



Domestic Infant Adoption Adoptive Parent Training Requirements

Adoption Center of Illinois at Family Resource Center (ACI) offers Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) training courses to promote a successful adoption. Training is required for all families to educate themselves on issues relevant to adoption. There is no additional cost to attend classes offered by our agency once PAPs have submitted their application and paid the Home Study fees. CPR training is required for all PAPs.* ¹

What is training and why do I need it?

Adoption and parenting come with many challenges (and joys!) and we want to ensure that PAPs are well prepared and that children thrive in their forever family. We encourage PAPs to continue their education throughout the adoption process and in the years to come.

How many training hours are required?

In addition to CPR training, PAPs must complete a minimum of 10 training hours before the home study can be finalized.

PAPs must complete training that is specifically geared toward their identified adoption expectations. At least 2 hours of training must address the specific needs of the child that PAPs are open to adopting. For example, PAPs open to adopting a child with complex medical needs, prenatal substance exposure, an older child, a child with a trauma history, and/or a child of a different race must receive training related to each of those topics. **Please note that if PAPs expectations change after the home study is finalized or after they have been matched with a particular child or children, they may be required to take additional trainings. At any time while working with our agency, more training may be suggested or required in order to better prepare PAPs for adoptive parenting.**

What methods of training are acceptable?

Trainings that take place in-person or online, as long as they provide certificates of completion. While we encourage as many in-person trainings as possible, some online resources that PAPs have utilized include www.adoptionlearningpartners.org, <https://heartofthematterededucation.com>, www.adoptionsupport.org, <https://creatingfamily.org/>. Please note that each PAP must be listed on the certificate of completion to provide them with credit. While we do not require that families attend ACI's classes, we highly recommend that PAPs attend as many in-person trainings as possible.

How long are credits from training courses valid?

Credits are valid for 4 years.

¹ Please check with your local American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or EMS Safety Services for these trainings.

TRAINING TOPICS FOR DOMESTIC INFANT ADOPTIONS

The training curriculum must be based on PAPs adoption expectations and/or a child's specific needs. Courses may include a selection of the following topics, but are not limited to:

1. Preparing for a Successful Adoption
 - a. Defining Adoption
 - b. How adoption is different: from forming a family by birth
 - c. Making a lifetime commitment
 - i. Changing roles and expectations
 - ii. Considering the impact on all members of the family
 - iii. Considering the impact on extended family and friends
 - d. Adoption as a life-long process
 - e. Positive adoption language
2. Process for completing an Adoption
 - a. Criteria used to determine eligibility: Background checks
 - b. Fees, costs and refund policies related to the process
 - c. Home study process
 - d. Pre-placement requirements
 - e. Placement process
 - f. Post-placement requirements and supports
 - g. Determining readiness for adoption legalization
 - h. Pre and post-adoption reporting requirements, if applicable
3. Adoption as a legal process
 - a. Legal specifics regarding the child's adoption, including foreseeable delays and/or impediments
 - b. Full and fair child specific disclosure/confidentiality
 - c. Birth parent rights and responsibilities
 - d. Adoptive parent rights and responsibilities
 - e. Voluntary and involuntary termination of parental rights
 - f. Adoption legalization process
4. Understanding a Child's Prior Experiences and their Effects on Adoptive Placement
 - a. Characteristics and needs of children awaiting adoption; current and future implications
 - b. Placement history, including foster care, orphanage life, or institutionalization
 - i. Type of care, effects of poor care and/or institutionalization
 - ii. Pre-placement history, including length at each previous placement
 - iii. Lack of attachment
5. Medical risks
 - a. Limited, inaccurate or missing background information
 - b. Unknown or undiagnosed medical conditions
 - c. Limited access to medical care and the need for immediate care upon arrival
 - d. Effects of risk factors
 - i. Malnutrition
 - ii. Environmental toxins
 - iii. Genetic, health, emotional and/or developmental risk
 - e. Drug and alcohol use during pregnancy
6. Attachment Issues
 - a. Significance of forming healthy attachments
 - b. Attachment disorders
 - c. Promoting healthy attachments
7. Openness as a continuum in Adoption
 - a. Defining openness as a continuum
 - b. Respecting past attachment and openness when appropriate
8. Special Issues in Adoption
 - a. Separation/loss and grief
 - i. Effects of multiple caregivers and placements

- b. Raising a child of a different culture, ethnicity, race, religion or linguistic background; current and future implications
 - c. Caring for children with special needs (i.e. medical, physical, emotional, behavioral, developmental, and educational issues)
 - d. Child development and the impact of adoption
 - e. Parenting and discipline techniques
 - f. Adopting the older child
 - g. Infant CPR
 - h. Subsidy Eligibility and post-adoption support services
 - i. Preservation
 - ii. Education
 - iii. Search and reunion
 - iv. Support groups
 - v. Services referral
9. Other Issues Specific to Child's Special Needs
- a. Ensure full disclosure of all known child specific information, including risk factors, current and future implications

Which ACI classes count towards the Domestic Adoption training requirements?

- Attachment and Adoption
- Baby Care 101
- Birth Parent Panel – Adoption from the Birth Parent's Perspective
- Communicating with your Child about Adoption
- Domestic Adoption and Illinois Law
- Race and Adoption
- Adult Adoptee Panel: Adoptees Share their Experiences
- Understanding Adoption: From Delivery to Possible Placement
- Understanding the Effects of Pre-natal Alcohol and Drug Exposure
- Understanding Grief and Loss

Please remember that additional trainings may be required based on PAPs adoption expectations and/or a child's specific needs.

If you have any questions relating to training, you may contact Teresa Bernu or Lindsay Weinberg at 773-334-2300.