

Training in Adoption Competency

Research shows that children with traumatic experiences of abuse, neglect and abandonment and challenging behavioral and emotional responses are at greater risk of presenting with adjustment problems within their adoptive families. Adoptive parents often identify these issues as contributors to family stressors post-adoption. Access to adoption-competent mental health services is a critical factor in achieving positive outcomes for these children and their adoptive families and the success of their adoptions. Birth parents may also experience significant stress prior to, during and after the adoption process. Many birth parents need quality adoption competent mental health services to process grief and loss.

Studies show that adoptive families have difficulty finding quality mental health services provided by therapists who are knowledgeable about the effects of pre-adoption experiences on children's intellectual and social functioning, children's ability to form attachments to their adoptive families, and children's overall development in light of early abuse and neglect and foster care placements. Likewise, birth parents often are challenged to find and work with adoption competent mental health professionals to help them with their needs.

Training in adoption competency (TAC) is designed to increase families' and individuals' access to adoption competent mental health professionals and to improve the well-being of adopted children and youth and their families. Based on eighteen adoption competencies developed by [The Center for Adoption support and Education \(C.A.S.E\) of Burtonsville, MD](#). in collaboration with its National Advisory Board, C.A.S.E. created the TAC to build and strengthen adoption competency in mental health communities across the United States.

Family Service of Waukesha is proud to have four therapists who are receiving adoption competency training (TAC) through the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, funded by the Jockey Foundation.