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NJ•ARCH Features:

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



[www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org)

## May is Foster Care Awareness Month

What do John Lennon, Wayne Dyer, James Dean, Eleanor Roosevelt, Eddie Murphy and Babe Ruth all have in common? They were all foster children. 1

Over 523,000 children and youth in the U.S. are living in foster care because their own parents cannot take care of them. 2

As we celebrate National Foster Care Month in May, we think about those foster parents that work hard to meet the needs of the children in their care. We think about the children who returned to their biological parents, those who ultimately found new homes. We also think about those young adults who "aged out" of the system.

National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity for people all across the nation to get involved; whether as foster parents, volunteers, mentors, employers or in other ways. It is also an opportunity to show our

appreciation for the dedication of the foster families who care for these children and youth as well as the social workers who support them.

Foster Care Month originated in 1988. At that time,



the focus was appreciation and recognition of the tremendous contributions of foster parents across the nation.

In the 1990's, Foster Care Month focused on youth in transition and under the leadership of the National Foster Care Coalition and Casey Family Programs, it became a significant part of the drumbeat that ultimately resulted in the passage of the *Chafee Foster*

*Care Independence Act (1999)*. This legislation helps ensure that young people involved in the foster care system get the tools they need to make the most of their lives. They may have opportunities for additional education or training, housing assistance, counseling and other services. 3

There are dozens of ways you can help children and youth in foster care and the families who care for them. Here are some ideas: 4/ 5

- Help a foster care program in your state.
- Mentor a young person. Research shows that children and youth with mentors earn higher grades and improve their relationships with friends and families. <http://www.mentoring.org/>. Learn more about how policy, legislative and budget priorities affect children and youth in foster care.

Some websites include:

*(Continued on page 3)*

# ASK OUR EXPERTS

E-MAIL US YOUR QUESTIONS AT [WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG)



**Barbara A. Rall, LCSW**

*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.*



*My husband and I adopted an eight year old girl from Eastern Europe. She has been in our home for about six months now and we are noticing some behaviors that have us concerned. Natasha\* does not say good-bye when she gets out of the car when I drive her to school. She's not very affectionate to my husband or me. She often acts oppositional when I ask her to clear the table or tidy up her room. At first she had behavior problems at school, but now her English language development is good and we have had positive reports from her teacher. We're wondering if she will ever fully love us and feel like our daughter. Would seeing a counselor be helpful?*

Since Natasha is your only child, I am guessing this transition is as new and challenging for you as it is for her. Natasha has come halfway around the world to a new family, new language and new culture. That's a great deal of change for her and for you and your husband as her new parents.

You don't say if Natasha was living in an orphanage or a foster home and how old she was when she was separated from her birth

parents. Separations are difficult for kids and life in a group setting can make the transition to a family challenging. We don't know how many caretakers she has had or what she might have experienced in terms of abuse or neglect. Some children come to depend only upon themselves due to their previous life circumstances. It is sometimes hard for them to trust other adults or to feel dependent and vulnerable. That makes them reluctant to make new attachments for fear they will only be hurt again when the significant adult moves out of their life.

On the other hand, some of the behaviors you describe are normal and can be seen in birth children as well as those who are adopted. I have yet to meet a child who willingly does household chores 100 % of the time. I think it's a positive sign Natasha has settled down in school and is progressing well.

I would suggest that you and your husband consider joining an adoptive parent support group. It's always helpful to "compare notes" with other adoptive parents. It will help you to tease out what is expectable behavior from an adopted eight year

old and what is not. If you do decide to see a counselor, I recommend that you choose one who has experience with other adoptive families. Adoption issues impact parents and children as they negotiate various developmental stages. It is important to see a counselor who understands the impact of adoption on family life cycle issues. The NJ ARCH web site has a comprehensive list of mental health providers who are knowledgeable about these issues.

The State of New Jersey has funded Post Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) programs for every county. The services are provided by private agencies under state contract and are staffed by clinicians who have been trained in adoption issues as well as general counseling techniques. This program is free and is open to any resident of the state who was adopted and is under the age of 18. It does not matter if the child was adopted domestically or internationally or from a private or a public child welfare agency. You can get information about the various PACS programs by calling the NJ ARCH Warm Line at 877-4-ARCH NJ.

