

## MODULE VII: TRANSCENDING DIFFERENCES IN PLACEMENT

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### Note Taking Guide

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain how flexibility in caregiving and adoptive parenting contributes to respecting differences
- Identify ways a family can help a child feel welcomed and respected for who they are
- Identify ways a child who looks like the caregiving or adoptive family can still be different from that family
- Explain how a caregiver or adoptive parent can help prepare their community for a new child

### Introduction to Differences

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- People are unique individuals with their own identities and life experiences.
- Never make assumptions about people, always ask questions.

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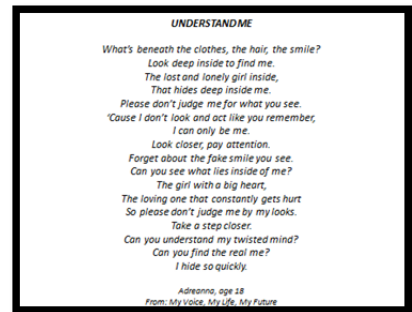
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### Rationale for Transcending Differences

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- All children that come to your home are influenced by the groups they belong to, life experiences they have had, and attributes unique to whom they are.
- They will have their own values, beliefs, and attitudes that drive their identity and behavior.
- They will also be influenced by the values, beliefs, and attitudes of you and your family.
- As foster caregivers and adoptive parents, you will positively or negatively influence their sense of self and identity.



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## The Importance of Self-Awareness

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- Each individual’s diversity includes culture, race, ethnicity, and other group memberships. Some of group memberships are permanent and some are likely to change during a lifetime.
- Understanding of our own uniqueness gives us a better understanding of another’s uniqueness.



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## Preparing Your Home

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- All foster children have been affected by trauma and loss; they require acceptance and understanding.
- In order for the child to feel safe, he or she will need to understand what you will expect of him/her as a new family member. He will also need to know where you are willing to flex in order to be respectful of that child’s diversity.



- Ideals that promote a sense of well-being among family members, individually and collectively:
  - Everybody matters
  - People come first
  - Honesty
  - Integrity
  - Respecting diversity
  - Sticking together

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### Preparing Your Community

It is the caregivers and adoptive parents' role to help children maintain a positive sense of self as they experience life in the community.



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List three ways you will use the information from this training.

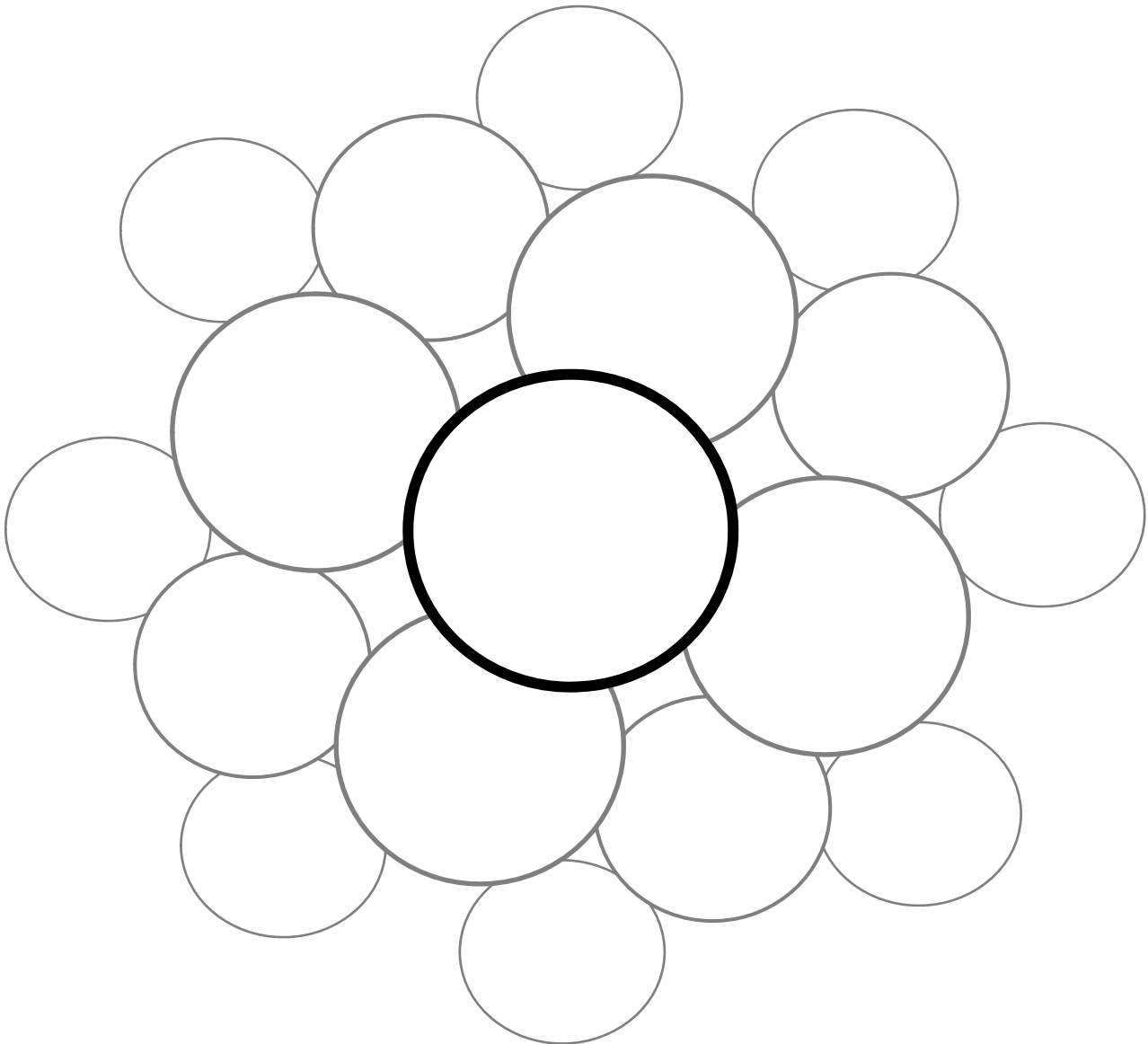
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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**I am...**

