How to Select a Foster Care or Adoption Agency

Selecting an agency is an important decision. Research and select the agency that’s a good fit for you and your family. Here are a few questions to consider.

- What sets this agency apart from other agencies?
- What are the agency’s requirements, beyond the minimum state licensing requirements?
  - Additional required training
  - Criminal background
  - Adult/child ratios
  - Health considerations
  - Dog breed restrictions
  - Immunization requirements
  - Pool fencing
  - Childcare restrictions
- Does the agency offer special events or activities for families? How frequently?
- Does the agency offer support groups?
- Are additional behavioral health services available beyond what DCS offers?
- Is it easy to reach a licensing worker or administrator? How quickly are calls returned?
- How many respite hours does the agency provide?
- Is agency support available after an adoption is finalized?
- Does the agency offer after-hours phone support?
- What is the average licensing worker caseload?
- Which programs are offered by the agency?
  - Regular foster care
  - Adoption certification
  - Therapeutic foster care
  - Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
- What is the time frame to become licensed?
- Are references available to speak with prior to selecting an agency?