

## Glossary

Do you know what TPR or permanency plan means? Read below about frequently used terms in foster care, adoption, or social services.

**Abuse:** Abuse is harm inflicted on a person through physical, verbal, emotional or sexual actions that cause the victim to develop emotional or behavioral problems. Therapy may be needed to work through abuse issues.

**Adjustment Disorder:** A reaction to a stressful event or situation, usually beginning within three months and ending six months after the event's end. Adjustment disorders are very common and can affect anyone, regardless of gender, age, race, or lifestyle. An adjustment disorder occurs when someone struggles to cope with a stressful event and develops emotional or behavioral problems.

**Adoption assistance:** Federal (Title IV-E) or state payments and other benefits designated to fund short-and long-term costs of adopting eligible children who have special needs.

**Attachment Disorder:** A condition characterized by an inability to develop significant connections with other people. Children who have been abused and/or neglected may find it difficult to form significant ties. Signs of attachment disorder include difficulty in maintaining eye contact, lying, and not responding to affection.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A lifelong developmental disorder including problems with attention span, impulse control, and activity level. Typical behaviors include squirming; difficulty remaining seated when required; distractibility; difficulty staying on task; difficulty playing quietly; inattention; and engaging in physically dangerous activities without considering the consequences.

**Conduct Disorder:** A complicated group of behavioral and emotional problems in children or adolescents. They may have great difficulty following the rules and behaving in a socially acceptable way.

**Developmental Delays:** Delays in a child's developmental progress as measured against other children's development of skills (sitting up, walking, toilet training, talking, etc.) at the same time.

**DHS:** The Iowa Department of Human Services works to help individuals and families achieve safe, stable, self-sufficient and healthy lives, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the state. ([www.dhs.state.ia.us](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us))

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS):** Children with FAS can have serious life-long disabilities such as mental retardation, learning disabilities, and behavior problems.

**Finalization:** The final legal step in the adoption process, involving a court hearing where the adoptive parents become a child's legal parent(s).

**Foster Care:** Foster care is the temporary placement of children and youth with families outside of their own home due to child abuse or neglect or other family crisis situations. The goal is to provide a safe, stable and nurturing environment.

**Home Study:** In-depth evaluation of a family to determine their ability to provide services to a child. The study includes the physical environment, background checks, and the family's background, current relationships, stability, resiliency, ability to cope, and empathy perception.

**IFAPA:** The Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association advocates for and serves foster and adoptive families in Iowa. ([www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org))

**Mainstreamed:** In school, when a child is moved from a classroom where he or she received help or special services to a standard classroom.

**Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD):** A disorder characterized by behavior, such as a temper, a tendency to argue with adults, refusal to obey adult requests, deliberate annoyance of others, spiteful and vindictive behavior, use of obscene language, or a tendency to blame others for mistakes.

**Orientation:** An in-depth, face-to-face session providing initial information about foster care and adoption to interested families.

**Out-of-home care:** A 24-hour substitute care outside of the child's home in pre-adoptive homes, relative foster homes, non-relative foster homes, group homes, institutions and supervised independent living situations.

**Permanency Plan:** A structured plan designed to ensure that a child establishes safe, lasting and loving family relationships that are expected to last a lifetime.

**PMIC facility (Psychiatric medical institute for children):** A structured 24-hour facility with staff providing psychiatric and medical care to children who have not improved at other levels of care.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** A syndrome sparked by traumatic past events where the person emotionally re-lives past traumas and becomes withdrawn from current events. Symptoms might include sleeping problems, nightmares, intrusive thoughts, and difficulty with concentrating.

**PS-MAPP Training:** Permanency and Safety-Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting is a 30-hour pre-service training completed in ten classes that helps prepare prospective foster parents for foster care.

**Residential treatment facility:** A structured 24-hour care facility with staff that provides therapy to help severely troubled children overcome behavioral or emotional problems that adversely affect relationships.

**Resource Family:** A resource family is licensed as both a foster and adoptive family. While providing foster care, a resource family provides support to a child's birth family.

**Reunification:** When a birth family is no longer in crisis and able to provide a safe and stable home for their child who has been in foster care.

**Termination of Parental Rights (TPR):** The legal process of taking away the parental rights of a parent who has abandoned a child, failed to support a child without just cause, participated in the neglect and abuse of a child, or who is unable to provide care during a child's formative years due to extended incarceration. If rights of both parents are severed, the child will become available for adoption.

**Therapeutic foster home:** A foster home where the parents are trained to deal with a variety of children, including those who are developmentally delayed, moderately or severely disturbed, delinquent, or medically fragile. Therapeutic foster parents also receive more help and supervision than other foster parents.