

A Partnership Between DHS and Private Agencies

- The current DHS adoption protocol can be greatly improved by partnering with private, licensed adoption agencies.
- This new process provides the child with a faster route to permanency, honors the mom's wishes to choose a family and be actively involved in her child's life and saves the state money.

Here's how it works:

1. Mom receives info about this open adoption alternative before her child is removed and before her parental rights are terminated.
2. Mom chooses a private agency.
3. Mom receives counseling.
4. She chooses a family from a pool of homestudy-ready families who've received the OR training and training on open adoption.
5. She meets the adoptive parents, they create a legally enforceable agreement for ongoing visits and receive relationship skills.
6. The mom, child, our counselor and the DHS caseworker would go before a judge. The mom would consent to the agency, the judge would transfer wardship from DHS to the agency. The agency would place the child with the family, who would sign the placement agreement.
7. The adoption would be supervised for a period of months.
8. The mom would receive lifelong counseling and everyone would access ongoing relationship guidance.