

THE HOME STUDY PROCESS

Each applicant for adoption will be assigned a home study social worker and a domestic specialist. In some cases, this will be the same person. The home study social worker will be your local worker who will conduct the home study, annual updates, and post placement visits. Your Domestic Specialist will walk you through the entire process, from the first phone call, to waiting, matching, placement, and post placement.

A home study is a series of interviews in which the social worker concentrates on collecting information via face-to-face contact with each couple. The home study typically consists of an orientation interview followed by 3 home study interviews.

1. The first interview is a home visit in which the social worker will address each of the qualifications for adoption. This is a joint interview.
2. The next visits are individual interviews and are typically held at the LCS office. Both spouses may come on the same day, if they must travel to get to the office. If they are local, each spouse may schedule his or her own interview at his convenience. The interviews will be autobiographical in nature and will be based on an Autobiography written by the applicant. The social worker will ask that you complete this Autobiography prior to this interview.
3. The third interview will focus on parenting philosophies and plans. Issues such as transracial parenting, applicant's experience and exposure to children, the applicants' parenting received when they were children, values and discipline will be explored.

Following the third interview, each family will watch a video series focused on educating the family on potential risks, grief in adoption, and some of the remaining process. The family will answer some discussion questions related to the video and then be able to discuss these further with the Domestic Specialist.

Education is a very important part of the home study process. Each family in the domestic program is required to attend Lifeline's domestic adoption conference in Birmingham, Alabama. This conference is a two-day interactive training which will prepare and equip families for the joys and challenges of domestic adoption.

After the home study process is completed, families will begin the matching process. Most families receive a placement 1-3 years after their home study is approved.