\*Name has been changed for confidentiality purposes.

**MAY IS NATIONAL AWARENESS MONTH...**  
(CONTINUED)

*(Continued from page 1)*

Child Welfare League of America - <http://www.cwla.org/>

Black Administrators in Child Welfare - <http://www.blackadministrators.org/>

Voices for America's Children - <http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/>

Children's Defense Fund - <http://www.childrensdefense.org/>

- Donate goods such as suitcases, books, games, computers, sports equipment, musical instruments, clothing, and school supplies for young people in foster care.

National Foster Parent Association - <http://www.nfpainc.org/>

- Send care packages to foster care alumni attending college.

Orphan Foundation of America - <http://www.orphan.org/carepackages.html>

- Help young people in foster care organize a youth leadership or support group.

Foster Club - <http://www.fosterclub.org/index.cfm>

- Become a virtual mentor for a young person in college. Expand the circle of support for a youth in foster care as an email/online pen pal.

Orphan Foundation of America - <http://www.orphan.org/vmentor.html>

We trust these links will assist you in supporting our NJ Foster Care families.

- 1 [http://www.fosterclub.com/funstuff/fam\\_fosterKids/index.cfm](http://www.fosterclub.com/funstuff/fam_fosterKids/index.cfm) (Foster Club for Teens; A National Network for Youth in Foster Care)
- 2 <http://www.fostercaremonth.org/About/> (National Foster Care Month, 2005)
- 3 [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/indep\\_living.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs/indep_living.htm) (Administration for Children and Families).
- 4 <http://www.fostercaremonth.org/GetInvolved/>
- 5 <http://www.fostercaremonth.org/GetInvolved/Heart/>

**DID YOU KNOW?**

NJ•ARCH has developed a number of presentations on adoption issues.

Contact us to discuss and schedule one for your group.



**BABIES WITHOUT A HOME NEED LOVE**

Today, there are up to 50 babies languishing in New Jersey hospitals with no homes to go to-- missing the love, nurturing and guidance that are critical to their healthy development.

Children's Aid and Family

Services, in conjunction with The Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), offers a comprehensive "Boarder Babies Program."

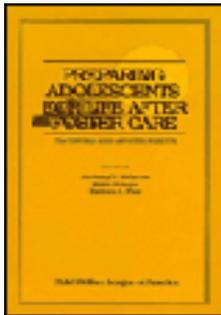
What are Boarder Babies? Boarder Babies are infants whose mothers have been

discharged from the hospital without them. These babies are medically freed to leave the hospital but have nowhere to go. These babies have complicated backgrounds, usually resulting

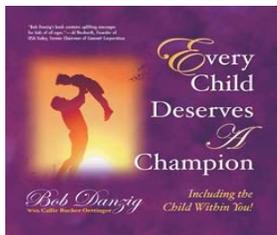
*(Continued on page 7)*

# FYI

**If you would like to read more about Foster Care, try some of these books from the NJ•ARCH Lending Library.**



**Preparing Adolescents for Life After Foster Care: The Central Role of Foster Parents,** by Anthony N. Maluccio, Robin Krieger, and Barbara A. Pine



**Every Child Deserves a Champion: Including the Child Within You!** by Bob Danzig and Callie Rucker Oettinger

# NATALIE'S BOOK CORNER

Hello, Readers! Welcome to Natalie's Book Corner.

As many of you know, May is National Foster Care Month. Hence, the topic I have chosen to write about is "foster care."

During the past month, I have done a great deal of reading on the subject of foster care. My two children and I are adopted adults. Until now, I really knew very little about foster care. My children entered my life directly from the hospitals in which they were born. The first two years of my life were spent in an orphanage in Nova Scotia, Canada, of which I have no conscious recollections.

By far, the most child-friendly book I have read about foster care is,



What's A Foster Family, Anyway? by Martine Golden

Inlay, with wonderful illustrations by Jodi Jensen. This book presents complete information about the foster family in a way that is age-appropriate and understandable from early age through adolescence. I feel it should be required reading for all foster parents and should be read to all foster children just entering the system.

The FACTS are that a foster family provides a loving home for children. A foster family takes care of children and gives them a safe place to live.

