

Understanding the Post-Adoptive Experiences of Parents

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Below is a brief summary of The Jordan Project and its main findings, as summarized by Michael Monroe (Tapestry, Irving Bible Church – www.tapestry.irvingbible.org):

➤ **The Project centered on the following three questions**

- What are the predominate post-adoptive challenges parents face?
- What resources are needed to aid adoptive parents?
- How do we respond?

➤ **423 families sampled using both qualitative and quantitative questions**

- Parents were constituents of FamilyLife and/or Focus on the Family and therefore most presumably regularly attend Christian churches
- Respondents were overwhelmingly female (89%), Caucasian (96%), married (89.5%) and highly educated (81.5% having a college degree or higher), and came from 43 states and seven countries
- Majority of children were placed through international adoptions (58.5%), and the average age at time of placement with adoptive family was 2.5 years of age

➤ **Post-Adoptive Challenges**

- Parents indicated that various post-adoptive challenges were *expected*, such as cognitive delays (19.9%), minority child/cultural issues (13.9%), RAD (9%) and FAS/FAE (7.2%)
- Parents responded that the following post-adoptive challenges (among others) were *actually diagnosed*: cognitive delays (13.3%), minority child/cultural issues (6.5%), RAD (23.3%) and FAS/FAE (4.2%)
- Parents indicated that non-diagnosed behaviors included anger (13.4%), attachment issues (12.6%) and aggression/violence (9.1%)

➤ **Post-Adoptive Services**

- Over 50% of parents indicated that their pre-adoption counseling did not provide adequate knowledge of post-adoptive issues
- 44.2% of respondents indicated that their agency/social worker provided no services beyond post-placement visits
- Parents indicated that they seek help for post-adoptive issues from various places, including bookstores (20.5%), family/friends (19.6%), internet (14.8%), agency/social worker (14.2%) and church/pastor (11%)
- When asked where they *first* sought help for post-adoptive issues, parents indicated the turn first to their adoption agency/social worker (23.3%), family/friends (22.6%), bookstores (13%) and church/pastor (9.2%)

➤ **Parents indicated the following resources would be helpful in addressing post-adoptive challenges:**

- Professional counseling from a Biblical worldview
- Respite care for parents and adopted children
- Support systems through their local church (mentors, support groups, etc.)
- Books from a Biblical worldview
- Education for adoption professionals and parents regarding post-adoptive needs
- Openness and realism regarding adoption-related issues