assistance ends at any time the parent(s) is no longer legally responsible for support of the child; or</li> <li>■ It is determined that the adoptive parent is no longer providing financial support to the child; or</li> <li>■ When the child turns 18 unless still attending high school - working to complete a GED or - meets the criteria for a difficulty of care subsidy then it ends at age 19.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b>Your Post-Adoption Team</b></p>
	<p>Karen A. Poteet          Program Manager II          (405) 522-2467  <a href="mailto:Karen.Poteet@okdhs.org">Karen.Poteet@okdhs.org</a></p> <p>Responsible for Post Adoption Program</p>

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Jacquelyn Hill-Anderson  
 Programs Manager I  
 (405) 522-4487  
[Jacquelyn.Hill@okdhs.org](mailto:Jacquelyn.Hill@okdhs.org)

Responsible for established adoption assistance cases and modification requests regarding a change of circumstances.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Ann Kent  
 Programs Field Representative  
[Ann.Kent@okdhs.org](mailto:Ann.Kent@okdhs.org)  
 (405) 522-0331

Responsible for review and approval of pre-finalized adoption assistance requests, Review and approval of Difficulty of Care requests and questions pertaining to private, independent or international adoptions.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Chris Foell  
 Programs Field Representative  
[Chris.Foell@okdhs.org](mailto:Chris.Foell@okdhs.org)  
 (405) 521-4375

Responsible for Mutual Consent Voluntary Registry, Confidential Intermediary Search Program and Supportive Services.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Martha Hopcus  
Administrative Assistant  
[Martha.Hopcus@okdhs.org](mailto:Martha.Hopcus@okdhs.org)  
(405) 521-3832

Responsible for support of Mutual Consent  
Voluntary Registry, Confidential  
Intermediary Search Program, and Paternity  
Registry

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Carol McCord-Kuchynka  
Administrative Assistant  
[Carole.McCord-Kuchynka@okdhs.org](mailto:Carole.McCord-Kuchynka@okdhs.org)  
(405) 522-1969

Responsible for parents with names  
ending in A through G as their  
adoption assistance contact.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

Ke'Nisha Peters  
Temp  
[Ke'Nisha.Peters@okdhs.org](mailto:Ke'Nisha.Peters@okdhs.org)  
(405) 521-2467

Responsible for parents with names  
ending in F through J as their adoption  
assistance contact.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

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Donna Mason  
Social Worker III  
[Donna.Mason@okdhs.org](mailto:Donna.Mason@okdhs.org)  
(405) 522-1002

Responsible for parents with names ending in K through Q as their adoption assistance contact.

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**Your Post Adoption Team**

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Debbie Drain  
Administrative Assistant II  
[Debbie.Drain@okdhs.org](mailto:Debbie.Drain@okdhs.org)  
(405) 521-4268

Responsible for parents with names ending in R through Z as their adoption assistance contact.

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