



**NYS Citizens' Coalition for Children  
Sample letter for NYS Representatives  
Post Adoption Services Advocacy**

Your Name  
Your Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Post adoption services are essential to families and can **save New York State millions of dollars a year**. Information & referral to community services, respite, support groups for parents and children, parenting programs, and help line services are services that families receive while their children are in foster care and that are cut off when the family adopts.

While most adoptive families will never need post adoption services, the families that do are thrown into crisis when they cannot find or afford these services in their communities. Children return to foster care or enter residential treatment centers when their families cannot manage them safely at home. Post adoption services will decrease the amount of time children spend in foster care and residential treatment. With residential treatment costing \$70,000/year per child New York State can save millions of dollars a year if post adoption services enable children to live with their families rather than the far more expensive residential treatment.

Adoption subsidies may cover some programs, but generally do not help with respite and other needed services. Therapists (many of whom are Medicaid providers) are rarely trained on attachment issues, loss of birth family, trauma caused by years of abuse & neglect, and prenatal alcohol and drug exposure. Counseling needs to be provided by trained adoption professionals. Adoptive families whose children have severe emotional and behavioral problems need more than the traditional services provided by family and community. Respite can mean the difference between family stability and adoption dissolution. Respite is unavailable for most of the adoptive families in need.

Currently, NYS is funding a handful of post adoption program using TANF funding. The vast majority of NYS adoptive families do not have an accessible post adoption program. 6 million dollars is needed to adequately fund post adoption services in New York State. The Adoption and Safe Families Act encourages many families to adopt children who spent years in foster care, now these families have been abandoned with few if any post adoption services available. The cost of state wide post adoption services would be offset by an increase in adoptions from foster care, a decrease in the number of children who return to foster care and decreased use of residential treatment. Providing these vital services would also decrease the use of juvenile justice and special education services.

Adoptive parents are committed to their children. Families are looking for help to safely maintain their children in their home and services to meet their child's unique emotional needs. Post adoption services cannot wait for another year's budget. I urge you to make post adoption services a priority for New York State.

Sincerely,