

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Angels in Adoption</i>	2
<i>Book Review: Raising Adopted Children</i>	2
<i>DYFS Featured Child:</i>	3
<i>Ask the Expert</i>	4
<i>In the Spotlight</i>	5
<i>National Adoption Day</i>	5

NJ•ARCH Features:

- Chat Rooms
- Lending Library
- Warm Line
- Resource Directory
- Buddy Mentors
- Support Group Advocacy
- Upcoming Events



www.cafsnj.org

NJ•ARCH WEB SITE LAUNCHED

Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc., proudly launched the NJ•ARCH web site, www.NJARCH.org, on August 1. Funded by the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), the website is just one component of the NJ•ARCH Program. The site has had a positive response from the community. To date there have been 3,650 visitors.

Formulated to provide services to all members of the adoption constellation, the web site contains a resource directory listing mental health professionals, adoption support groups, adoption agencies and other community organizations providing services of interest to those touched by adoption.

Those in search of services can log on to the site or call the warm line: 1.877.4ARCHNJ to obtain information and referrals.

The website has a comprehensive bibliography in-



cluding books for adults and children and adoption articles. Articles can be downloaded or mailed and many of the books are available for folks to borrow. Follow the directions on the book page or call the warm line to arrange for a book or article to be sent to your home or of-

fice. Or, if you prefer, you can order your own copy by linking to a cooperative internet book source. The book list is annotated by adoption professionals making it easy to select the right book to fit your needs.

Local support group activities, agency information meetings and major adoption training programs are listed on the events page.

Other features of the web site include descriptions of services offered by NJ•ARCH including support group leader training, the buddy mentoring program, chat rooms, current adoption news and links to other sites of interest to members of the adoption constellation.

NJ•ARCH—A DREAM COME TRUE CONGRATULATIONS! WE DID IT!

The entire Adoption community should take pride that the New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House is a reality. The New Jersey Adoption Services Advisory Committee, chaired by Ceil Zalkind, Executive Director of Association for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), has for many years discussed the need to develop a statewide information, referral, and support system for all adoptive and birth families,

children, adult adoptees and the professional community that serves them. In this age of technological miracles, utilizing an internet website has enabled us to reach so many people. It truly is a dream come true. The transformation took many years, as the individual members of the Advisory Committee each contributed their own wish list of what they felt families, kids, and professionals who support adoption,

might need. The impetus for change came through the leadership of Eileen Crummy, Assistant Director of DYFS Adoption Operations and her staff. She researched other state models, sought input from national leaders like the Casey Foundation and decided that New Jersey deserved this opportunity as well. With the support of the Division of Youth and Family Services Director

(Continued on page 5)

NEW JERSEY'S ANGELS IN ADOPTION

Eileen Crummy
nominated by
Representative Mike
Ferguson

Janet Farrand
nominated by Senator
Jon Corzine

Pamela Hasegawa
nominated by
Representative Rodney
Frelinghuysen.

**Monsignor James
J. McGovern**
nominated by
Representative
Christopher Smith

ANGELS IN ADOPTION FOUR NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED

The *Angels in Adoption Program* raises congressional awareness about the thousands of foster children in this country and the millions of children around the world in need of permanent homes. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) event provides an opportunity to members of Congress to recognize and honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of children through adoption.

In September 2003, 140 Congressional Angels in Adoption from all 50



states were nominated. Here are some of our local heroes:

New Jersey's Angels in Adoption are:

- Eileen Crummy, nominated by Representative Mike Ferguson

- Janet Farrand, nominated by Senator Jon Corzine

- Pamela Hasegawa, nominated by Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen.

- Monsignor James J. McGovern, nominated by Representative Christopher Smith

Two of this year's angels have been instrumental to the genesis and support of the NJ ARCH Program:

Eileen Crummy

Ms. Crummy was a Department of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) caseworker in 1975 and today is responsible for all adoption services in New Jersey's public child welfare system. She has overseen and implemented the mandates of the Adoption and Safe Families Act and has successfully advocated for an additional Adoption Resource Center office to concentrate on the placement of children who need newly recruited adoptive families. She was also the driving force behind the *Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH)* which provides adoption advocacy, education, information and referral services.

Pamela Hasegawa

An untiring, effective advocate of adoptee rights, Ms.

Hasegawa enjoys the respect of the entire adoption community for her work in the field. As an adult adoptee, she has made it her life work to serve adoptees and their families, creating bridges and unifying all parties involved in the adoption process.

As a member of the Adoption Services Adoptive Advisory Committee, Ms. Hasegawa advocates for increased recruitment activities on behalf of NJ's children who are awaiting adoption. Her work has been recognized by NJ's Inter-Agency Council on Adoption. Additionally, Ms. Hasegawa has remained a tenacious and enduring presence for over 30 years in Trenton where she speaks out for legislative reform to the adoption process in NJ. She also founded the Adoption News Service and created an informal network of supporters for adoptee rights and reform throughout the country. Ms. Hasegawa is also on the NJ•ARCH Advisory Board and has contributed much to the development of NJ•ARCH programs. Ms. Hasegawa is truly one of the great unsung heroes of adoption.

