Parent Education Program

International Adoptions

Education is very important as you are preparing to adopt an institutionalized child from another country. It is our goal to insure that you are as prepared as possible for the changes in your life and that of your family as you go through the adoption and post adoption process. The education you will receive as part of your home study consists of education classes and reading materials including web sites, books and articles.

The education you will receive is not only an agency requirement, it is also a 'federal regulation' for anyone adopting internationally according to Hague Standard 96.48(b)(2). The Hague Convention is a program that governs the way international adoptions are conducted throughout the world. One of the major components of The Hague is the education of adoptive parents. Each prospective adoptive parent is required by Federal mandate to take a minimum of 10 hours of education as part of the home study. Some States as well as countries require additional education, over the 10 hour Hague requirement.

In California, Nightlight home study clients are required to take the in-office classes that meet the Hague requirement. These classes consist of, “Attachment and Other Issues of International Adoption,” “Life Long Issues in Adoption” and “Medical Issues in International Adoption.” The additional education required by China can be completed via an on-line webinar. Please see webinar information that follows.

Colorado requires 16 hours of CORE adoption training that includes topics required by Hague regulations. Nightlight home study clients are required to take this 16-hour course through Nightlight Christian Adoptions Colorado.

In all other offices, home study clients complete their required 10 hours (12 for China families) of Hague or parent education through the webinar education programs listed below plus a few additional training hours of non-Hague topics.

If you are completing your home study through another agency with Nightlight Christian Adoptions as the ‘Primary Provider’ or placement agency, we still require the following education as provided either through your home study agency or the online education programs discussed below. Please check with your Nightlight coordinator to insure your completion of the appropriate pre-adoption education.
The following education requirements are designed to equip parents with the resources needed to respond to issues important for families adopting internationally. Nightlight is held accountable to the educational requirements of the state of licensure, The Hague Convention, and the child’s country of origin. Our program enables parents:

1. To speak with other adoptive parents in order to learn about their experiences parenting adopted children.
2. To prepare strategies for coping with the challenging behavior of adopted children.
3. To identify referral resources for the potential developmental delays of adopted children.
4. To learn how to respond to the effects of loss, stages of grief, and other attachment issues.
5. To develop cultural awareness and sensitivity for the adopted child’s (children’s) country of birth.
6. To become familiar with medical issues common in internationally adopted children.
7. To learn how adopting a child may impact family functioning (adjustment), family values, and expectations (including discipline).

**REQUIRED EDUCATION**

Nightlight Christian Adoptions has always placed a high value on education. It is our belief that families who are well educated and prepared for the adoption of post-institutionalized children helps to promote a successful adoption. Families who work with Nightlight Christian Adoptions make the commitment to complete the following education program.

**CALIFORNIA-REQUIRED CLASSES**

1. Attend a 3 hour Nightlight Seminar where the following information is addressed:
   - Intercountry adoption process
   - General characteristics and needs of children awaiting adoption
   - Review the specific information about any country being considered for international adoption that is available in the Nightlight Office in Anaheim Hills, California or via websites provided in the Client’s Adoption Notebook.
   - Fees associated with Intercountry adoptions.

2. Attend the Attachment and Issues of International Adoption Class, a 5 hour training class that covers:
   - Information about the impact on a child of leaving familiar ties and surroundings according to the age of the child.
   - Data on institutionalized children and the impact regarding the length of institutionalization and type of care provided.
   - Information about attachment disorders, impact of multiple caregivers both before and after adoption and ways to help facilitate attachment.
   - Issues of multi-culturalization.
   - Post Adoption Depression.
   - This class includes articles on the effects of institutionalization on children; Developmental milestones; Recommended Medical tests once the child arrives in the United States
3. Attend the **Medical Issues Class** provided by Dr. Gary Feldman, Medical Director, Miller Children’s Hospital, Stramski Clinic, Long Beach Memorial Hospital, Long Beach California. This is a 2.5 hour class that addresses:
   - Medical issues most common in institutionalized children
   - Effects of malnutrition, relevant environmental toxins, maternal substance abuse and other known genetic, health, emotional and developmental risk factors associated with children from various countries.
   - Resources
   - List of medical tests recommended once the family returns from the foreign country with the child.

