

Post-Adoption Questionnaire for Couples Study INFORMED CONSENT & STUDY DISCLOSURE

The School of Social Work at Michigan State University was awarded federal funding to develop pre- and post-adoption trainings for adoptive couples. The purpose of this research study and the enclosed questionnaire is to gather information from adoptive couples about the impact of adopting on their relationship. We will use the information to develop trainings for couples to help enhance their relationships and strengthen their families. Questionnaire results will help us decide on the content and focus of the trainings.

Creating this questionnaire was challenging. We do not have a lot of the information we need to create good, relevant trainings for adoptive couples. Following this letter, you will find a questionnaire made up of five sections within a total of six double-sided pages. We are asking you to share information voluntarily about the following topics:

- yourself as an individual;
- issues you have faced as an adoptive couple;
- your relationship with your spouse/partner;
- characteristics of each child, such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, and details about their special needs; and
- any other comments, experiences, challenges, issues, or suggestions you would like to share.

We estimate it will take 20 to 30 minutes to complete all five sections of the survey. This time estimate means you can expect to spend a minimum of a half an hour completing all the questions. We would like both you and your spouse/partner to answer the enclosed questionnaires and mail each back using different return envelopes. For the purpose of this research, please complete and return your questionnaire separately from your spouse/partner. A questionnaire from only one of you still will be useful and appreciated. We have no way to know who has returned a questionnaire and who has not, even if your spouse participates but you decide not to.

We want you to know that this questionnaire is about very personal experiences and feelings. Some questions may feel intrusive, and others may not apply to your relationship or may seem pointless. We assure you that each question has been selected to provide information we need to develop good trainings. Because of the sensitive and personal content, you should know your answers are confidential and will not be shared with anyone. No one will be able to match your survey with your name. Your privacy will be respected and fully protected.

When doing research about families and children, university and federal research protection requirements are strict. We will respect your privacy by guarding your confidentiality and protecting your questionnaire answers. We respect your choice about whether or not you participate and about how much information you provide. And, we assure you we will not share your answers, report information, or quote comments you share in ways that could identify you or your family as participants.

- Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, or you may refuse to answer certain questions.
- You will not receive any direct benefits for participating.
- You will not be penalized or lose any benefits or opportunities now or in the future if you do not return a questionnaire.
- Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.
- Research reports will contain only summaries of combined answers from all returned questionnaires.

You will be able to withdraw from the study at any point by contacting Dr. John Mooradian using the contact information below. We do not know which questionnaire is yours unless you tell us your special personal identifier. Dr. Mooradian will assist you with recreating the special personal identifier so that your questionnaire can be found and removed from the other surveys. You can stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits or assistance.

Please, keep this letter for future reference. If you have questions about the study or experience any distress because of completing the questionnaire, you may contact the primary investigator, Dr. John Mooradian. He is available to address your concerns or answer any questions you may have. He can be reached at 254 Baker Hall, School of Social Work, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, by phone at (517) 353-9745, or by email sent to mooradi1@msu.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact—anonymously if you wish—Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Director of the Human Research Protection Program, by mail sent to 205C Olds Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, by phone at (517) 355-2180 or fax (517) 432-4503. Dr. Vasilenko also may be reached by email sent to irb@msu.edu.

You indicate your voluntary participation in this research by returning a questionnaire, at your own cost, addressed to the Social Work Research Office 106c, 254 Baker Hall, School of Social Work, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118.