BOOK REVIEW: RAISING ADOPTED CHILDREN BY LOIS RUSKAI MELINA

Our NJ•ARCH currently has over 300 books, videos and articles available for loan. Each month we will feature a review of a book that is of interest. Log onto our website to view all

the resources available to you from our organization. You will be glad you did!

NATALIE'S REVIEW

In 1986, Lois Melina wrote the book, Raising Adopted

Children. At that time, her two children were preschoolers. The first edition shows a relatively new adoptive parent looking for answers. When the 2nd edition was

(Continued on page 3)

DYFS FEATURED CHILD: TIERRA

In each issue of *Under the ARCH*, we will feature a child available for adoption through New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). Here is our featured child:

Tierra is a polite, inquisitive and affectionate African-American girl. Though she tends to shy away from the unfamiliar, Tierra's friendly, pleasant personality unveils once she warms up to a person. Tierra is a youngster who enjoys the company of others, both at home and with other students at school. She is actively involved in church where she attends Sunday School, Bible Study and sings on the choir. Other favorite activities include playing with dolls, bike rid-

ing, and eating her favorite foods. While Tierra may stomp, tantrum, or become uncooperative when she is angry or frustrated, she can be redirected.

School is an area where Tierra excels. She demonstrates above-average achievement, and has received a school award. Tierra is classified Multiply Handicapped due to emotional challenges, language delays, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Speech therapy is provided for her twice weekly. Tutoring is provided by a church member. At times in the past year, Tierra has displayed anxious and aggressive behavior in school. Significant progress in Tierra's behavior and ability to remain



Tierra, age 10; our Featured Child

focused has been noted from the use of medication, as well as from Tierra's participation in weekly therapy.

A patient, compassionate, affectionate and emotionally supportive family would be the best match for Tierra.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT TIERRA, PLEASE CONTACT THE NJ ARCH WARMLINE AT
1-877-4-ARCHNJ

BOOK REVIEW: RAISING ADOPTED CHILDREN (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 2)
printed in 1998, Lois Melina was able "to reassure new adoptive parents that the satisfaction of raising adopted children continues and the deep love we feel for our children grows."

Melina says that infertility and adoption turned her life upside down. Her two adopted children came into her life by chance and they are the core of her daily life. She considers this to be an awesome realization.

Raising Adopted Children is divided into three sections.

PART I: "Instant Family"

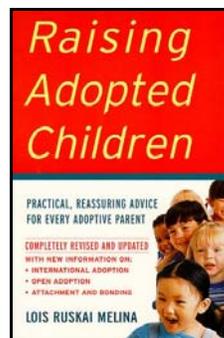
addresses the transition to adoptive parenthood, adjustment of the family, and bonding and attachment.

PART II: "At Home With Adoption" covers talking about adoption, how adoption affects the family, the question of whether adoptees are at risk, the important family history and contact with biological relatives.

PART III: "Special Issues in Adoption" deals with ethnic and cultural identity, international adoption, serious behavior problems and special situations in adoption.

The book is beautifully organized and reader friendly. As an adult

adoptee and the adoptive mother of an adopted son and daughter, now adults, I found this read to be informative as well as insightful. It made me feel as though the author, Lois Melina, was a dear friend and that we were sharing parenting styles over coffee.



DID YOU KNOW?

Adoption finalizations through the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) have grown from 597 in 1997 to 1266 in 2002—that's more than a 100% increase!

NJ ARCH currently has over 300 books, videos and articles available for loan. Each month we will feature a review of a book that is of interest. Log onto our website to view all the resources available to you from our organization. You will be glad you did!

ASK OUR EXPERTS

E-MAIL US YOUR QUESTIONS AT WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG

*Have a question
that needs
expert advice?
E-mail or
call the warmline;
we would be happy
to assist you!
Frequently asked
questions
and responses
from the staff
will be published
in future newsletters.*



Question: *Many of my friends have adopted teenagers who are angry, depressed, using drugs or dropping out of school. I find this pretty frightening. What causes these behaviors and how can I help my 12-year-old avoid them?*

- Adoptive Mother

Answer: Adolescence is a challenging time for those who are adopted. The emotional work at this age is to develop one's identity and to become more independent from the family. The ultimate goal (in the late teens or early 20's) is to become an independent, functioning adult with a challenging career and rewarding personal relationships.

For those who are adopted, identity has mysterious aspects. Unless the adoption is open, the adopted teen does not know who he or she physically resembles and what traits and/or talents are inherited. As most of you know, all teens, adopted or not, spend a great deal of time looking in the mirror. Part of this is to fathom the question, "Who am I?" The question is harder to answer when one is adopted.

