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Understanding the experiences of parents who were adopted as children

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Australian Institute of Family Studies

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The Australian Institute of Family Studies acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands and waters. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present.

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2508 Adult adoptees and parenting

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Overview

This resource summarises the evidence about the experiences of parents who were adopted as children (i.e. adult adoptees). It discusses their experiences of parenthood and the impacts of parenthood on their identity, wellbeing and relationships with others. It outlines the broader complexities of family separation in adoption, the impact of adoption on relationship attachment and the intersection between adoption and parenthood. This paper also provides some considerations for practitioners and other professionals working with adult adoptee parents and their families.

Key messages

- Adult adoptees who become parents may experience some unique challenges that need specific supports. Adoption is an ongoing experience – emerging research suggests that the experience of having been adopted can play a significant role in adult adoptees' wellbeing and their relationships with their child(ren) and families.
- The parenting experiences of adult adoptees are mixed – for some it can be beneficial and rewarding, for others it can present challenges. Parenthood can cause adult adoptees to reflect on their own birth and separation from their birth or first parents.¹ Adults reflecting on these experiences may require support from practitioners and other professionals.
- Existing research on adult adoptees' experiences of parenthood is limited. There is more research needed on how to best support adult adoptees when they become parents.

For practitioners, you can increase your awareness and understanding of the impacts of adoption experiences on some clients to provide more tailored support:

- Recognise that adoptees have unique experiences and may require different supports for their concerns (e.g. birth family search, attachment, grief and loss).
- Take a holistic approach to the impacts of adoption by understanding the complexities of family separation in adoption, how it shapes individual experiences and the sensitivities around this.
- Refer individuals to adoptee-related support or peer groups and programs. (See [Further readings and resources](#) at the end of the resource.)
- Use trauma-informed supports for individuals and their families.

Introduction

Adoption is a life changing event. It never goes away as it has formed an essential part of one's personality and how one deals with the world and relates to others. (Masso & Whitfield, 2003, p. 20)

Adoption or separation from a birth parent can have effects across an individual's lifetime and potentially impact their children (Baden & Wiley, 2007; Flikweert, 2021). Common adoption-related challenges include difficulties accessing identity and family information or history (Laybourn, 2017; Walton, 2012), the emotional and logistical challenges of searching for birth family and attachment difficulties, and grief and loss related to birth family separation (Kenny et al., 2012). These can all have implications for intergenerational relationships that affect the child being adopted and their birth parents, the adoptive parents and their families and, eventually, the families and children of adoptees (Battalen et al., 2018).

Research on adoption has often focused on the social and psychological adjustment of adoptees during childhood and adolescence. There is less research on the experience and impacts of adoption in adulthood. However, what research does exist suggests that there are higher levels of mental health issues (e.g. depression, anxiety, personality disorders, suicidal behaviours) among adult adoptees than non-adoptees (Gustafsson &

¹ Given the sensitivity of language in adoption, there is different terminology that people may prefer to use to refer to the parents and family prior to adoption (Kenny et al., 2012). This includes first parents, natural parents and birth parents. In this resource, we use the term 'birth parents'.

Fronek, 2022; Melero & Sánchez-Sandoval, 2017). Adoption may also impact adult adoptees' relationships with others, including how they approach and experience intimate relationships and parenthood.

Most post-adoption resources are similarly focused on children, adolescents and their adoptive parents. This is consistent with a common assumption that adoption is an event that occurs when people are children, rather than a lifelong process requiring post-adoption support across the life course (Walton, 2012).

While individual needs can vary, adult adoptees' may need access to support throughout their lifetime. The need for support may be especially acute at key life stages – such as contact or reunion with birth family, development of ethnic identity and/or attempts to connect to birth culture – as well as key life events such as marriage and parenthood (Sánchez-Sandoval et al., 2020).

The existing research on adult adoptees' experiences of parenthood is still limited and the majority of studies to date are qualitative. This resource includes studies from a range of countries, demonstrating some important shared themes despite different legal and social systems.

Adoption in Australia

This section describes what adoption is, provides a brief overview of the history of adoption in Australia and summarises some key issues for adult adoptees.

From a legal perspective, adoption is a process where full parental rights and responsibilities for a child are legally transferred from the child's parent(s) to their adoptive parents (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2021). When this occurs, the legal relationship between the child and their parent(s) is severed and, for the adoptive parent(s), the adopted child's legal rights become the same as they would be if the child had been born to them (AIHW, 2021).