4. Attend the **Lifelong Issues Class**, a 2.5-hour class, where the prospective parents hear about adoption from adults who have gone through the process. This class addresses the impact of having ‘two' families and long term implications of multi-cultural issues.

**COLORADO-REQUIRED CLASSES**

**The State of Colorado requires the following adoption training for families adopting internationally:**

**7.710.55 Training [Rev. eff. 5/1/10]**

A. The adoptive agency shall verify and document that all adoptive applicants have completed in training provided or approved by the agency as a part of the adoption process.

1. All adoptive applicants shall complete sixteen (16) core hours of training provided in face-to-face format.
2. Reasonable effort must be made to compete all required hours of training prior to the placement of a child(ren).
3. All training must be completed by each adoptive applicant prior to the finalization of the adoption.
4. Applicants adopting children over twelve (12) months of age or completing an Intercountry adoption must complete training topics as listed at Section 7.710.55, C.
5. Training must be separate from and in addition to the family assessment.
6. If an adoptive applicant(s) is completing a subsequent adoption through the same agency or has completed documented training from their previous agency, the core training need not be repeated if documentation of the prior training is on record with the current agency. The social worker completing the home study will make a recommendation to the NCA Executive Director and a clinical manager who will make that decision together.
7. All training must be documented in writing, including dates, number of hours and topics covered.

B. Core training must include all of the following topics:

1. Attachment/bonding issues.
2. Loss and grief issues, as applicable for all parties to the adoption.
3. Adoption as a lifelong issue as it pertains to all parties to the adoption.
4. Key concepts of child growth and development.
5. Boundary setting and discipline.
6. Parenting a child of different cultural or racial background infancy through adulthood, if applicable.
7. Disclosure issues including the accuracy of family history information regarding the child and birth parent(s)’ family, discussion with the child and sharing information with others.
8. Understanding adoption laws and procedures, including termination of parental rights and the expedited relinquishment process pursuant to Section 19-5-103.5, C.R.S., and the administrative notice for
presumed birth fathers pursuant to 19-5-103.7, C.R.S., if applicable.
9. On-going contact and/or communication of child and adoptive family with biological family and/or significant individuals, if applicable.
10. Possible current and/or future use of community resources, including help with parenting techniques.
11. Medical and health issues including, but not limited to, shaken baby syndrome, parental substance abuse, relevant environmental issues, and genetic risk factors.
12. Expectations of adoption and adoptive process.
13. Basic core and supervision appropriate to the age of the child.

C. Additional Child and Country Specific Areas of Training-Required
1. For families that are completing an Intercountry adoption, additional training on all topic areas listed below must be completed as applicable and must be completed prior to home study completion. The topics are:
   a. U.S. immigration requirements and the laws and procedures of the foreign country, including reporting requirements such as any post-placement or post-adoption reports required by the expected country of origin.
   b. Cultural heritage of the child, including available community resources.
2. For families that will be adopting a child who is either medically fragile, over twelve (12) months of age or any Intercountry adoption, four (4) additional hours from the following topics must be completed as applicable and appropriate for the age(s) of the child(ren) being adopted for a total of twenty (24) hours. These four (4) hours of training may be approved in formats other than face-to-face training at the agency’s discretion.
   a. Parenting a child that has been abused or neglected.
   b. Parenting the physically, mentally, developmentally or emotionally delayed child.
   c. The impact of frequent moves and multiple caregivers on the development of a child.
   d. Information on the long-term implications for a family that has become multicultural through Intercountry adoption, including:
      1) The child’s history and cultural, racial, religious, ethnic and linguistic background; and,
      2) The known health risks in the specific region or country where the child resides. Any general characteristics and needs of children awaiting adoption and the in-country conditions that affect children from the expected country of origin.
   e. Any other medical, social and other data known about the particular child.
   f. The impact of a child leaving familiar surroundings as appropriate to the expected age of child.
   g. The impact of frequent moves and multiple caregivers on the development of a child and data on institutionalized children and the impact of institutionalization on children, including the effect on children depending on the length of time spent in an institution and of the type of care provided in the expected country of origin.
ALL OTHER NCA OFFICES-REQUIRED CLASSES  
(1 OF THE 3 ON-LINE TRAININGS LISTED BELOW)

