

ADOPTION Terminology

Many terms and phrases describing adoption have negative connotations. When you hear negative language being used, suggest more positive terminology such as from the list below.

A suggested way to deal with the aspect of “time” within the adopted family is to use the phrase *“Before you came to live with us...”* OR *“After you came to live with us...”*

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Birthparent, Birthfather, Birthmother Biological parent Biological child ancestry Woman who gave birth	Real parent Natural parent
Adopted person Adoptee Adult adoptee	Adopted child of <i>(fill in the blank)</i>
Birthchild	Their own children Their real children

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Adoption Triad	Adoption triangle
To opt for, Choose, or Continue parenting	Keeping
Born outside of marriage to a _____ Single person, Divorced person, Never married person, or Unwed mother	Illegitimate child Bastard

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
An adoption plan was made for... The baby joined the family The older child joined his/her family	Adopted out Put up for adoption
An adoption was arranged An adoption was planned He/She was placed	Given away Given up
My child	My adopted child

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Termination of parental rights Unable to parent ANY child Court termination	Gave up
Made an adoption plan Legally or voluntarily released	Gave away
Waiting child, Child with special needs, Child available for adoption	Hard to place child