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NJ•ARCH Features:

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



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

www.cafsnj.org

November is National Adoption Awareness Month

Answering the Call You don't have to be perfect to be a parent

There are currently 523,000 children in the public child welfare system. Of these, almost 118,000 are waiting for an adoptive family. Sadly, each year, approximately 19,000 children "age out" of the system without ever being adopted.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families has partnered with The Adoption Exchange Association, The Collaboration to AdoptUsKids and The Advertising Council to develop a national public service advertising campaign available in both

Spanish and English to raise awareness about the children who are waiting for a family. The campaign issues a call to action to prospective parents asking them to consider adopting a child or children from foster care. The campaign aims to significantly promote the urgent need for families who can provide loving, permanent homes for these

children. Recently the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, AdoptUSkids and The Advertising Council launched the first ever national Spanish language PSA campaign to encourage the adoption of children from foster care. 1

Adoptuskids.org also launched a Spanish language website to help guide prospective adoptive parents through the adoption process. Visit Adopte1.org for more information about the Ad campaign and to view samples of the ads. <http://www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/adoption/> 1 <http://naic.acf.hhs.gov>

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY: NOVEMBER 19TH



This year, National Adoption Day is November 19, 2005.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the 118,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. Now in its sixth year, National Adoption Day has made the dreams of thousands of

children come true by working with courts, judges, attorneys, and advocates to finalize adoptions into permanent, loving families. and to celebrate adoption.

SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Marcia Fisher, LCSW



Alyce Jenkins

*For more information
about Angels in
Adoption, log onto:
www.ccaainstitute.org*

ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS: TEN NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED

Each year, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), in partnership with the United States Congress, organizes the *Angels in Adoption™* program. This program gives members of Congress the opportunity to recognize individuals from their states who have made a difference in the lives of foster children and orphans from around the world. This year, 140 Congress members and 199 individuals and organizations participated in the September event. Since the program's inception in 1999, members of Congress have awarded more than 550 Angels from all 50 states.

We would like to recognize this year's New Jersey Angels:

Donald Cofsky

Rep: Robert Andrews

Each year, Donald Cofsky enriches the lives of children and adoptive parents through his legal representation in private, agency, international and domestic placements. He has also served as a lecturer and workshop leader at numerous adoption seminars.



Marcia Fisher

Rep: Steven Rothman

Marcia Fisher is the Director of the Adoption Program at Children's Aid and Family Services in Paramus, NJ. She has been in this position for 10 years and is responsible for services for infant adoption, older child adoption, a program for infants abandoned at local hospitals (Boarder Baby Program), all recruitment efforts aimed at informing the public about NJ's waiting children and services to the adult adoptees who are seeking background and medical information that they need, as well as reunion services.

Alyce M. Jenkins

Rep: Frank Pallone, Jr.

Alyce Jenkins is a loving adoptive parent of two. Over 20 years ago, Ms. Jenkins was faced with her 7-year old daughter's need for medical information, which could only be provided by

her daughter's birth parents. Through that experience, she became an active member in Adoptive Parents for Open Records, and took a leadership role in an adult educational program on adoption in her church. Ms. Jenkins has organized various adoptive and pre-adoptive family support groups and led CHATS (Connected Hearts Adoption Triad Support), a group in which parents share their personal stories of hope and healing. Ms. Jenkins is also currently serving on the Advisory Board of NJ ARCH.

Patricia Keltie

Rep: Frank Lo Biondo

Before coming to New Jersey, Patricia Keltie was very active in the 1970's with adoption programs in Vietnam, Thailand and Bangladesh, where she helped to establish life saving child welfare programs, two of which are still in operation today. She also spent time in Seoul, Korea. Ms. Keltie served as the Branch Director for Holt International Children's Services. She remained at Holt for 23 years and just retired in 2004. Under her tenure as Director, she oversaw more than 2,600 adoptions of

(Continued on page 3)

ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS:

(Continued from page 2)

children from overseas coming to New Jersey and made it a point to become personally involved with each one of them. Ms. Keltie has also been a tenacious advocate for finding homes for those children with special needs and those labeled as hard to place.