National Council for Adoption (NCFA)

a. The National Council for Adoption (NCFA) has put together a training seminar entitled “The Intercountry Adoption Journey,” an educational system presented online as an on demand program with modules covering topics pertinent to individuals adopting children internationally. *The Intercountry Adoption Journey* offers the option of testing online for up to two certificates of completion at no additional charge and provides 10 hours of Hague compatible education.

[Register here](#) for *The Intercountry Adoption Journey*. When you register, you will be asked “Did your agency provide you with a special code?” Click yes and then enter the code **Nightlight222** for couples and **Nightlight111** for singles.

b. The National Council for Adoption (NCFA) will issue a completion certificate which will be e-mailed to you. Please forward this certificate directly to your social worker for submission to our office and incorporation into your home study.

Adoption Learning Partners (ALP)  
[www.adoptionlearningpartners.org](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org)

Cost: $200.00 for package listed below, including certificates. Please enter our agency partner code when registering. **Nightlight’s Agency Partner Code is: F271NLCA**

- 4 hours  With Eyes Wide Open
- 2 hours  The Journey of Attachment
- 2 hours  Finding the Missing Piece: Helping Adopted Children Cope with Grief & Loss
- 2 hours  Let’s Talk Adoption: A Lifetime of Family Conversations
- 1.5 hours  Conspicuous Families: Race, Culture & Adoption
- 2.5 hours  Medical Issues in International Adoption

Heart of the Matter Education  
[www.heartofthemattereducation.com](http://www.heartofthemattereducation.com)

Because They Waited™ education system, $149 for two certificates
ADDITIONAL REQUIRED TRAINING ALL OFFICES

In addition to the 10 hours of Hague education completed online or through face-to-face training, all international prospective adoptive parents must complete country specific training and child specific training.

**Country specific training** must be completed prior to your home study being finalized. You should receive this education from your placing agency. If you have not received this education, please request it from your placing agency. You will need to provide documentation to your home study provider that you have completed this requirement before your home study can be finalized.

**Child specific training** must be completed prior to travel. You should receive child specific training once you have accepted a referral of a child. Child specific training will encompass any potential medical issues/special needs your child may have. If you have accepted a referral, but have not received this child specific training, please request it from your placing agency. If you have not completed child specific training prior to travel, your adoption could be delayed.

**Contact one adoptive couple** who has adopted from our agency previously. This conversation should take place over the phone or in person, though it can be arranged via email. (Our agency will provide you with a list of Nightlight Alumni families to talk with in order to meet this requirement.) An Adoptive Parent Discussion form will be provided as part of the parent education materials and must be completed for a total of 1 hour credit. (Please note that the program director may require you to speak with an additional family from the Alumni Families List at a later point in the adoption process.)

**Post-Adoption Depression Training**
Each family is required to read three (3) articles concerning Post-Adoption Depression which will be provided to you. After review of the articles and before completion of your home study, each family will be required to meet with their home study preparer to develop a Post Adoption Safety Plan which is then reviewed by the Social Services Manager at NCA-KY. Each parent will also complete a Reading Verification form (2 credit hours).

**NOTE: REQUIRED EDUCATION FOR CHINA ADOPTIONS**
*China requires a minimum of 12 hours of training which must be completed prior to home study approval.

