

# Project Wait No Longer *“Permanency For Foster Youth”*

## *General Information Packet*



## *Older Child Domestic Adoption*

THE  
**BARKER**  
FOUNDATION since 1945

Dear Prospective Adoptive Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in learning more about ***Project Wait No Longer: Permanency for Foster Youth***, the older child adoption program through The Barker Foundation. The Barker Foundation is a non-profit adoption agency licensed in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Since 1945, we have been providing comprehensive adoption services. The agency's mission is to serve *all* participants in the adoption circle – birth parents, adoptive parents, and persons who have been adopted. During its first decades, Barker was known solely for its strong domestic infant adoption program and pregnancy counseling services; however, the agency has also developed a strong program to find permanent homes for older children who are currently in the foster care system.

One hallmark of Barker's services is its commitment to providing lifelong support to all participants in adoption. Through our Department of Family and Post-Adoption Services, we offer counseling, support groups, educational and social activities, and informal discussion groups. We know our families take comfort in knowing that The Barker Foundation has been here for 63 years and will continue to be here to serve their needs.

**PROJECT WAIT NO LONGER: PERMANENCY FOR FOSTER YOUTH (PWNL)**

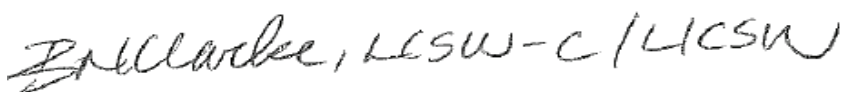
This comprehensive program works with couples and single individuals regardless of race, sexual identity and marital status to assist them with the adoption of older children between the ages of 6-17, from the foster care system. We are partnering with our local Departments of Social Services in MD, VA and DC as well as across the United States in this effort. We provide 27-hours of training, adoption home study and individualized consultation, referral of children, pre-placement support and lifelong access to Barker's Department of Family and Post-Adoption Services.

We realize that adoption is a complex process, and we also know the tremendous joy it brings. While this is a time filled with many decisions and challenges, it may also be filled with hope and excitement. Becoming knowledgeable about adoption will help you make decisions that feel right for your family. To help you begin the process, we offer free consultation on both general and specific adoption issues. There is a fee for the comprehensive training and participation is required for all applicants; please read the enclosed material about the training.

In this brochure you will find additional information about *Project Wait No Longer*, including and the Barker Foundation's adoption process. Please review the enclosed information carefully and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions. Application forms as well as other key program documents are available online at [www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org). If you are in need of a paper copy of the application, please contact the Project Wait No Longer Program Assistant at (301) 664-9664.

We appreciate your interest in The Barker Foundation and its mission, and we would be privileged to assist you as you seek to begin or enlarge your family. Our very best wishes as you consider this important life decision.

Sincerely,



Beverly Clarke, LCSW-C, LICSW  
Director, *Project Wait No Longer: Permanency for Foster Youth*

# The Adoption Process for Older Child Adoption

## **1. Receive the Information Packet**

Following your inquiry about the program, we will send you an information packet specific to older child adoption.

## **2. Submit the Application**

The application is your formal entry into the adoption program.

## **3. Meet for an Application Interview**

After your application has been submitted and has been approved by the application review committee, you will meet with the director.

## **4. Complete PRIDE Training**

PRIDE training is 27 hours and is specific to the adoption of older children from the foster care system. The curriculum covers trauma, grief and loss, attachment and bonding, development, communication, behavioral and emotional challenges, transracial and transcultural adoption, financial assistance, as well as the legal process.

## **5. Submit Home Study Documents**

The Barker Foundation will provide you with a list of required home study documents. The documents should be submitted as they are completed.

## **6. Conduct the Home Study**

The home study is required of all families who want to adopt a child. A home study is valid for one year and requires annual updates. The home study is a series of meetings with the prospective parent or parents, together as a couple and/or individually, to get to know them and to assist them in preparing to become parents through adoption. The home study will be shared with county social workers and other appropriate professionals during the matching process.

## **7. Create a Family Profile**

The Barker Foundation will work with you to create a one-page family profile. This profile will be used to introduce you to the adoption community.

## **8. Prepare During the Matching Period**

The matching process begins when your home study is approved. The time frame depends on many factors and may take up to one year or more. There is a monthly support group help on the second Wednesday of every month from 6:30 – 8:30 PM at Barker's Bethesda office. This support group has proven helpful to many of our waiting families.

## **10. Pre-placement Period**

When a child has been identified, we will contact you and present you with a profile and information about the child. If you are interested in proceeding, we will contact the child's social worker and other professionals involved to decide how to move forward. The pre-placement period varies according to the needs of the child and family. We will also examine any Interstate Compact (ICPC) requirements.

