

POSITIVE PERMANENCY & ADOPTION LANGUAGE

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Pathways to
Permanence 2

Parenting
Children
WHO HAVE
Experienced
Trauma
AND LOSS

Session 1

Parenting
Children
with
Extra Needs

Parent's
Toolbox

The language of permanency/adoption has evolved along with our society's changing perceptions about these concepts. We can influence this change through the words we choose. There are positive terms to use when talking about permanency and adoption, just as there are less positive words and phrases. Here are some suggestions for phrases to use and others to avoid.

Use these terms/phrases:

Birth or biological parents
Biological or birth children
My/your/our child
Chose to parent the child
Made an adoption plan, chose adoption
Was adopted
We are an adoptive family

Not these less positive terms:

Natural or real parents
Natural or real children
My/your/our adopted child
Kept the child
Put up/gave up for adoption
Is adopted
My child is adopted

Additional examples of positive language for foster families and relative caregiving families may include the following:

She is my granddaughter, but also my daughter.
He/she is my son/daughter through foster care.
He/she is a member of our family.