In contemporary Australia, adoption is generally 'open adoption'. This is different to 'closed adoption' and 'forced adoption', which (in Australia) are largely historical practices.

- Open adoption: the identities of birth parent(s) can be known to adoptees and adoptive families and there are access arrangements between the adoptee and the birth parents (Kenny et al., 2012).
- Closed adoption: the identities of the birth parents are not known (i.e. the child's original birth certificate is sealed forever) and the amended birth certificate contains the adoptive parent(s)' details (Kenny et al., 2012).
- Forced adoption: adoptions are carried out without the consent of the child's parents or under coercion (Smart, 2020).²

Furthermore, adoptions can be categorised as either domestic or intercountry (AIHW, 2024):

- Domestic adoptions: includes both local adoptions, where the child and adoptive parent(s) did not know each other before the adoption; and 'known child' adoptions where the child and adoptive parent(s) knew each other before (e.g. step-parents or former foster carers). In Australia, known child adoptions comprise the overwhelming majority of adoptions.
- Intercountry adoptions: adoptions of children from overseas, where the child and adoptive parent(s) did not know each other before the adoption. Closed adoption is characteristic of the vast majority of intercountry adoptions and forced adoption is also reportedly common in some locations (Briggs, 2012; Cuthbert & Spark, 2009a; Kim, 2016; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2016).

Patterns of adoption in Australia reflect broader societal and policy changes (AIHW, 2023; Kenny et al., 2012). Adoption practices and rates of adoption in Australia have changed significantly over time. There was a large increase in adoptions between 1968 and 1971–72, during the era of what is known as 'forced adoption' (AIHW, 2023). In 1971–72, there were 9,798 recorded adoptions in Australia – the highest number on record (AIHW, 2023). Since then, the number of adoptions has declined significantly and adoption is now relatively uncommon in most states and territories. In 2022–23, there were 201 adoptions³ (domestic and international) in Australia; this was a decrease from 339 a decade before (in 2012–13) and is a 98% decrease from 1971–72 (AIHW, 2023, 2024).

² The practice of forced adoption declined in the 1970s–80s when legislation and practice progressively changed across the states/territories (Kenny et al., 2012). In 2013, the Australian Government formally apologised for past forced adoption policies and practices.

³ The majority of adoptions were in New South Wales, with smaller numbers in other states/territories (AIHW, 2025).

The decline in adoptions in Australia has a range of causes. These include changes in social trends and attitudes (such as towards sex outside of marriage and increased support for single mothers to keep their children), policy and legislative changes and increased use of other methods for family formation (such as assisted reproductive technology and surrogacy) (Spark & Cuthbert, 2009).

For children in out-of-home care, most Australian states/territories have a permanency of care hierarchy (prioritisation of desired outcomes). In most parts of Australia, having children placed with birth parents, or reunited with birth families after separation, are the preferred permanency outcomes and are listed at the top of the hierarchy. Adoption is usually lower in the hierarchy as a means of achieving permanency. See this AIHW table for more information on [permanent care-related concepts, definitions and legislative and policy contexts by jurisdiction](#).⁴

Adoption and the complexities of family separation

Adoption in Australia is usually practised with the intention of giving children a sense of legal and relational permanency and/or to protect them from harm. There is also some international evidence to suggest that children placed for domestic adoption tend to have better outcomes than children in other forms of out-of-home care (although this may be due to a selection effect where children with less complex issues are more likely to be adopted) (Walsh et al., 2018).

In contemporary Australia, all domestic adoptions are now 'open adoptions'. This means that the identities of the birth parents are known to the adopted child and contact between the child and their birth parents can be maintained (and may be a legally enforceable part of the adoption order). The practice of open adoption was introduced gradually to Australia starting from the late 1970s into the 1990s (Quartly et al., 2013).

Before this time, adoption in Australia was primarily 'confidential' or 'closed'. This meant a 'clean break' where the child's birth certificate was amended and where the child and their birth parents had no contact or information about each other (Kenny et al., 2012; Modell, 1994, 2002). In some countries, closed or confidential adoption is still common practice.