## **11. Placement of a Child**

During the placement process, we will work together to determine the best time to transition the child from foster care to your care. During this time, any needed services for the child and family will be scheduled.

## **12. Post-Placement Visits**

The Barker Foundation will conduct six or more post-placement visits during this phase, depending on the needs of the child and the family. Reports summarizing the visits and the transition are required by The Barker Foundation, the child's social worker and, if involved, ICPC. Reports are also needed by the courts in order for finalization to occur.

## **13. Finalization**

The post-placement period is a minimum of six months before the adoption can be finalized. The Barker Foundation and the county will assist you through this process. Finalization is the process through which you become the legal guardians of your child.

## Project Wait No Longer: Permanency for Foster Youth (PWNL) *Older Child Adoption Overview of Fees*

*Project Wait No Longer: Permanency for Foster Youth* is a comprehensive program specifically designed for families who are considering the adoption of an older child or children, 6-17 years old, and/or children with special needs from the public foster care system. Families will receive valuable training, resources, and support through each phase of the adoption process.

A **Sliding Scale Fee** is used to determine the fees an adoptive family will pay throughout the adoption process. It is based on your family's annual income using the most recent 1040 Federal tax return. *Please note that there are some fees that are not included in the sliding scale fee.*

**PWNL SLIDING FEE SCALE**

Salary	Fee
\$0 - \$40,000	\$3,500
\$40,001 - \$50,000	\$4,000
\$50,001 - \$60,000	\$5,000
\$60,001 - \$70,000	\$5,500
\$70,001 - \$80,000	\$6,000
\$80,001 +	\$7,500

### Fees Not Included In Sliding Scale

1. **Application: \$200** - the application fee is **non-refundable** and is not part of the sliding scale fee. It is to be submitted with your completed application. The fee includes a private assessment and consultation with Barker staff to answer your questions and to assist you with the paperwork process. *(Paid At Time of Application)*
2. **Training: \$225 for couples and \$175 for singles** - *Project Wait No Longer* provides a comprehensive 24-hour training course for prospective adoptive families and anyone interested in learning more about older child adoption. The fee is due at the time of training registration and is **non-refundable**. Additionally, families are required to take 3 hours of CPR training through the Red Cross or another approved entity, and these fees are paid directly to the provider by the client. *(Paid At Training Registration)*
3. **Change in Agency Fee: \$1000** - A fee of \$1000 will apply at your request to have your completed homestudy released to another agency. *(N/A - If Adoption Is Completed By Barker)*
4. **Homestudy Update: \$200** - Annual Requirement - The homestudy requires an update every year. *(Paid Prior To Update Meeting)*

*Note: The family is responsible for paying the documentation costs associated with the home study to include, but not limited to, clearances, home inspections, and physical exams.*

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR SLIDING SCALE FEES

*The following fees are part of the **Sliding Scale Fee (listed above)** and are paid in installment at specific times during the adoption process. As they are paid, they are deducted from the total sliding scale fee due. You will be billed when each fee is due:*

**1. Homestudy: \$750**

The home study fee is due prior to the first home study interview. The home study is conducted for families who have completed the required training. It is required of all families who wish to adopt.

**2. Comprehensive Search Fee: \$500**

This fee includes networking with counties, creating your family profile, sending your home study and profile to social workers, reviewing documents, providing referrals, and coordinating the search process with Departments of Social Services across the country. This fee is paid at the completion of the homestudy.

**3. Match & Pre-Placement Services Fee: \$500**

This fee is due when a match has been made between a family and specific child. The fee includes pre-placement planning including coordinating disclosure meetings, visitation schedule, ICPC paperwork (if applicable) and facilitating any other pre-placement arrangements.

**4. \*\*Placement & Post Placement Support Fee: (Balance Of Sliding Scale Fee - See Below For Chart)**

This fee is due once a placement date has been scheduled for your child to be placed in your home. Barker’s placement services include assisting in the placement of the child or children in the adoptive home, monthly home visits, required post-placement reports, supportive services, consultation, required court reports, and assistance with finalization and referral services. The placement balance can often be paid for by the placing agency if a purchase of service agreement can be made. If this is possible, families may not have to pay the placement and post placement support fee.

### PWNL SLIDING FEE SCALE - PLACEMENT BALANCE

Salary	Fee	Placement Balance**
\$0 - \$40,000	\$3,500	1,750
\$40,001 - \$50,000	\$4,000	2,250
\$50,001 - \$60,000	\$5,000	3,250
\$60,001 - \$70,000	\$5,500	3,750
\$70,001 - \$80,000	\$6,000	4,250
\$80,001 +	\$7,500	5,750

The Barker Foundation will provide information regarding the adoption tax credit to offset fees.

Please note that fees are paid in increments as services are rendered as shown in the fees previously outlined.