WHY FOSTER CARE? Sometimes parents are not able to take care of their children. Because of some family problem, parents cannot always keep their children safe. The problem is a grownup problem. It is never the child's fault. It has nothing to do with anything the child did.

COMMON FEELINGS of children who are removed from their homes and placed in foster care are sadness, loneliness and fear. A FOSTER MOM provides opportunities to talk and to hug.

A SOCIAL WORKER manages cases. He/she makes sure

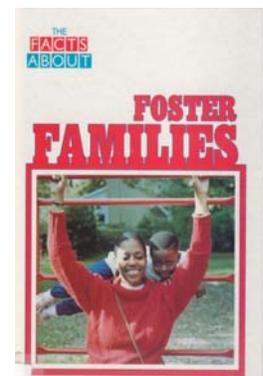
children receive the care they need. He/she wants them to be safe and happy.

If the question is asked, "WHAT SHOULD I CALL MY FOSTER PARENTS?" The answer is, "MOM and DAD or by their FIRST NAMES; whatever is comfortable."

QUESTIONS such as, "When do I get to see my birth parents?" and "When can I go home?" are among the most frequently asked.

The child's TEAM includes: the foster parents, the social worker, a guardian ad litem (appears in court and represents the child), the judge, and an attorney (who can also act as the guardian ad litem).

The Facts about Foster Families, by Jeanne Barmat



gives the reader a sense of the origins of foster care and

*(Continued on page 5)*

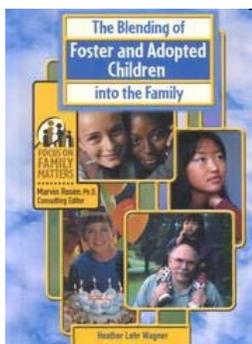
## NATALIE'S BOOK CORNER... (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 4)

an overview of the system as it is today. As long as there have been people, various methods have been used in an effort to help and protect children. The reader is actually taken back to the 1800's. A detailed glossary defines such terms as the almshouse, apprenticeship, founding home, orphanage, orphan train, poorhouse and more.

This book studies the foster care system with its many current challenges and some possible alternatives.

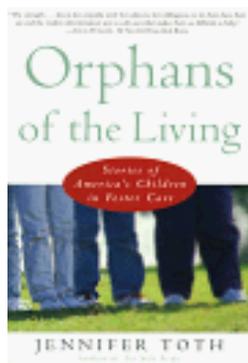
Many foster children come from families that are unable to cope with emergencies or stress. Some are the children of single parents. A large number of these children have alcoholic or drug abusing parents. CRACK use seems to be the most common reason for children of drug abusers to be placed in foster care. Financial problems sometimes contribute to neglect and abuse of a physical, emotional or sexual nature.



The Blending of Foster and Adopted Children into the Family, by Heather Lehr helps the reader to understand the different ways in which families come together.

We are led chapter by chapter through the many challenges facing foster and adopted children. Included is the management of emotions, the struggle with issues of identity, the situation a child "lives" when he is of a different race or ethnic background from the other family members, and the ultimate decision to search for his birthparents.

I found this to be all-inclusive in terms of coverage of important information. It was very comprehensive and very readable.



Finally, Orphans of the Living, by Jennifer Toth is a compilation of stories of American children in foster

care. Five actual case studies are followed in detail. The author takes us to visit the kids in orphanages and group homes, on the streets, and in foster care homes. We, as readers, hear the youthful cries of hope, despair and heart-break. It is a shocking and poignant account. It is information that we, the public, must hear.

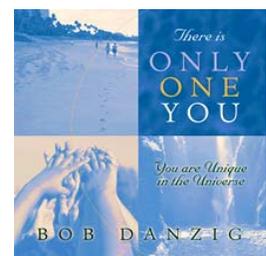
*“Many improvements have occurred in the American foster care system throughout the years, but there remains much work to be done!!”*

Needless to say, I found my readings to be thought provoking and profound.