Although adoption can potentially provide important relational and legal stability for a child, the legal process of separation, especially in closed adoptions, has been shown to potentially affect the child's family socialisation (i.e. the infant and child's social development through the family). This can particularly be the case if they no longer have contact with their birth parents and families.

The process of separation in more closed systems of adoption (and especially in past forced adoption practices in Australia) has been described as creating a damaging 'culture of secrecy'⁵ whereby adopted children were not aware of their birth family or, sometimes, that they were adopted (The Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2012, p. 30). Some researchers and advocates have drawn parallels between the secrecy, guilt and shame that enabled coercion in past domestic adoption practices in Australia with how young women in other countries, especially single women, have been stigmatised, shamed and pressured to relinquish their children for intercountry adoptions (Cuthbert & Spark, 2009b; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Human Services, 2005; Kim, 2016; Quartly et al., 2013).

These practices have had long-lasting implications and have been described as contributing to 'adoption stigma', which is 'biased, judgemental attitudes toward adoption and adoption-related concerns' (Baden, 2016, p. 3). Due to feelings of secrecy and shame, adoptees may feel they are not able to speak openly about their adoption.

Because domestic adoption in Australia no longer involves the same complete break from birth family as under previous policies, younger adult adoptees (including young parents) may have different experiences of, and feelings about, their adoption than previous generations (or adoptees from other countries). However, because open adoption only became widespread in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, there are still current adult adoptees in Australia who were adopted under systems in which contact with birth families was severed (Quartly et al., 2013). Further, a child's separation from their birth parents, whether in closed or open adoption or via placement in other forms of out-of-home care, can have lasting effects on an individual and result in experiences of trauma, loss and grief (Briggs, 2012; Fronek et al., 2015; Kenny et al., 2012; Leon, 2002).

4 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) outlines a hierarchy for placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care (SNAICC, 2017). Adoption is often considered the last resort for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (AIHW, 2016; SNAICC, 2024) - however, it is beyond the scope of this resource to discuss these issues in detail.

5 This refers to a period when women impacted by forced domestic adoption carried their experience as a secret even from their closest friends and families (The Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2012).

Regardless of whether someone experienced open or closed adoption, there can be additional complexities for adults who, as children, were placed with adoptive parents of a different racial, ethnic or cultural background to themselves. When adoptive parents (particularly those within white adoptive families) have not reflected on their own racial identity or had explicit experiences of racial socialisation⁶ from their own parents, they may not feel equipped to support their child to understand their racial identity or to have conversations about racism.

In intercountry adoptions, this can be further exacerbated if the adoptee's connection to their birth family and country is minimised or, conversely, when adoptive families focus on celebrating an adoptee's birth culture but do not address or discuss the adoptee's racial identity (Willing & Fronek, 2014; Zhou et al., 2021). This can have negative impacts on adoptees' sense of belonging and identity into adulthood and affect their understanding of racism or ability to make sense of personal experiences of racism or discrimination (Hübinette & Tigervall, 2009; Walton, 2019). As we discuss later, this lack of understanding can also impact an adoptee's ability to help their own children with racial socialisation.

Adoption narratives and impact on help seeking

The act of family separation that make an adoption possible and the consequences of this experience for adoptees are not always well understood or discussed by other people in adoptees' lives (Willing & Fronek, 2014; Willing et al., 2012). Both the experience of child-birth parent separation and any later lack of acknowledgement that this may have been significant or traumatic can negatively affect adoptees' mental health and their adjustment within adoptive families (Hübinette & Tigervall, 2009). This is especially the case where adoptees perceive that they are expected to be grateful for their adoption or to feel lucky that they were adopted (Briggs, 2012; Fronek et al., 2015). This, in turn, can reinforce feelings (or fears) of 'adoption stigma' (Baden, 2016).

Because adoptees may not feel they are able to discuss their experiences or challenges with their adoptive families (Willing & Fronek, 2012), they may also be less likely to seek external support when it is needed. This can leave adoptees feeling less supported or less comfortable talking about experiences because it may be seen by others as 'negative' or 'ungrateful'. They may also be less likely to seek support, particularly if they do not feel that practitioners have knowledge about the complexities of adoption (Atkinson, 2020; Atkinson et al., 2013; Baden & Wiley, 2007). Additionally, adoptees may not feel safe to talk about these experiences with a practitioner if they are not sure if the practitioner will explicitly acknowledge the impacts of family separation.