Your sliding scale fee is determined from Line 22 of your most recently filed 1040 Federal Income Tax. Please bring the 1040 with you to the application interview appointment.

## Adoption Tax Credit Information

An Adoption Tax Credit is available for adoptive families.

*On March 23, 2010 the Adoption Tax Credit (ATC), which was scheduled to expire in 2010, was extended through December 31, 2011. The highlights of the ATC are:*

- The maximum tax credit was increased from \$12,150 to \$13,170
- The ATC was made refundable. If a family has no tax liability, the IRS will refund the amount.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

- <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/i8839.pdf>: Instructions for Form 8839 "Qualified Adoption Expenses." Includes worksheets and instructions for calculating the adoption tax credit.
- <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8839.pdf>: IRS Form 8839 "Qualified Adoption Expenses." This form must be completed and filed with the Federal Tax Form (1040) in order to claim the adoption tax credit.
- <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p17/ch37.html#d0e78233>: Additional information on the adoption tax credit can be found in Publication 17—Your Federal Income Tax for Individuals. (Please note: Scroll down to see chapter 37)
- [http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/adoption\\_tax\\_credit.cfm](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/adoption_tax_credit.cfm): To take an online course about the Adoption Tax Credit.



## **Is Project Wait No Longer Right for You?**

The goal of this assessment is to help you (and your spouse/partner) identify, clarify and discuss your feelings and goals about adoption of an older child. If you have a spouse or partner, complete the assessment separately, then compare and discuss your answers (*this document is for your own use & is designed to get you talking and thinking about some important aspects of older child adoption - you do not need to turn it back in to us*).

1. Why do you want to adopt an older child?
2. What does "older child" mean to you?
3. Who introduced the idea of adopting an older child?
4. Do you and your spouse feel the same level of desire towards adoption of an older child?
5. Are you open to potentially adopting (Select all that apply):
  - Transracially
  - A child who has been sexually abused
  - A child who has a mental health diagnosis
  - A child with attachment issues
6. Are you open to being placed with a child from out of state?
7. Are you open to parenting a sibling group?
8. Do you have flexibility at work to take up to 6 weeks (combined) off during/after the adoption?
9. Has the decision to adopt caused conflict in your relationship? Please explain.
10. Have you shared your plans to adopt an older child with family and/or friends? If so, how have they responded to your decision?
11. What do you feel you could contribute to an older child?
12. What aspects of childrearing are so important to you that you would find it difficult to compromise (such as discipline, religion, schooling, stay-at-home parenting, etc.)? Please explain.
13. Deep down do you feel like you are being forced to adopt if you want to have children, adoption as a means to build a family is "second best," or that adoption is your "last resort" if you want to be able to have children?
14. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest, how committed are you to the adoption process?

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Project Wait No Longer* is a program of The Barker Foundation, a licensed non-profit adoption agency which for 65 years has served the Washington Metropolitan Area. Well-known for its work in the field of infant adoption, Barker's mission has now been enlarged to include finding homes for older children and youth that are in the public foster care system. *Project Wait No Longer* aims to restore the hope and answer the longing for permanency of children and teenagers who face the daily reality of foster care. They desire the stability and joy of a "forever family" like we all do. The Barker Foundation partners with public service agencies, combining our resources to make a difference in the lives of waiting children. *Project Wait No Longer* is a unique initiative with the goal of recruiting and training families committed to adopting older children, welcoming them into their home and their hearts forever.

## Who Are The Children?

*Project Wait No Longer* seeks to find homes for children whose circumstances resulted in their being placed in public foster care. Most of these children are between the ages of 6 and 17 years old, have special needs, are of various ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds, and may be part of sibling groups.

Unless there are special circumstances, The Barker Foundation strongly prefers to maintain children's family ties by placing siblings in the same adoptive home.

## Who Is Eligible To Adopt?

*Project Wait No Longer* is seeking couples and singles of any age who have an unconditional commitment to provide permanency for older youth. The Barker Foundation welcomes all inquiries.

## What Does The Program Offer?

*Project Wait No Longer* offers parents the opportunity to adopt legally free children from the public foster care system. We can place children in to your home from any state or county across the country, allowing you the freedom to search for children in and out of your local community.

## What Does The Program Include?

*The adoption process includes the following chronological steps:*

1. 27 hours of specialized pre-adoption group training
2. Adoption homestudy and individualized consultation
3. Matching and referral
4. Pre-placement meeting and visitation with child
5. Placement of child
6. A minimum of 6 months of post-placement services
7. Lifelong access to Barker's comprehensive Department of Family and Post-Adoption Services

## What sets The Barker Foundation and *Project Wait No Longer* apart from other agencies?

The Barker Foundation upholds a philosophy of excellence and continual care throughout the adoption process. We have a strong history of pre-adoption education and preparation for prospective parents, as well as ongoing support through our Department of Family & Post-Adoption Services. Dedicated adoption consultants are here for you to respond in a timely fashion to your questions and requests. Our partnership with social service departments in meeting the needs of older children is the hallmark of this program.



