The Inclusive Family Support Model: Facilitating Openness for Post-Adoptive Families

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Open adoptions have increased over the past few decades and while guidance for considering and creating open adoption agreements exist, one area of needed post-adoption support is helping adoptive and birth/first families navigate open-adoption relationships after finalization. Adoption agencies have a responsibility to assist adoptive parents, who may have fears and concerns about openness, see the potential benefits rather than only the challenges. This article describes a practice model designed by one agency to help families navigate post-adoption openness. The Inclusive Family Support model is conceptualized through the theoretical perspectives of family systems theory, ambiguous loss and disenfranchised grief, and the transtheoretical model of change. The authors highlight the major dimensions of the model, how it will be implemented and evaluated at one agency, and discuss implications for practice, and policy.

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