



## MARE'S ADOPTION PARTY GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

1. **IF YOU ARE NEW TO ADOPTION, TAKE TIME TO:**
  - Attend the workshop that will discuss the adoption process.
  - Discover the information area.
  
2. **FOR ALL FAMILIES:**
  - Check the "Today's Waiting Children" booklet featuring children at the party; please be discreet with this booklet around the children.
  - Look through the MARE Photolisting® Book. Many of these children will not be at the event. If you are interested in a child who is not at the event, please fill out a FOLLOW-UP form and place it in the appropriate box. Someone from MARE will call you the following week to give you more information.
  - Sign-up for MARE's mailing lists to receive the MARE newsletter and future adoption party invitations.
  
3. **INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE PARTY:**
  - Even if social workers did not bring a child with your desired characteristics, they might have other children on their caseload or know of other children in their agency. Adoption parties are a great place to network with social workers and other prospective adoptive parents.
  - If you are looking for a particular social worker, please go to the information area and ask a MARE staff person.
  
4. **GET INVOLVED:**
  - Help the children join in the activities of the party. They may be nervous or shy, and need encouragement. You can volunteer to help, or join in the activities yourself.
  - Talk to the children about things they enjoy doing, or compliment a nice outfit or a nice smile.
  - **!!CAUTION!! Do not ask the children about adoption, foster care or whether they want to be adopted. These are very personal things to share with a stranger. Please don't make any promises and always be honest. If you are interested in learning more about a particular child, talk to the child's social worker, but not in front of the child.**
  
5. **IF YOU FEEL HESITANT OR HAVE A QUESTION**, seek out a MARE staff person.

Remember: Adoption parties focus on sharing information, making friends, and becoming more familiar with the process. Matches may happen, or they may not; we hope that they will. In any event, discovering new friends, both workers and parents, can increase your adoption network!