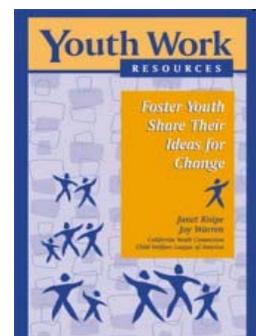
NATALIE HAMILTON  
WARMLINE WORKER  
NJ•ARCH

## FYI

**The NJ• ARCH Lending Library has a variety of books on adopting older children.**



**There is Only One You:**  
You are Unique in the  
Universe,  
by Bob Danzig



**Foster Youth Share Their  
Ideas for Changes,**  
by Janet Knipe and  
Joy Warren

## DID YOU KNOW?

THERE ARE CURRENTLY  
**532,000** CHILDREN IN THE  
PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE  
SYSTEM.

ALMOST **130,000** ARE  
WAITING FOR AN ADOPTIVE  
FAMILY. EACH YEAR **9,000**  
CHILDREN "AGE OUT" OF THE  
SYSTEM WITHOUT EVER  
BEING ADOPTED.

MOST CHILDREN IN FOSTER  
CARE TEND ARE MINORITIES,  
WITH OLDER AFRICAN AMERI-  
CAN BOYS WAITING THE  
LONGEST FOR ADOPTION



*Comments or Questions  
about NJ•ARCH  
or this newsletter?  
Contact us at  
[warmline@njarch.org](mailto:warmline@njarch.org)  
or call us at  
973-763-2041*

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT: WARREN COUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILY SERVICES

In this issue, we have elected to spotlight the *Warren County Foster and Adoptive Family Services (WCFAFS)*. WCFAFS is a volunteer committee of the Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), a tax-exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to the support and advocacy of foster and adoptive families.

This particular group, led by Laurie Braman and her excellent committee of volunteers, are constantly buzzing with activities, trainings and events for their area's foster parents and children alike.

The group's mission statement is to "meet the special needs of foster and adoptive families and to advocate for improved foster care and adoption services."

Warren County has about 54 foster parents in the county; approximately half of those foster parents are active members of this support group. This is a huge increase and a major success, even from a year ago.

This core volunteer staff coordinates many activities including monthly support meetings, held each 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month,

(excluding July and August), at the DYFS Regional Office in Washington, NJ. Each meeting includes guest speakers, trainings, and general support from both group and non-group members.

In addition to the monthly meetings, this group also offers an average of four family social events per year...all this for a \$20.00 per year membership fee.

Due to the good works of the committee members, numerous gifts have been donated to WCFAFS by various organizations. "We wrote to local churches, businesses, schools and organizations telling them of our children's needs," stated Mrs. Braman; "...they came through with flying colors!" These funds paid for events such as the holiday parties and gifts. These children have so little, so receiving gifts that make their time within the foster care system more manageable is such a huge help.

WCFAFS, in partnership with Long Valley Presbyterian Church, offers "Fostering Wishes"; which provides \$75.00 per foster child to assist in paying for the special activities and items such as scout expenses,

school photos, prom tickets and art/music lessons.

If this is not enough, this organization also offers free education for their foster parents. Topics range from Life Long Adoption Issues, Autism, Transracial Adoption and more. Those in attendance are granted "training credits" that goes towards the required DYFS foster parent training.

This group, along with other FAFS groups, attends events such as the Annual Leadership Celebration, Foster Parent Recognition Dinner and an annual Membership Luncheon.



*For more information about joining the Warren County Foster and Adoptive Family Services organization or any other FAFS organization, please check out their website at: <http://home.earthlink.net/~wcfafs/>.*

*Interested in becoming a foster parent? Contact Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) at 800-222-0047 or visit their website at <http://www.fafsonline.org/>.*

## BABIES WITHOUT A HOME NEED LOVE... (CONTINUED)

*(Continued on from page 3)*

from being born with some degree of drug involvement.

This program links infants who are languishing in area hospitals with loving foster parents who are eager to guide their growth and development. Through foster parent nurturing and early intervention services, these children can receive the es-

sential medical and therapeutic care they need. The Boarder Babies program has also been recently expanded to provide services to children between the ages of one and three who have been neglected, experienced multiple moves or trauma and are developmentally delayed.

Many support services are offered to the foster parents

to assist in the care of these children.

*For more information about the Boarder Baby Program at Children's Aid and Family Services, call 201- 226-0300 and ask for the Recruitment Specialist.*

## DID YOU KNOW?



Please Join Us For Our Special Live "Hosted Chats":

**Wednesday, May 25:  
9:00 – 10:00 pm**  
Search and Reunion with Gloria Smith and Betsy Forrest

**Wednesday, June 22:  
9:00 – 10:00 pm**  
Parenting your Biological and Adopted Children with Paula Kaplan-Reiss, Ph.D.

