



Wisconsin
Adoption &
Permanency
Support

USING RESPECTFUL ADOPTION LANGUAGE

RESPECTFUL ADOPTION LANGUAGE HONORS THE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES INVOLVED IN THE ADOPTION PROCESS. THIS GUIDE OFFERS IDEAS BASED ON CURRENT FEEDBACK FROM ADOPTED INDIVIDUALS. THIS GUIDE IS NOT COMPREHENSIVE, BUT IS A GOOD BASELINE TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN TALKING TO SOMEONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED ADOPTION. KEEP IN MIND IT IS ADVISABLE TO ASK ADOPTED INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES WHAT LANGUAGE THEY PREFER TO USE WHEN POSSIBLE.

X INSTEAD OF...



SAY...

real parent / first parent birth parent / biological parent

own child birth child / biological child

give up / give away make an adoption plan

keep a child parent a child

unwanted pregnancy unplanned / unexpected pregnancy

X INSTEAD OF...



SAY...

➡ Where are their real parents?

➡ Congratulations on welcoming a new child to your family!

➡ Couldn't you have your own kids?
Does your child know they are adopted?

➡ I am interested in learning more about your adoption journey.
Would you mind sharing with me?

➡ Why was your child abandoned by his birth parents?

➡ How can I support you and your family?