

Handout: Ancillary Interventions

Adoption-Themed Camps: Adoption-themed camps and other camp experiences focus on healing relationships and experiences. There are family camps that create positive family memories and offer parent workshops and children's activities that foster understanding of adoption and a sense of belonging. Camps for children can have various themes; for example, "Camp to Belong" gives separated siblings a chance to reunite, while being therapeutic and healing.

Cultural Camps: Cultural camps are designed for internationally-placed kids to celebrate culture and make new connections.

Animal Therapies: Animal therapies, such as equine therapy and the use of therapy dogs, teach children how to take care of and nurture an animal, as well as how to interact and communicate with the animal. Having an animal present during a therapeutic session can also be a calming influence on a child.

Drumming: Drumming accelerates physical healing, boosts the immune system and produces feelings of well-being, provides a release of emotional trauma, and reintegration of self. Slow drumming is calming and the rhythmic beat can help to organize the brain.

Expressive Therapies: Expressive therapies such as art therapy, music, poetry, dance, and drama provide a creative outlet for children to tell their story and express their feelings, work through loss and grief, trauma and other emotional issues. The presentation of these creative expressions can engage children and their parents in re-learning and relationship building.

Groups For Children/Teens Who Are Adopted: Groups for children/teens who are adopted can normalize the children's experiences and reduce a sense of isolation. Teens, especially, benefit from hearing each other's stories and identifying their own feelings in others' experiences. (See *Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens* for scripted group format).

Life Book Work: Life book work, which we will discuss further in Module 3, is more than a scrapbook. It is a tool for helping children know their stories and begin the healing process. Supporting the child's understanding of their past paves the way for them to heal and move forward.

Narrative Therapy: Narrative therapy is a way for a child to tell his or her story, and have the therapist help to separate the story from the child, allowing the child a more objective perspective of the situation and the impact of the experience on the child. Click the link on the screen to learn more.

Occupational Therapy (OT): Occupational therapy (OT) can be very useful for children with sensory integration and self-regulation problems by helping children improve their cognitive, physical, sensory, and motor skills, and enhance their self-esteem and sense of accomplishment. For instance, rocking is soothing and helpful for children with attention difficulties, and weighted vests help children feel grounded.

Psychoeducational Training: Psychoeducational training, including preparatory training and post-placement workshops, help parents feel more confident parenting children with traumatic backgrounds and confounding behaviors. There are a variety of online resources for parents, including webinars through the Center for Adoption Support and Education, Adoption Learning Partners, and Foster Parent College. Many private adoption agencies offer ongoing workshops and parenting curricula, such as Pathways to Permanence (Kinship Center). Check locally to see if your community partners offer workshops that would benefit your families.

Sand Tray Therapy: In sand tray therapy, a child uses trays of sand and miniature figures of people, animals and other objects, to construct a scene that represents an aspect of their life. It allows the child to reflect on the scene, change it, remove obstacles, resolve conflicts, and gain acceptance. This therapy can be used with a child or with a family together.

Sensory-Based Activities: Sensory-based activities, such as baking, cooking, and gardening, can be used with children and families to serve as attachment building activities, which can be translated to the home environment. Our senses of taste, smell, and touch can be used to enhance experiences, while building cooperation and a sense of accomplishment. These, and other sensory activities, can be very helpful in building attachment experientially.

W.I.S.E. Up!: W.I.S.E. Up! teaches effective techniques for helping children who are in adoptive and guardianship families, as well as children in foster care, deal with painful and often disturbing encounters with people who ask hurtful and inappropriate questions.

Yoga: Yoga is a great way for parents and children to share in a healthy activity together while learning to control their bodies and breathing and quiet their minds. Yoga has many health benefits aside from the potential attachment benefit.