

Questions to Consider When Choosing an Agency

We encourage kinship families to do their research before choosing an agency, and we recommend starting with the list of agencies who we have vetted and partnered with to serve kinship families (see Appendix C). To help you find the agency that is the best fit for your family, we have compiled the following list of questions:

General

1. Where are the agency's offices located? How far will you have to drive for trainings? Or are trainings offered online?
2. What is the agency's general reputation in the community? What do other kinship/adoptive families have to say about them?
3. What is the size and scope of the organization? (Typically, larger organizations have more flexible training options, but smaller organizations may be more attentive to your individual needs.)

Licensing

1. What are the agency's requirements for licensing?
2. What is the anticipated timeline for becoming a licensed kinship home?
3. How many families are currently licensed with the agency?
4. How many kinship families have worked with the agency?
5. Does the agency currently have any constraints in the licensing process (i.e. longer than normal review process, staff shortage, approval committee)?
6. Does the agency have an electronic system for documentation and/or submission of licensing requirements?
7. Are there any costs related to the licensing process?

Training

1. How much of the agency's training curriculum is Trauma-Informed?
2. Is childcare offered during annual training classes?
3. How much assistance does the agency provide with regard to annual training requirements?
4. Are any of the trainings available via livestream or online access?

Support

1. Is the agency staff trained in Trauma-Informed Care?
2. Are they willing to come to your home to offer assistance with severe behavioral challenges, if necessary?
3. How often do agency representatives attend court hearings, mediations, and/or permanency conferences?
4. How often does the agency conduct unannounced home visits?
5. Do they offer support groups or other types of support for families?
6. Do they offer post-adoption support?
7. What are the agency's requirements for babysitters and respite care providers? Will it be reasonably easy for you to get the childcare support you need?