## DYFS FEATURED CHILD: TIFFANY



**About Tiffany,  
Born July 4, 1995**

Tiffany is a cute, independent African American girl with a warm smile. She enjoys helping adults when asked and loves to receive positive attention, although sometimes she tries to hide it. She is working on being less guarded with adults. Tiffany occupies her time playing educational games on the computer,

playing with her stuffed animals or collecting treasures while playing or out for a walk.

Tiffany loves to be outside exploring nature which includes digging in the dirt to see what interesting creatures she can find. She also loves animals and listening to music. Tiffany enjoys school and tries to conduct herself as a model student, even though she has some educational limitations.

Tiffany currently resides in a pre-adoptive group home where she is working on improving her social skills and allowing herself to be loved and nurtured. She is also working on accepting redirection without feeling angry with herself. Tiffany

deserves a patient and nurturing family to provide her with long-term stability. She also needs a family to be more interactive with her, as she has a tendency to isolate herself from others.

*For more information about adopting Tiffany or other children like her, please contact the Recruitment Specialist at (201) 226-0300, ext. 247. Or email: [adoption@cafsnj.org](mailto:adoption@cafsnj.org)*



SAMPLING OF  
MAGAZINES,  
PERIODICALS,  
AND/OR RESOURCES  
FEATURING FOSTER  
PARENTING:

**Fostering Families  
Today Magazine**  
<http://www.fosteringfamilies.com>

✧

**Foster and Adoptive  
Family Services**  
1-800-222-0047  
<http://www.fafsonline.org>

✧

**Division of Youth  
and Family Services,  
Foster Care  
Department**  
<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dyfs/index.html>

✧

**Foster Parenting.  
com**  
<http://www.fosterparenting.com>



**NJ•ARCH WISHES  
EVERYONE A  
HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!**

## THE HEART GALLERY: PROMOTING ADOPTION IN A UNIQUE WAY



Photo Credit: Gabriel Holton

*"Photographs can take us to places we have never been, show things we might never see, help us to relate to things we might not be able to understand. They can make us desire, feel, empathize. They can make us laugh, cry, be angry or sad. Most importantly, they can make us active, move us to action, to change. Hopefully that is what this group of photographs can do: inspire some action."*

— Eric Swanson, 2001 Heart Gallery photographer

On March 9, 2001, the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) brought the expression "a picture is worth a thousand words" to life. On that day, the first annual "Heart Gallery" exhibit opened at the prestigious Gerald Peters Gallery in Santa Fe. An unprecedented crowd of 1,200 people gathered at the opening to see stirring, professional portraits of children in CYFD custody who needed permanent homes. At the opening, and as they have

toured around the state, the Heart Gallery portraits have inspired heightened interest in foster care and adoption, and drawn national attention. <sup>1</sup>

This first Heart Gallery was the brain child of Diane Granito, a social worker, from the New Mexico CYFD. She continues her work by assisting other states that wish to start their own "Heart Gallery."

Since this first Gallery opened, another seven have been created. These galleries span the U.S., in locations from Connecticut, Oklahoma, Tampa Bay, Washington State, Ohio, Boston and St. Louis.

Future gallery openings include Denver, CO, Kentucky, Dallas, TX, Charleston, South Carolina, Austin, TX, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Missouri/ Kansas, and Long Island as well as New Jersey.

New Jersey's Heart Gallery will be mounted in the Liberty Science Center. The grand opening is scheduled for June 12th, 2005. The Heart Gallery is a New Jersey charitable organization dedicated to Helping Kids Find Families(sm) through portrait exhibits of foster chil-

dren who are at least three years old and/or are sibling groups. Award-winning photographers generously donate their time to capture the special spirit of each child.

All of the children featured in the New Jersey's Heart Gallery were photographed with the permission of the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), the state agency responsible for their care. <sup>2</sup>

*For more information about the Heart Gallery and/or to view some of NJ's children waiting for permanent homes, log onto: <http://www.heartgallerynj.com/>.*

*For more information on the Heart Gallery in NJ e mail: [info@heartgallerynj.com](mailto:info@heartgallerynj.com).*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.adoptuskids>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.heartgallerynj.com/index.php>

## THINKING ABOUT “CULTURE” CAMP?

The school year is almost over; final projects are being completed....where do we send the kids this summer?