The next section describes the research evidence on experiences of adult adoptees becoming and being parents. This is followed by a summary of practice considerations for practitioners and professionals working with adult adoptees who are parents and their families.

What are the experiences of parenting among adopted adults?

The research suggests that the transition to parenthood can present challenges for adult adoptees that may mean they need support from child and family practitioners and other professionals. In particular, parenthood or impending parenthood can cause adult adoptees to re-examine or explore their adoption history and experiences. This, in turn, can affect their feelings about parenting, their relationship with their child and their wellbeing (Conrck, 2016).

In the sections that follow, we describe the evidence on the experiences of parenting among adopted adults according to the following interconnected themes:

- identity – who am I?
- mental wellbeing
- attitudes towards parenting
- relationships with partners, adoptive parents and extended family.

⁶ Racial socialisation can be broadly defined as the processes by which children and young people learn about the significance of race, racial identity and issues of racism (Priest et al., 2014).

Identity – who am I?

According to Day and colleagues (2015), 'the developmental process of becoming a first-time mother is a transformative experience in women's lives, prompting reflection on their identities, relationships, upbringings and future selves' (p. 360). When adult adoptees become parents, they also may go through a process of reflecting on their own birth and early childhood and this can include reflecting on the separation from their birth parent(s) (Egan et al., 2022; Neil et al., 2023). This can trigger new or prospective parents to actively seek further information about their adoption history as they may be considering questions such as 'who am I?' and 'where do I belong?' (Conrick, 2020; Neil, 2023).

The consequences of this reflective process vary. An Australian study of mothers who were adopted as infants found that some women felt their adoption status had a negative influence on their sense of self (Conrick, 2020). This, in turn, complicated their experiences of motherhood because they were unsure of who they were and where they belonged (Conrick, 2020). In contrast, a UK study of Romanian adoptee mothers described how some participants, particularly those with a lower sense of self-worth or who said that they had few life accomplishments, felt a sense of pride and achievement in becoming a parent (Edwards et al., 2023).

For transracial adult adoptees (children placed with adoptive parents of a different racial/ethnic/cultural background to them), becoming a parent can cause individuals to (re)explore their identity and what it means to them as well as how to foster racial/ethnic identity in their children (Zhou et al., 2021).

A qualitative study of Korean-American women who were adopted into white families described how becoming a parent was a catalyst for them to reflect upon their own cultural and racial experiences growing up and the effects of these experiences on their identity and sense of self (Day et al., 2015). Some women reported feelings of confusion, uncertainty and even shame when reflecting on their identity (Day et al., 2015).

This motivated some participants to explore the culture of their birth parents so they could pass on knowledge and help nurture their child's identity and sense of self (Day et al., 2015). This was a particularly strong intention for parents who lacked exposure to their birth culture during their childhood and who felt that this had negatively impacted their ethnic or racial identity. This experience was a powerful motivation to try to avoid their child having the same experience.

Mental health

Research suggests that there is a relationship between the prospect or experience of parenting and adult adoptees' mental health – however, the effects of this relationship vary. For some adult adoptees, parenting can have negative effects on their mental health. For others, parenting is a highly positive experience that enhances their wellbeing.

There is some research to suggest that some adult adoptees experienced increased mental distress when they became parents. As we have noted above, this is, in part, because the experience of becoming a parent can prompt reflection on childhood experiences. For example, an England-based study of adults who were adopted from care as children reported high levels of mental distress among some participants as they transitioned to parenting (Neil et al., 2023). The authors suggested that this distress was the result of people's reflections on, and feelings about, their adoption experience becoming more intense. This, in turn, could exacerbate any existing mental health issues (Neill et al., 2023).

However, parenting does not negatively affect the mental health or wellbeing of all adult adoptees. For example, a French study comparing adoptees' and non-adoptees' experiences of parenthood found that there were no significant differences between the 2 groups in relation to their parenthood experiences (e.g. their motivation to have a child, levels of parental stress or their co-parenting behaviours). This lack of difference in experiences of parenting was striking given the finding that adult adoptees tended to have lower pre-existing attachment security and lower mental health scores than non-adoptees (Despax, Bouteyre, & Guiller, 2021).

Participants in other studies of adoptee parents have reported that parenthood can bring positive feelings of belonging, security and positive relational attachment (Field & Pond, 2018). For some adult adoptees, becoming a parent provides greater motivation for them to become more emotionally and financially independent (Edwards et al., 2023) and allows them an 'opportunity to repair the past, to give their children what they did not have' (Conrick, 2020, p. 64).