Moving away from one's family of origin is complicated by adoption as well. Any "leaving," college included, can stir up feelings of loss and sadness reminiscent of the initial separation from birth parents or the numerous losses some

children experience if their adoption is at a later age. If these feelings are not processed, leave taking may not occur or may only occur as an angry break in the relationship with the adoptive family. Or it might result in behavior (drugs, illegal activities, etc.) that provokes the family to sever the relationship.

How does a family prevent these "acting out" behaviors? My belief is that anything not talked about gets acted out. From early on, parents need to encourage children to talk about the painful issues in adoption. "Why didn't my birth parents keep me?" "Who do I look like?" "Why don't I look like you?" "Why was I in a foster home?" "I wish I lived with my birth family."

As an adoptive parent, I know we long to focus on the positive and minimize the negative aspects of how we formed our families. The trouble with this approach is our kids think we don't want to talk about the sad and painful issues. We become better role models for our children when we send them the message that painful subjects can be talked about and worked through; that we are all strong enough to tolerate sad and angry feelings; that adoption means life long loss; and that our kids can come to us anytime with painful material or events and we can help them sort things out.

Some kids will need professional help. I remember the case of a pre-teen who drank a can of beer while her parents were out on an errand. When questioned about it, she said she was feeling "stressed." Her parents talked to her about her birth family's history of alcoholism and asked her if she wanted to talk about her stress with a therapist. She immediately agreed. The parents concluded that her "acting out" behavior was her way of asking for help.

Not all behaviors can be avoided, nor should they be. Some are simply normal adolescent hi-jinks: fitting in with friends, experimenting with alcohol, sex, testing parents about issues of independence, etc. The goal for parents is to encourage the discussion of feelings, to be supportive and to be understanding rather than punitive and to allow teens to experience the consequences of their actions. And of course, to "keep your fingers crossed."



Barbara A. Rall, LCSW

IN THE SPOTLIGHT CONCERNED PERSONS FOR ADOPTION

In this issue, we are spotlighting Concerned Persons For Adoption (CPFA). Located in Whippany, NJ, CPFA has been a long established adoption support group for over 31 years. This support group holds monthly meetings targeting various topics such as how to adopt internationally/domestically, panels of adopted persons, birthparents and successful adoption stories. CPFA publishes a monthly newsletter, spon-

sors social events, and holds the yearly "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference in November. CPFA is an excellent resource for those interested in learning how to adopt as well as a great support group for the life long journey.

NJ•ARCH warmly thanks CPFA for their contribution to our Resource Directory. Our special thanks goes to Pat Bennett who took it upon herself to create this amazing list of resources for CPFA and shar-

ing this list with NJ•ARCH! Visit their website at www.cpfan.org.



NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY – NOVEMBER 22 OPENING DOORS. STARTING NEW FAMILIES

Each year, courts and communities open their doors and hearts on National Adoption Day to finalize adoptions of children from foster care and to celebrate all families who adopt.

In 2002, almost 1,400 children were adopted as a result of National Adoption Day events in 34 cities nationwide. This year will be

even bigger and better!

Locally, the Essex County Court in Newark will host a celebration for nearly 60 children from the foster care system whose adoptions will be finalized. They will be escorted to the court room and will participate in activities, pose for professional photos with their "forever families" and enjoy refreshments.

Find a way to celebrate this month with your family. Check out the National Adoption Information Clearing House (NAIC)'s website to learn about the great ways to celebrate National Adoption Month in your community! <http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/adoptmonth/celebrate.cfm>

NJ•ARCH— A DREAM COME TRUE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

and the Department of Human Services the funding became available. The NJ•ARCH program is a continuation of the commitment of the DYFS Adoption Program to improve the Quality of Care and Service to all New Jersey families.

Children's Aid and Family Services is proud that we were selected to imple-

ment and administer the New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House program, and we will work tirelessly to ensure that all members of the Adoption Community benefit.

ROSE ZELTSE, MSW,
LCSW

VICE PRESIDENT,
CHILDREN'S AID AND
FAMILY SERVICES, INC.



Rose Zeltser, MSW, LCSW

*Comments or Questions
about NJ ARCH
or this newsletter?*

*Contact us at
warmline@njarch.org*

*or call us at
973-763-2041*

NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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*The one-stop
resource
for those
touched
by adoption.*

NJ•ARCH BUDDY TRAINING

JANUARY 24, 2004

Do you have experience with
adoptive parenting?
Do you like to help others?
Train to be a Buddy Mentor.
Help another family succeed in
their adoption by being in regular
contact by e-mail or telephone.

Saturday
January 24, 2004
Morris County Public Library
10 AM to 4 PM

Call or e-mail to R.S.V.P.
973.763.2041
brall@njarch.org



Adoptive Families benefit from Specialized Services