

# 2016 Adoption Option Inc. Programs

**Adoption** services have been provided since this agency received its license to provide adoption and foster care services in 2004. We offer comprehensive adoption services and help families navigate the adoption process. The adoption program works with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to facilitate permanency for Michigan foster care children. Adoption Option Inc. has received adoption referrals from more than 18 Michigan counties and completed adoptions for more than 225 children.

**Foster Care** services are provided for children whose birth parents' rights are still in effect and are working towards reunification as well as children whose parent's rights are terminated by the family court. A foster care caseworker is assigned to ensure the child's safety, health, education and permanency needs are met while a child is in out of home placement. Our agency has provided services to youth in foster care since 2005.

**Foster Care Licensing** is a process of evaluating a family and their home to determine their ability to qualify to meet state foster care requirements. This process includes multiple steps and each step is an important component of the process designed to protect the safety and overall health of each child. Over 125 families have become licensed foster parents with help from this agency.

**Learn Evaluate, Achieve & Play (LEAP)** LEAP is a summer youth mentoring program that provides academic enrichment opportunities, lessons in leadership and seeks to positively impact at-risk middle school youth through educational opportunities and mentoring in a college setting. Reading comprehension and Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) topics are included to increase critical thinking skills. LEAP Forward provides similar educational and recreational experiences throughout the school year. Approximately 100 youth have participated in either the LEAP summer program or the LEAP Forward program.

**Parents and Children Together (PACT)**--This program provides supervised visitation between birth parents and their children who are placed out of the home. The supervised visitation worker coordinates visitations and provides transportation for the parents and children to guarantee the visit times are convenient for all parties involved. During supervised visitations the PACT worker ensures the safety of the children while documenting the parent-child interactions. The visitation worker provides written documentation from each visit to the assigned Foster Care Worker.

**Parents Actively Learning (PAL)**--This is a Foster Care Supportive Visitation contract that provides parent education using the Nurturing Parenting Program that was written by Dr. Stephen Bavolek. Individualized parent education is provided to each parent based upon their needs. It is the responsibility of the PAL worker to coordinate, transport and provide one on one parent education. The PAL program works with the family for 3 to 6 months, documenting the parent's strengths and needs.

**Family Reunification Program (FRP)**--This program is a 4-month program which works with the family to support the successful reunification of their children into the family home. These families have successfully completed other services prior to FRP coming into the home and their children are being returned to their family. FRP offers therapeutic and concrete interventions to all family members.

**Strong Families Safe Children**--This In-Home Parent Education program is offered to the families of Bay County. This program offers individualized parent education and life skills to parents involved with Children's Protective Services and Foster Care. The worker provides transportation related to job search and connecting with community agencies. Individualized parent education is provided using the Nurturing Parenting Program.

**Parents Learning and Nurturing (PLAN)** is an Adoption Option Inc. program offering group based parent education to families referred by Midland County. Group sessions are provided for 16 weeks using the Nurturing Parenting Program. Group sessions focus on providing appropriate discipline, communication, understanding age appropriate expectations and understanding feelings.

**Parents Using Life Skills Education (PULSE)** is a program providing intensive, individualized parent education focusing on the parent-child interaction and helping facilitate a productive and healthy home environment. The Family Skills case worker works together with the family to create a Service Plan for weekly visits, along with intensive supportive intervention as it pertains to life skills. The Service Plan includes an assessment of the parents strengths and needs.

**Youth In Transition (YIT)** is the newest Adoption Option Inc. program. YIT mentoring services are designed to facilitate readiness for independence in at-risk youth ages 14-21 who meet the eligibility criteria set by YIT. This program currently services Midland and Saginaw Counties. Participating youth are paired with an adult mentor based on common interests and overall compatibility. Youth and Mentor will meet at least twice a month and spend a combined total of at least four hours together every month for at least 12 months.