Attitudes towards parenting

People's experiences of adoption can influence their approaches to parenting in different ways. As well as reshaping one's identity, having an adoption background can influence people's feelings about becoming a parent and their relationships with their child(ren) (Conrick, 2020; Egan et al., 2022).

Research suggests that the experience of having been adopted can affect people's feelings and attitudes towards parenthood even before conception (Masso & Whitfield, 2003). A French study that examined the views of adult adoptees about parenting found that some had decided to never become parents because of their concerns about their ability to parent and fear of passing on unknown biological or genetic traits that might be harmful to the child (Despax, Bouteyre, & Halidia, 2021).

Pregnancy and childbirth can also trigger stressful thoughts and emotions (Conrick, 2020; Masso & Whitfield, 2003). For example, expectant mothers may be anxious about bonding with their baby in the first few weeks after delivery (Masso & Whitfield, 2003). Some participants in a study of mothers who were adopted as infants told researchers that in the post-partum period they felt afraid to be separated from their children (Conrick, 2020). Other participants recalled experiencing a fear of losing their child, which led to them being (temporarily) emotionally distant from their baby (Conrick, 2020).

Nonetheless, a common finding among studies of adult adoptees is that many feel that there was a special meaning attached to having a biological child (Day et al., 2015; Edwards et al., 2023; Egan et al., 2022; Sherr et al., 2019). For these individuals, there was something special and powerful about having a blood/genetic connection to their child and having someone in their life that looked like them (Field & Pond, 2018).

Relationships with partners and family

Relatively little is known about the flow-on effects of adult adoptees navigating parenthood on their relationships with family members. There is some research to suggest that parenthood can affect adoptees' relationships with their partners and other family members in a range of ways. Some individuals have reported feeling a deeper connection with their adoptive family after becoming a parent (Edwards et al., 2023; Neil et al., 2023).

However, for others, it can complicate relationships, especially when the experience of parenthood highlights a lack of connection with adoptive parents (Masso & Whitfield, 2003). Adult adoptees' relationships with their birth parents can also be affected in varying ways as they themselves become parents. Some report becoming closer to their birth parents (and feeling more sympathetic towards their birth mother in particular), whereas others reported feeling more distant (e.g. not wishing to involve their birth parent in their pregnancy and birth due to a lack of connection) (Masso & Whitfield, 2003).

Relationships with partners can be affected by the experience of becoming a parent but relationships with partners also influence how adult adoptees experience parenting. Emerging research suggests that dyadic coping – i.e. how partners communicate about stress, support each other and deal with stress together – can mediate the relationship between an individual's psychological characteristics (attachment, mental health and resilience) and parental stress (Despax, Bouteyre, & Guiller, 2021). In other words, the nature and quality of an adoptee's relationship with their partner influences the level of parental stress they experience during parenthood.

Implications for practitioners

Adoption is a practice that involves family separation as well as family formation. There are some narratives or assumptions about adoption that tend to focus more on the beneficial aspects of family formation – for example, that adoptees are lucky to have been adopted and become part of a permanent family – than on the complexities of family separation.⁷ These narratives can affect how adoptees and their families may understand and experience adoption.

⁷ Note that the unique experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regard to the Stolen Generations mean that there are distinct narratives about adoption and family separation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; specifically it is recognised that the experiences of forced removals (which could include adoption) continue to negatively affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to this day. The report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (1997) documents the harmful effects of forced removal and adoption.

The research suggests that some adult adoptees find parenthood important and beneficial whereas others may experience additional challenges and vulnerabilities on becoming parents that stem from their experiences of loss, disconnection from birth parents and early disruption to childhood attachment. Having insight into the potential effects of these experiences may be valuable to practitioners providing support to adult adoptee parents.

More research is needed to understand what works to support adult adoptees when they become parents. However, practitioners can increase their awareness and understanding of the impact of adoption experiences for their clients and reflect on the considerations below.

Practice considerations

Understanding the unique or additional challenges that can be experienced by adult adoptee parents can help practitioners and professionals to provide tailored supports that promote wellbeing, positive parenting experiences and stronger relationships between parents and their children.

