

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES
STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE
STANDARDS FOR ADOPTION SERVICES

7.8 SUPPORTS FOR MULTI-RACIAL, MULTI-CULTURAL, AND MULTI-ETHNIC ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Council on Accreditation Standards

The Council on Accreditation Standards S14 (Adoptive Services) and S14.9 (Pre- and Post-Legal Adoption) link to and support Standard 7.8 *Supports for Multi-Racial, Multi-Cultural, and Multi-Ethnic Adoptive Families*.

Administrative Code

The Ohio Administrative Code Rules 5101:2-42-67 (Preparation of Lifebook); 5101:2-48-05 (Agency Adoption Policy and Recruitment Plan); 5101:2-48-08 (Adoption Inquiry); 5101:2-48-13 (Adoption Requirements Pursuant to the Multiethnic Placement Act); and 5101:2-48-14 (Preparation of Child for Adoptive Placement) address Standard 7.8 *Supports for Multi-Racial, Multi-Cultural and Multi-Ethnic Adoptive Families*.

I. Philosophy

Agencies need to recognize that adoptive placements may reflect some racial, cultural or ethnic disparity between the child and adoptive family. Until there is an adequate resource pool of adoptive families that reflect the waiting children's races, cultures and ethnicities, multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic placements will occur (see Standard 7.3, *Recruitment of Adoptive Homes* and Standard 7.6, *Matching*). When these placements are made, CFSA's should make every effort to prepare and support multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic adoptive families to ensure permanency for children.

Race, culture and ethnicity are vital to the child's identity and development, and therefore, should be primary considerations in building a family through adoption from training preparation to matching to post-adoptive supports.

By supporting and educating multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic adoptive families, children are able to preserve their cultural background.

II. Outcome

All children will develop and preserve a positive racial, cultural and ethnic identity.

III. Evaluation

FACSIS events, CPOE and the Federal Health and Human Services outcomes may be considered when evaluating this standard. In addition, the CFSA may consider the following:

- number of children in permanent custody per year;
- number of children placed and adopted in a home of a different race, culture and/or ethnicity versus number of children placed and adopted in a home of the same race, culture and/or ethnicity;
- number of adoption disruptions in an adoptive home of a different race, culture and/or ethnicity versus number of adoption disruption in an adoptive home of the same race, culture and/or ethnicity;

- median length of stay in permanent custody prior to adoption finalization;
- number of pre-placement activities and visits held per child and prospective adoptive family.

IV. Standards for Implementation

As part of adoption policy, the CFSA should address the placement of children in families with a different race, culture, or ethnicity than that of the child.

The CFSA should use an assessment process to determine the appropriateness of the potential match (see Standard 7.6, *Matching*).

- 1) When a decision has been made to place a child within a family of a different race, culture, or ethnicity than that of the child, the CFSA has a responsibility to provide the prospective family with information and support to raise that child. This information and support should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. acceptance of racial, cultural, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic differences among people and a willingness to teach the child to appreciate the richness of these differences;
 - b. knowledge of how to build a lifestyle that is racially, culturally, and ethnically integrated and the skills and resources to provide a concise plan for providing an integrated lifestyle for the child;
 - c. information about the importance of living in an integrated community, whenever possible, to provide opportunities for the child to interact with children and adults of like racial, cultural and ethnic groups;
 - d. emphasis on the need for a family to develop relationships with adults and children of the same race as the child, who are able and willing to provide continuous support to the child and/or family;
 - e. understanding of their own personal history and how this helped shape their current values and attitudes regarding race, culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and religious differences;
 - f. acceptance of the child as a part of a racial, cultural or ethnic group that is different from their own without making the child feel separate and different;
 - g. an emphasis on the need for a family to be knowledgeable regarding the child's race, culture and ethnic ancestry and the skills to share this knowledge and information regularly with the child through family life experiences;
 - h. understanding of the impact of racism and prejudice on an individual, and a commitment to provide an opportunity to teach the child survival and coping skills;
 - i. awareness that they may need to withstand hostility and isolation when parenting a child of a race, culture or ethnicity different from their own;
 - j. understanding of the need for extended family and other significant relationships to be supportive of the family's decision to parent trans-racially, trans-culturally, or trans-ethnically, and a willingness to assist others in dealing with any prejudice and/or discrimination they may face;
 - k. willingness to provide opportunities to have regular contact with siblings and other members of the birth family when deemed appropriate (see Standard 7.11, *Placement of Children In the Adoptive Home*); and
 - l. acknowledgment and understanding of the differences in the child's skin, hair, and health care needs, and a willingness to seek support or professional assistance when needed.

- 2) Because the group process as part of this training experience is valuable, smaller agencies should work jointly to provide group training on preparation for the placement and continuous support and information.
- 3) CFSAs should make all efforts to recruit, train and maintain staff that are culturally diverse and sensitive to differences.

V. Financial Implications

No additional costs are anticipated for Standard 7.8, *Supports for Multi-Racial, Multi-Cultural and Multi-Ethnic Adoptive Families*.