Suggested question to ask a placing agency

- How many children are placed for adoption annually through your agency’s domestic adoption program?
- What is the average waiting time for prospective adoptive families prior to placement?
- How long has the longest waiting family been waiting?
- How many families are currently on your agency’s waiting family list?
- How long does the average family wait before they see their first presentation of an expectant parent/child situation?
- Do your agency see specific trends in terms of expectant parent preferences (ex: many expectant parents prefer a religious (or non-religious) family, age preferences for the adoptive parents, preference for in state vs out of state families, etc.)?
- How can specific family characteristics (such as family composition, age of prospective adoptive parents, etc.) impact wait time?
- What services are provided to expectant parents? Does your agency continue to provide support to birth parents following placement?
- Please describe the demographics of the expectant parent population your agency works with.
- How commonly do you see prenatal substance exposure in the children placed through your agency? What types of substances do you commonly see children being exposed to?
- Please describe the process of how expectant parents are matched with prospective adoptive families. How many profiles are generally presented to expectant parents?
- What is your agency’s philosophy on openness in adoption? What do open adoption relationships commonly look like between adoptive and birth families who have worked with your agency? Is openness legally binding in your state?
- What is your fee structure?
- What fees are refunded/rolled-over in the event of a change of heart?
- Are prospective adoptive parents required to pay living and/or medical expenses for expectant parents? In the event of a change of heart, would any of these fees be recovered?
- What is the legal process for expectant parents to surrender their parental rights? Can the expectant parents sign surrenders with their counselor or are they required to appear in court? What is the required waiting period prior to expectant parents being able to surrender parental rights?
- What is the process for finding expectant fathers if they are not actively involved in adoption planning? How are an expectant father’s rights terminated if he is unable be to found and/or unwilling to engage in the adoption planning process?
- Are adoptive families required to hire an attorney in the child’s birth state?
- Do most out of state families finalize the adoption in the child’s birth state or the adoptive family’s home state? Are you required to travel back to the child’s birth state for a finalization hearing?