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THE ADOPTED CHILD

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The Adopted Child

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Abstract: This Element overviews recent research on children's adjustment to adoption and its relevance for key questions addressed in developmental science. First, a historical perspective on trends in adoption practice and adoptive family life is offered. Second, research on children's adjustment to adoption is reviewed, including the impact of early adversity on their development, as well as biological and social factors related to their recovery from adversity. Third, factors impacting adoptive identity development are examined, followed by research on open adoption and adoption by sexual minority adults. Fourth, different types of postadoption support and services that facilitate family stability and children's emotional well-being are analyzed. Finally, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations for future research and practice are offered.

Keywords: adoption, adoption adjustment, recovery from early adversity, adoptive identity, postadoption support and services

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