



## **TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION**

Most professionals today believe that sharing a common race is not a prerequisite for effective parenting. Thousands of families each year adopt children that are a different racial make-up than themselves. There are important things to consider when opening your adoption preferences to children of other races:

### **Expand Your Family's Horizons**

This is an opportunity to grow your knowledge and exposure to people of all races. This isn't important just for the adoptive parents, but for children and extended family as well. Adoption impacts entire families for generations, and taking the opportunity to learn more about others will also impact your family generationally.

### **Maintain Racial Backgrounds**

It will be important for the adopted child to maintain an identity with his racial and ethnic heritage. He will gain the benefits of your culture heritage, but his must be honored and maintained as well. This doesn't mean that the family should shift its entire identity, but rather add in more diversity. This will give your family a greater depth of understanding and more reasons to celebrate the uniqueness in each of us! Easy ways to implement this include stories and movies about role models and historical figures as well as celebrations that are culturally significant.

### **New Relationships**

Creating the opportunity for friendships with others of the same race will be vital. This can be through school, church, or just neighborhood friends. Staying in touch with birth parents can also help with this. Some families have had to make adjustments to schools or move to different neighborhoods to ensure that the child does not feel like the only one who doesn't fit in.

### **Talk About It**

Racial prejudice may come up. Be open to talking about it and don't try to sweep it under the rug. Because you are now an interracial family, you will need to be prepared to deal with. At times, you may find it comes up within your extended family. Be caring, yet firm in your opportunities to educate others.

### **Hair, Skin, and Health Issues**

You may need to be prepared to deal with certain physical issues in caring for a child. Don't be shy about asking for help! Others are usually eager to help teach you what you need to know to care for your child.