Put your name in the center circle. Begin with the circles closest to your name and list groups, experiences, and characteristics that contribute most to your identity. Use the outer circles to list those groups, experiences, and characteristics which identify you but are not very influential in your life.



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### Preparing Your Home

#### Entry Way – Welcoming of a New Child

This is the space of first impressions, that initial period when a child decides whether or not he is welcomed, safe, and totally accepted into the home.

#### Questions:

- 1) A sense of safety is very important for a child coming into a new home. What kinds of things can you do to help a new child feel safe?

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- 2) How will a child know you respect him and his uniqueness?

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#### Family Room/Family Life—Where Everyone is Included

This is the space where each household member contributes to the functioning of the family system and where the family works out the most important household rules. It is also where the family members figure out how to relate to each other and the outside world as a growing and evolving multicultural family.

#### Questions:

- 1) What are some areas of family life for which rules and expectations must be set?

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- 2) What are some of your current family rules? Which one of these would you have the most difficulty changing in order to honor the diversity of a child?

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#### Kitchen/Dining Room—It's All About Eating!

This is the space that represents expectations and practices around mealtimes and eating.

**Questions:**

- 1) What are some areas of mealtime and snacking for which you might want to set rules or expectations?

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- 2) What things might you do to ensure that a child's food preferences or restrictions are considered in meal planning?

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**Bedroom – Bedtime Rules at your Home**

This space represents expectations and rules around sleeping behaviors and appropriate use of the bedroom space.

**Questions:**

- 1) What are things to consider when setting rules and expectations around sleeping arrangements?

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- 2) What are things to consider when setting rules or expectations about the appropriate use of bedroom space?

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**Bathroom – Hygiene and Personal Presentation**

This space represents issues around hygiene, privacy, and personal presentation.

**Questions:**

- 1) What are some areas around hygiene and appearance for which you might want to set some rules or expectations?

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- 2) What are some rules around personal privacy that are important to consider?

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### Individual Reflection

*Please take a few minutes to reflect on what you have learned in the Preservice training and how it applies to you. Give this sheet to the agency worker who is completing your homestudy.*

	<b>Diversity Readiness Checklist to Become a Foster or Kinship Caregiver or Adoptive Parent</b>	<b>Working on it</b>	<b>Ready to do it</b>
<b>1</b>	I embrace the value that diversity brings to my life and the life of my family.		
<b>2</b>	I have spent time exploring my identity (collective memberships) and the impact they have in how I see the world and how I make decisions.		
<b>3</b>	I acknowledge that children that come to live in my home will come with their own identities and worldview.		
<b>4</b>	I am prepared to embrace and respect the diversity of my child.		
<b>5</b>	I have prepared my children and extended family to embrace and respect the diversity of the children that come to our home.		
<b>6</b>	My home environment and family life will reflect our multicultural family.		
<b>7</b>	I am prepared to help my foster, kinship, or adopted child develop a healthy self-identity.		
<b>8</b>	I am prepared to discuss issues of racism and discrimination with my family and with my child.		
<b>9</b>	I am prepared to speak out against racial, ethnic, and cultural intolerance within my family, friends, and community.		
<b>10</b>	I am prepared to advocate for my child as needed.		