## What Does The Training Involve?

Training consists of 24 hours of specialized training and 3 hours of CPR. Classes are held throughout the year. The training period usually lasts from 4-6 weeks. During the training session you will have the opportunity to:

- Learn about Adoption from the Foster Care System
- Learn the specific issues related to older child adoption
- Ask questions and address any concerns
- Consider or confirm your commitment
- Meet other families who are also considering adopting an older child

The Training sessions are presented by well-respected professionals considered experts in their fields. The topics specifically address the issues relevant to older child adoption, including:

- Attachment and bonding
- The impact of abuse and neglect on childhood development
- Transitioning the child from foster care to an adoptive home
- Educational advocacy
- Grief and loss
- Behavioral challenges
- Transracial and transcultural adoption

## What's Involved In The Homestudy?

A homestudy for Fost-Adopt and/or Adoption is required of all prospective adoptive parents. It consists of a series of interviews with a knowledgeable and caring social worker, who will assist you in making well informed decisions related to parenting older children. The homestudy generally takes 8-12 weeks after the gathering of paperwork.

## What Are The Fees Associated With The Program?

The fees associated with Project Wait No Longer are very low and offered on a sliding scale basis. Much of your cost for the program can often be reimbursed by the state. Many of the children we place are eligible for a monthly subsidy which will be paid to their parents until the child turns 18. Health insurance is often available until the child is 18 as well. Please contact us for more detailed information on how the program fees work. An income based sliding scale fee is also available.

## Do I attend training even if I'm not ready to make a decision?

Deciding to adopt an older child is a process, requiring patience. The training is specifically designed to educate, and address the joys and challenges particular to older child adoption. While many who attend the training have made the decision to proceed, you need not have made such a commitment in order to take the training. The classes are designed to help you to take the next steps. You will have the opportunity to meet others who are considering adopting an older child and you will have access to professionals in the field to ask questions or discuss your particular concerns.

## Can We Adopt Through The International, Domestic Infant & *Project Wait No Longer* At The Same Time?

Prospective applicants often research their options extensively prior to the homestudy. Applicants do not apply to multiple programs simultaneously; however, once an adoption is completed, parents sometimes desire to utilize another program of The Barker Foundation as they build their family. The various adoption programs have different issues, challenges and rewards, and are best addressed one at a time.



## Older Child Adoption Suggested Reading List

Keck, Gregory C. and Kupecky, Regina M. (2002). Parenting the Hurt Child: Helping Adoptive Families Heal and Grow. Colorado Spring, Colorado: Pinon Press.

Maskew, Trish (1999). Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child. Longmont, CO: Snowcap Press.

McCreight, Brenda (2002). Parenting Your Adopted Older Child: How to Overcome the Unique Challenges and Raise a Happy and Healthy Child. New Harbinger Publications.

Orlans, Michael and Terry M. Levy (2006). Healing Parents: Helping Wounded Children Learn to Trust & Love. Washington, DC: CWLA Press.

Schooler, Jayne E. & Keefer, Betsy. Telling the Truth to Your Adopted or Foster Child.



## Post-Adoption Services Offered for PWNL

*PWNL Support Group*: meets the second Wednesday of every month from 6:30—8:30 PM. Consists of families who are interested in PWNL, families in the paperwork process, families in our waiting pool, and families who have children placed in their home. Gain oversight and receive support from people in your shoes. No need to RSVP, just come to the Bethesda office!

*PWNL Children's Group*: meets on scheduled dates and run simultaneously with the PWNL Support Group. This group is for children (and their siblings) who have been placed through Project Wait No Longer.

*Barker's Annual Conference*: held annually, Barker's conference covers various topics pertinent to the adoption world. Come listen to adoption professionals, adoptive parents, and adoptees about current issues surrounding adoption.

*On-Going Trainings*: Barker provides ongoing trainings regarding issues parents might face when parenting children from foster care. Prior trainings have included sexual abuse and attachment disorders.

*Personal Consultation*: Available for finding resources particular to your specific needs.

*Clinical Interventions*: PWNL Families will have access to clinical interventions and meetings with our Director of post adoption services as well as access to adoption camps and events for kids.

*\*\*Anyone who utilizes The Barker Foundation for their adoption is entitled to lifetime access of our Post-Adoption and Family Services. Some services do require a fee; however, many are free of charge.\*\**



For more information about  
Project Wait No Longer, please contact:

*Beverly Clarke, LCSW-C, LICSW  
Director, Project Wait No Longer*

*(301) 664-9664*

*bclarke@barkerfoundation.org*

*To download a PWNL Application,  
please visit our website at:*

*[www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org)*