

From: Scott Corcoran [scott@afamilyforeverychild.org]
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2013 4:44 PM
To: scott@afamilyforeverychild.org
Subject: Adopting Older Children



Dear ,

Have you thought about adopting an older child? With the average age of a child in foster care being 9 years old, there are many young adults and teenagers that are in need of loving families. Parenting any child requires preparation, patience, adjustments and some unconventional parenting methods. If you can open your preferences to include older children, you may find that it is incredibly rewarding.

Most waiting children are over the age of 9, and many are part of a sibling group. They are all waiting for their forever families who will provide love and security.

The idea that an older child is resistant to the idea of a younger child is a myth. All children want a family to belong to. An older child may be a little more nervous about joining a new family, so there will be a transition period while he/she adjusts. Often a child will feel conflicting emotions, due to the fact that they may still have ties to their biological or foster family, or they are still dealing with the loss of their biological parents. An older child may have moved from foster home to foster home, and may have experienced a disrupted adoption. Moving from home to home can have a negative effect on a child's self-esteem and their ability to form relationships and attachments. Despite all this, deep down all they want is a strong, permanent family who will love them forever.

Every parent considering adopting an older child needs to educate themselves on the challenges they will face, and the challenges their child may have faced growing up in the foster care system. Older children may be developmentally delayed in some areas, for example. They may be 13 years old, but socially, developmentally, and sometimes physically, they may act younger. Adoptive parents will need to be willing to seek out resources to help children overcome these developmental gaps, and be prepared to advocate for their children in classroom and social settings.

The most important things you can do are to educate yourself, be committed, and maintain hope. There are definitely challenges associated with adopting an older child, but if you work at it, educate yourself, and appreciate all the good your child has in them, you will be very successful in helping your child become part of the family.

There are so many benefits of adopting an older child or teenager. Here are just a few of them:

- 1. That younger kid you're adopting? He or she is going to turn into a teen anyway.**
- 2. Contrary to what you may think adopting a 15-year-old doesn't mean that you will only be parenting for 3 more years.**
- 3. You know what you are getting.**

To see more of the list of benefits of adopting a teenager (and there are MANY more!), follow this link: <http://pflagfostermom.blogspot.com/2008/03/reasons-to-foster-or-adopt-teens.html>

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