

What To Say And Not To Say

The Words We Use Matter

What we call someone or something can change what we think and feel about that person or thing. We want to use accurate and honoring language when we discuss fostering and adoption. By speaking the truth in a loving way, we can dispel negative connotations and dismiss myths. As we represent such a sensitive issue and reality, let's represent it in the most honoring and accurate way.

DON'T Say	DO Say
Foster kids	Kids in foster care
Orphan	Kids who are legally free
Real parent, natural parent	Birthparent/ biological parent
Own child, real child, natural child	Birth child
Adopted child, own child	My child
Adoptee	Person / Individual who was adopted
Illegitimate	Born to unmarried parents
Give away, adopt out, give up, put up	Make an adoption plan, choose adoption
To keep the baby	To parent the baby/child
Adoptable child/unwanted child	Child in need of a family
Handicapped child, hard to place	Child who has special needs
Giving away your child	Choosing an adoption plan
Putting your child up for adoption	Finding a family to parent your child
Closed adoption	Confidential adoption
Unwanted/problem pregnancy	Unintended pregnancy