It is critical for practitioners to take a holistic approach to the impacts of adoption by understanding the broader context of adoption that shapes individual experiences. We have drawn on the existing literature to describe some of the ways practitioners can support adult adoptee parents.

- **Recognise the unique experiences of individual adoptees.** Avoid generalising or making assumptions about adoption experiences but be aware of common adoption-related concerns such as birth family search, attachment difficulties, grief and loss (Zhou et al., 2021). Understand that there are a variety of ways that adopted individuals may re-evaluate and readjust their identity and sense of self in response to becoming parents. Be open-minded about how this process occurs and what supports are needed (Egan et al., 2022).
- **Reflect on any assumptions or beliefs you may hold about adoption.** Related to the need to recognise the unique experiences of adult adoptees is a need to be aware of your own assumptions. You may hold beliefs or attitudes about adoption based on personal experiences or information from the media (including films and television shows). Many of these focus on the positives of adoption (Willing, 2009; Willing & Fronek, 2014). These assumptions may affect how you provide support to individuals with experiences of adoption.
- **Recognise that some adoptees may be initially reluctant to speak about their adoption.** Some individuals may have experiences of depression, anxiety or isolation related to being adopted but may appear to be coping well when they present to practitioners. They may initially minimise their experiences or not recognise struggles that may be related to their adoption. This can be a result of adoption stigma – that is, previous experiences of people making assumptions or having judgemental attitudes about adoption (Baden, 2016).
- **Refer individuals to adoptee-related groups and programs.** Look for support groups, online forums or workshops that provide opportunities for adult adoptees to seek support from others going through a similar process of reflecting and reframing in relation to their identity (Day et al., 2015). Informal adoptee-led groups that are not necessarily therapeutic can still have therapeutic effects by providing a space where people can develop connections with other adoptees with similar lived experiences (Sánchez-Sandoval et al. 2020; Walton, 2009; Walton, 2019).
- **Provide trauma-informed support for individuals and their families.** Adult adoptees may experience challenges when transitioning to parenthood. This suggests a need for trauma-informed support for families. Trauma-informed care is based on knowledge and understanding of how trauma can affect people's lives, their service needs and their service engagement. Trauma-informed approaches can help service providers to provide safe and non-stigmatising supports that avoid re-traumatising adult adoptees and allow them agency and choice in how they receive services. Individuals with existing mental health challenges may also benefit from tailored support in the early stages of pregnancy and parenting to reduce the risk of escalation later on (Neil et al., 2023). See the [Further readings and resources](#) section for some resources on trauma-informed care.
- **Consider involving adult adoptees' partners in parenting support or family counselling.** Parenting supports may be more effective when they involve adoptees' partners. Greater support from, or strong relationships with, partners during parenthood may be a protective factor for adoptees' wellbeing and reduce the level of parenting stress (Despax, Bouteyre, & Guiller, 2021; Field & Pond, 2018).

For more information on adoption supports related to this topic, please see the following links.

Further readings and resources

[Adoption](#) – AIFS has several resources related to adoption, including a [guide](#) for service providers.

[Adoptions Australia](#) – The AIHW collects data and information about numbers and types of adoption in Australia.

[VANISH](#) is a not-for-profit organisation for adopted people, mothers, fathers and other family members affected by past adoption practices.

[The Benevolent Society](#) has various resources related to adoption, including impacts of adoption, information for partners and relatives of adoptees, adoptive parenting and searching in adoption.

[Intercountry Adoptee and Family Support Service](#) (ICAFSS) is a nationwide government-funded support service for intercountry adoptees and their families that is delivered by Relationships Australia.

[Intercountry Adoptee Voices](#) (ICAV) is a national adoptee led and run not-for-profit organisation that provides [resources](#) for the adoption community and professionals.

[Forced Adoption and Post Adoption Services](#) – Relationships Australia SA provides resources and services to adoptee adults and children, parents who have lost a child/children to adoption and adoptive parents. Family members can also access the service.

Resources related to trauma

[Phoenix Australia](#) has research and resources designed to help you understand, prevent and recover from the impacts of trauma, and to support trauma-impacted loved ones or communities.

[SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](#) – This manual explains the SAMHSA framework, referred to throughout this practice guide, for becoming a trauma-informed organisation, system or service sector. The manual provides a definition of trauma and a trauma-informed approach and offers 6 key principles and 10 implementation domains.

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