Also any family adopting a child with an identified special need must also complete following:

**Special Needs Adoption**
All families adopting internationally are asked to research special needs and then complete a Medical Conditions Checklist. This form will help you think through what special needs would be appropriate for your family. It is also used by your home study social worker to list conditions in the approval section of your home study.
CONTINUED EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

After Hague compatible training has been completed and while a family is awaiting placement of a child, ten (10) hours of annual adoptive parent training is required for each USCIS approval/extension. In order to fulfill this requirement, waiting families must read from an approved list of books and articles provided by NCA and submit a Reading Verification Form to the Social Worker for submission to our office and incorporation into your home study. Every three (3) years, all families must re-do the Hague component portion of training.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

As a prospective adoptive parent, I have read and understand the educational requirements that I must complete prior to finishing my home study. I also understand that these requirements must remain current before traveling for my child. These requirements are put in place by my state of residence, The Hague Convention and the country of origin. I will contact Nightlight Christian Adoptions with any questions or concerns that I have regarding these educational requirements.

Prospective Adoptive Parent Signature ____________________________________________

Printed Name ____________________________________________ Date ________________________

Prospective Adoptive Parent Signature ____________________________________________

Printed Name ____________________________________________ Date ________________________
Please complete and return the following Parent Education Checklist to Nightlight:

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Please return this form signed by your Home Study Social Worker prior to or at the completion of your home study. You are required to check off at least one option under each Content Block, as well as complete a minimum of 10 hours of education. (More education may be required depending upon the country program or your state of residence). Copies of any Certificates of Completion for classes completed elsewhere and summaries of the required reading and web sites reviewed should also be included.

Content Areas 1, 6 & 8: Country Specific Information, Laws Effecting the Adoption process & Post-Adoption Reports

- Attended an information seminar presented by Nightlight, home study agency or another local agency
- Completed NCFA/ALP/Heart of the Matter Online Training Courses
- Read Country Specific Education Provided by Placing Agency (Required)

Content Area 2: Medical Issues in International Adoption

- Attended “Medical Issues in International Adoption” presented by Dr. Gary Feldman at the Nightlight CA or CO office
- Attended a class presented by a local agency
- Completed NCFA Hague compliant course, or completed ALP course “Medical Issues in International Adoption”, or completed Heart of the Matter Hague compliant training course.

Content Area 3: Child’s Adjustment to Adoption

- Attended “Attachment and Other Issues of International Adoption”/CORE at Nightlight CA or CO office
- Attended a class presented by a local agency
- Completed ALP course “Adopting the Older Child” or “With Eyes Wide Open”
- Completed NCFA Online Training Courses or Heart of the Matter Online Training courses

Content Area 4: Impact of Institutionalization

- Attended “Attachment and Other Issues of International Adoption”/CORE at Nightlight CA or CO office
- Attended a class presented by a local agency
- Completed ALP course “Medical Issues in International Adoption” or “With Eyes Wide Open”
- Completed NCFA Online Training Courses or Heart of the Matter Online Training Courses

Content Area 5: Attachment

- Attended “Attachment and Other Issues of International Adoption”/CORE at Nightlight CA or CO office
- Attended a class presented by a local agency
- Completed ALP course “The Journey of Attachment”
- Completed NCFA Online Training Courses or Heart of the Matter Online Training Courses

Content Area 7: Long-Term Implications of Multi-cultural Adoption

- Attended “Attachment and Other Issues of International Adoption” and “Life Long Issues in Adoption”/CORE at Nightlight CA or CO office
- Attended a class presented by a local agency
- Completed ALP courses “Conspicuous Families” and “Let’s Talk Adoption”
- Completed NCFA Online Training Courses or Heart of the Matter Online Training Course

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If you have attended classes at your local adoption agency, please list below:

- **Name of Course:** ____________________________
  - Date: ____________
  - # of Hours: ______
  - Location: ____________________________

- **Name of Course:** ____________________________
  - Date: ____________
  - # of Hours: ______
  - Location: ____________________________

- **Name of Course:** ____________________________
  - Date: ____________
  - # of Hours: ______
  - Location: ____________________________

- **Name of Course:** ____________________________
  - Date: ____________
  - # of Hours: ______
  - Location: ____________________________

**RECOMMENDED READINGS**

As you complete a book, please write a brief paragraph that includes what you liked about the book, what you did not like, identify a particular idea or intervention that you believe will help you with your adopted child and describe what you gained from reading the book.