While many camps fill up by early March, some have openings almost until summer begins.

The NJ•ARCH website has

numerous camps listed. Many are culture and/or special needs camps for those parents who feel that their child needs that “extra something.”

*Check out the NJ•ARCH website (select Resources) or call the Warm Line to obtain a list of camp options in your area.*

*If you cannot find a camp that is appropriate for your child, or you want more information on how to select a camp, check out the American Camping Association at: <http://www.acacamps.org/>.*

Let’s offer our children a terrific summer!

## FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

Most children are placed temporarily in foster care due to parental abuse or neglect.

The average age of a child in foster care is 10.2 years; approximately 24% between the ages of 1-5, 22% between the ages of 6-10 and 30% between the ages of 11-15. Boys outnumber girls in foster care 53% to 47%.

As a percentage, there are more children of color in the foster care system than in the general U.S. population. However, child abuse and neglect occur at about the same rate in all racial/ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic children make up approximately 54%, while white, Asian and others comprise the remaining 46%.

In 2002, children requiring foster care remained in the

system for an average of more than two years (32 months). Nearly half of those leaving care that year had been away from home for a year or longer. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the young people leaving the system were reunified with their birthparents or primary caregivers.

Over 2 million American children live with grandparents or other relatives because their parents cannot care for them. When relatives provide foster care (kinship care), siblings can often stay together. Kinship care also improves stability by keeping displaced children closer to their extended families, their neighborhoods and schools.

Each year, an estimated 20,000 young people “age out” of the U.S. foster care

system. Many are only 18 years old and still need support and services. Statistics indicate that only 2% obtain a Bachelor’s degree, while 54% receive a high school diploma. Averages indicate that over 40% become a parent 12-18 months after “aging out” of the system.

It is so important that a foster child have a significant adult in their lives as a role model or mentor. Consider becoming a mentor to a foster child or young adult. Think about becoming a foster parent. It may be the most rewarding job in your lifetime.

*For more information about becoming a NJ foster parent, contact: Foster and Adoptive Family Services at: <http://www.fafsonline.org/> or call: 800-222-0047*

## DID YOU KNOW?

◆ 523,000 CHILDREN ARE CURRENTLY IN FOSTER CARE.

◆ 2,502,380 CHILDREN ARE BEING CARED FOR BY RELATIVES.

◆ 20,000 YOUNG ADULTS “AGE OUT” OF FOSTER CARE EACH YEAR.

◆ 195,000 AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN ARE IN FOSTER CARE. THEY MAKE UP 15% OF THE NATION’S YOUTH AND 37% OF THE CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.



# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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

## DISCLAIMER

While New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ-ARCH) or Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. (CAFS) makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither NJ-ARCH or CAFS guarantee the completeness, efficacy or timeliness of such information. In addition, reference herein to any specific product, process, service, organization, or viewpoint does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by NJ-ARCH or CAFS.

## COME CHAT WITH US

Ever had the urge to speak to someone about adoption-related issues or ideas and not sure where to start or who to call? NJ-ARCH's chat room may be a perfect place to start....

NJ-ARCH hosts numerous on-line, live chats; simply log onto [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) and select "Chat Room" on the left column; select "agree" at the bottom of the "Rules of the Chat Room" screen, and join our chat! It's that easy. NJ-ARCH moderates various topics including general

adoption, birth parent, search and reunion, young teen, and older teen chats.

Check our schedule below and join us. It's a great place

to ask questions and chat with someone who may have the same concerns or ideas you have. You will be glad you did!

### General Adoption Chat:

Tuesdays 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

### Young Teen Chat:

Wednesdays 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

### Search and Reunion Chat:

2nd and 4th Wednesday 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

### Older Teen Chat:

Wednesdays 7:00 pm-8:00 pm

### General Adoption Chat:

Saturdays 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

### Special Hosted Chat:

4th Wednesday of each Month, 9:00 pm-10:00 pm

If you have any questions, please contact NJ-ARCH.

