



Support. Education. Local Events.
for Adoptive Families



The seven core issues of adoption

More than 30 years ago, adoption educators Deborah Silverstein and Sharon Kaplan Roszia published a groundbreaking article identifying seven core issues of adoption:

- Grief
- Loss
- Rejection
- Control
- Identity
- Intimacy
- Shame

Silverstein and Kaplan Roszia used the term “core” because these seven issues apply to adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents alike. Further, Silverstein and Kaplan Roszia observed that members of what they termed the “adoption constellation” can encounter these issues throughout their lives.

Individuals may experience the core issues individually or together. One issue may emerge to the forefront as others recede, or movement in one area may spur corresponding movement in another. While the core issues don’t define a person’s experience, they can shape a person’s perception of self, relationships, and the world.

Naming the core issues was an attempt to normalize and

destigmatize them. Silverstein and Kaplan Roszia hoped that those who experienced these adoption-related issues would feel less isolated, knowing that most adoptees, birth parents, and adoptive parents experience them too.

Over the next four issues of the PARC newsletter, we will share more about each of the seven core issues, including this issue that explores grief.

Exploring grief

Author Earl Grollman wrote, “Grief is not a disorder, disease, or sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical, and spiritual necessity—the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.”

All members of the post-adoption community experience grief, varying in intensity and timing, throughout their lifespan. But as Silverstein and Kaplan Roszia observed, “The losses in adoption are difficult to mourn in a society where adoption is seen as a problem-solving event.” After all, a birth mother chooses life for her child, a child gets a family, and a family gets a child. However, these gains do not erase grief for what was lost.

- An **adoptee’s** grief over the loss of birth family or unknown history is not a rejection of the adoptive family.
- It’s natural that a **birth parent** would grieve, even

“Grieving doesn’t make you imperfect. It makes you human.”

— Sarah Dessen

The seven core issues of adoption continued

if placing the child for adoption was their decision.

- An **adoptive parent's** grief for unmet expectations is not a lesser form of love for that child.

We can embrace those who are grieving and understand that loss is an innate aspect of adoption. If you're unsure how someone in the triad is grieving, simply let that person know you're thinking of them. Your gesture opens the door for conversation, but don't take it personally if the person chooses not to share deeply personal information or emotions with you.

*You can find many resources online that go deeper into the seven core issues of adoption, including this article from Child Welfare Information Gateway:
https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/factsheets_families_adoptionimpact.pdf*



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Check out **postadoptionrc.org** for past editions of our newsletter, events, helpful articles, and more information about us and services we offer.

All three Post-Adoption Resource Centers have many family fun events planned, as well as support groups and trainings. Please check your Post Adoption Resource Center region's Facebook page or website, watch for monthly calendars, or give us a call to find out what is available near you.

REGION 2

Bethany Christian Services
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REGION 3

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Mason, Lake, Osceola, Clare, Gladwin, Arenac, Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, Midland, Bay, Montcalm, Gratiot, Saginaw, Ionia, Clinton, and Shiawassee counties

REGION 4

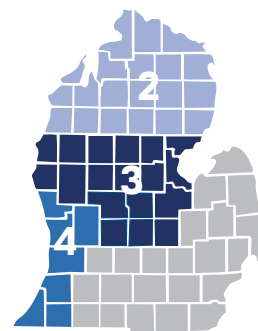
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Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, and Van Buren counties



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postadoptionrc.org

Other suggested websites: adoptivefamilies.com adoptioninstitute.org