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**COUNTRY SPECIFIC EDUCATION:**

Please list below the country specific education that you completed provided by your placing agency.

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HAGUE TRAINING VERIFICATION

I certify that I have completed a minimum of 10 hours of the required adoptive parent education as required by Nightlight Christian Adoptions and the Hague Treaty.

Adoptive Mother:_________________________________________ Date: __________

Adoptive Father:_________________________________________ Date: __________

I certify that adoptive parent(s) ______________________________ have/has completed a minimum of 10 hours of the required adoptive parent education as required by Nightlight Christian Adoptions and the Hague Treaty.

Home Study Preparer:____________________________________ Date: __________
RECOMMENDED READING

The following books are additional recommended reading to help you prepare for your adoption. Although we recommend that you purchase the books for your home library, they are all available for checkout through our office library in some locations.

The Connected Child: Bringing Hope and Healing to Your Adoptive Family  Karyn Purvis, David Cross & Wendy Sunshine

Parenting With Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility. Foster Cline, MD and Jim Fay.

Raising Adopted Children: Practical Reassuring Advice for Every Adoptive Parent. Lois Ruskai Melina

Adopting the Hurt Child: Keck & Kupecky

Attaching In Adoption: Deborah Gray

Helping Children Cope With Separation and Loss, Revised Edition: Claudia Jewett

Parenting From the Inside Out: Daniel Siegel

Parenting the Hurt Child: Keck & Kupecky

Touchpoints: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development: T. Berry Brazelton

"Toddler Adoption, The Weaver's Craft": Mary Hopkins-Best

The Whole Brained Child: Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child’s Developing Mind: Daniel Siegel, MD and Tina Payne Bryson, PhD

With Eyes Wide Open: A Workbook for Parents Adopting International Children Over Age One: Margi Miller and Nancy Ward (Available at www.childrenshomeadopt.org)

RECOMMENDED MOVIES

1. The Blind Side
2. Losing Isaiah
3. Chimpanzee
4. October Baby
5. The Odd Life of Timothy Green
6. Imitation of Life
13. Somewhere Between (Documentary)
14. I Am Sam
7. Bella
8. White Oleander
9. China Cry
10. Angels in the Outfield
11. Antwon Fisher
12. The Dropbox (Documentary)
RECOMMENDED ONLINE CLASSES

Although the classes below do not meet the criteria for pre-adoption Hague education, they are very helpful and highly recommended for families planning to adopt school age children.

Boris Gindis Center – Post Adoption Leaning Center  www.bgcenterschool.org
Karen Purvis  http://empoweredtoconnect.org/created-to-connect-study-guide/

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES


Eastern European Adoption Coalition,  www.eeadopt.org

National Adoption Information Clearinghouse,  http://naic.acf.hhs.gov, is a great resource for families in any stage of the adoption process as it provides publications and links on many adoption topics.

Adoptive Families of America,  www.adoptivefam.org

Post Adoption Information,www.postadoptinfo.org, specialized in providing information for families who have adopted institutionalized children from Eastern Europe.


ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READINGS BY TOPIC

Child Development:

American Academy of Pediatrics Guide to Your Child's Symptoms
Baby Signs: How to Talk With Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Talk
Talking With Young Children About Adoption: Mary Watkins & Susan Fisher
The Myth of the First Three Years: A New Understanding of Early Brain Development
Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age Five

Adoption:

Adopting After Infertility: Pat Johnston
The Complete Guide to Foreign Adoption: Barbara Bascom
Can This Child Be Saved? Solutions for Adoptive and Foster Families: Foster Cline
Our Own! Adopting and Parenting the Older Child: Trish Maskew
Real Parents, Real Children; Parenting the Adopted Child: Holly Van Gulden
The Primal Wound: Understanding the Adopted Child: Nancy Verrier

Culture, Language and Ethnic Differences:

Chinese at a Glance by Scott D. Seligman (New York, Barron's Educational Series Inc.,)
Cross Cultural Adoption: How to Answer Questions From Family, Friends and Community: Amy Coughlin, Caryn Abramowitz**
Easy Russian Phrase Book: Over 690 Basic Phrases for Everyday Use (Dover Books)
First Thousand Words in Russian (Ukrainian; Chinese etc) (Picture Word Books)
Kinki Kreation: A parent’s guide to natural black hair care for Kids: Jena Renee Williams

Developmental or Behavioral Issues:

The A.D.D. Book: New Understandings, New Approaches to Parenting Your Child
The Bipolar Child: The Definitive and Reassuring Guide to Childhood's Most Misunderstood Disorder: Demitri Papolos, M.D. and Janice Papolos
Building the Bonds of Attachment: Awakening Love in Deeply Troubled Children: Daniel Hughes
The Challenging Child: by Stanley Greenspan

I'm Chocolate, You’re Vanilla: Raising Healthy Black and Bi-Racial Children in a Race Conscious World. Marguerite Wright
Inside Transracial Adoption: Gail Steinberg and Beth Hall
Russia (Eyewitness Books Trade)
Russian Song Book: Dover Books
Please to the Table: The Russian Cookbook
Teach Me Russian (Teach Me More Series): book/tape combo
The New Oxford Picture Dictionary English – Russian (Chinese; Spanish etc)
Ukrainian: A complete course for beginners Olena Bekh, James Dingley

Help for the Hopeless Child: A Guide For Families by Ronald Federici
I Hate You – don’t leave me: Understanding The Borderline Personality: Jerold J. Kreisman, M.D. and Hal Straus
**Love is a Start...** The Real Challenges of Raising Children with Emotional Disorders: The true story of a mother raising children, adopted domestically, with neurological differences

**The New Language of Toys:** Teaching Communication Skills to Children With Special Needs

**The Out of Sync Child** Coping With Sensory Integration Dysfunction: by Carol Stock Kranowitz

**Raising Great Kids:** Dr. John Townsend (Christian based parenting book)

**Children’s Books**

**A Mother for Choco:** Keiko Kasra

**Chinese Eyes:** Marjorie Waybill

**Families Are Forever:** Deborah Capone

**Favorite Russian Fairy Tales** (Dover Children's Thrift Classics):

**Horace** (Reading Rainbow Book): Holly Keller

**I Love You Like Crazy Cakes:** Rose Lewis

**Is That Your Sister:** Catherine and Sherry Bunin (for families with children who are adopting transracially)

**The Keeping Quilt:** Patricia Polacco

**Little Miss Spider:** David Kirk.

**Relationship of Learning Problems and Classroom Performance to Sensory Integration:** Sensory Integration and the Child. Jean Ayres

**Stop Walking on Eggshells:** Taking your life back when someone you care about has Borderline Personality Disorder: Paul T. Mason, M.S. and Randi Kreger

**Therapeutic Parenting:** Deborah Hage

**Troubled Transplants:** by Richard Delaney and Frank Kunstal

**When Love is not Enough:** by Nancy Thomas

**The Little Snowgirl:** An Old Russian Tale:

**A Little Story About A Big Turnip:** Tatiana Zunshine

**Over The Moon:** Karen Katz

**Seeds of Love:** Mary Ebejer Peteryl

**Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born:** Jamie Lee Curtis.

**Three Cheers for Catherine the Great!** (Children's book)

**Through Moon and Stars and Night Skies:** Kristine Wi

**The Survival Series for Kids** Joyce Berry

**What to do when...** Dawn Huebner