



## WISAPSP ASKED A PANEL OF ADULT ADOPTEEES

What are the most important messages for adoptive parents to hear today?

### THIS IS WHAT THEY SHARED

Although adoptees lead similar lives to non-adopted people and can seem well adjusted and capable of overcoming challenges, we can experience other circumstances that need to be overcome. We face challenges as we think about our identity, and it's ongoing. Often times these special needs and circumstances go unrecognized and unmet by society in general. Please learn more about these special needs and circumstances that your adoptee may face.

To transracial adoptive parents, your family's racial identity has now shifted. Your adoptive child's culture is now a part of who you are.

Your adopted child has been through a trauma whether you realize that or not. It's not your fault, but you need to acknowledge it. Be honest with yourself - you can help them. Be open so they can talk to you. Be okay if the story changes, and be open to that. That doesn't speak to you as a parent or their love for you, it's just the reality of it. It's important to listen, acknowledge it, and be honest with yourself.

Carefully and respectfully - adoptive parents need to remember that their adopted child's story didn't start with them. One of the most amazing things they can do is to help encourage their child's earliest moments. As they grow, help them start to find the missing pieces as they're able and it's developmentally appropriate."