Barbara A. Rall, LCSW

Rep: Senator Jon Corzine

Barbara A. Rall has been an outstanding advocate for adoption services and a leader in her community for more than 20 years. Through her diligent efforts, she has touched the lives of thousands of families. Ms. Rall has not only welcomed children into her loving home, but she serves as the Assistant Director for the New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH). Her two decades of social work experience, her boundless energy and unflagging commitment to adoption have helped to make NJ ARCH invaluable to the adoption community. In addition to her important work with NJ ARCH, Ms. Rall has conducted workshops for the Korean American Adoption Network and continues to speak at adoption confer-

ences around the nation. Ms. Rall's experience, both as an adoptive parent and in the field, is what makes her such an "Angel" in adoption.

Warren and Mary Sweeney

Rep: Christopher Smith

In 1984, the Sweeney's chose adoption to begin their family. They learned quickly of Healing the Children (HTC), a nonprofit organization that brings children to the United States to receive medical care unavailable in their own countries. The Sweeney's volunteered to be a host family to provide care and support for many children from Russia, Moldova, and the Dominican Republic. Warren Sweeney became a founding member of Healing the Children, Greater Philadelphia Area Chapter and continues to serve as treasurer and on its Board of Directors, and is in the process of forming Rainbow House, a non-profit organization to help children in orphanages around the world receive the medical help they deserve.

Jo-Ann Tatz

Rep: William J. Pascrell

Jo-Ann Tatz has been a member of Concerned Per-

sons for Adoption (CPFA), located in Whippany, NJ for nearly 20 years. She has served on the Executive Board as Secretary, Vice President, and President and is currently their Treasurer. In the past, Ms. Tatz has visited many high schools through CPFA's Adoption Awareness Program, which educates students and staff about adoption. Ms. Tatz continues to coordinate the annual "Let's Talk Adoption *sm*" Conference, handling all the registrations and finances for the hundreds that attend each year.

John and Carol Ann

Tesoriero

Rep: Scott Garrett

John and Carol Ann Tesoriero have adopted a little girl from China and are the process of adopting another. They have made, and continue to make, a difference in the lives of children through adoption.



**CONGRATULATIONS TO
ALL THE WINNERS!**

SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Barbara A. Rall, LCSW



Jo-Ann Tatz

*Photos courtesy of
Pam Hasegawa*



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.



ASK OUR EXPERTS

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

My wife and I have had several years of infertility treatment and were recently informed that we have exhausted our alternatives. While doing research on the web, I came across a message from a pregnant woman who is looking for a couple to parent her baby. How would my wife and I go about connecting with a birthmother and what are the pitfalls to this type of arrangement?

What you are talking about is called identified adoption. Many couples advertise in local newspapers and on the web to locate pregnant women who are considering an adoption plan. They develop a relationship with the woman and in some cases, her partner, before the baby is born. Often the adoptive parent(s) are present at the birth of the baby. If the birth parents decide to surrender the baby and all of the legal requirements are met, the adoptive parent(s) bring the child home and later finalize the adoption. I believe it is more unusual to see a pregnant woman soliciting adoptive parents, but it could happen.

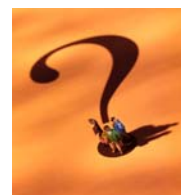
As with any adoption, the prospective parents need to have a completed home study. You can obtain information about NJ licensed adoption agencies from NJ ARCH or from the New Jersey State Bureau of Licensing. Be sure to ask if the agency has experience with identified adoption and if they are equipped to work with you if the birthmother lives out of state. You will also need an adoption agency and/or an attorney who can work with the birth parents. If they are residents of New Jersey, your agency should be able to do this. If they reside elsewhere, you will need to connect the birthmother to professionals in her state of residence. Adoption is controlled by state law and you will need to meet the requirements of both states.

It is important to ascertain that the woman is pregnant and getting appropriate prenatal care. Counseling to assist her and her partner in making an adoption plan and processing the loss of the child should be provided. Most states, including New Jersey, permit the prospective adoptive parents to pay reasonable medical and living expenses.

The emphasis here is on "reasonable"; be very suspicious of people who request large sums of money. It's important to get receipts because the judge who finalizes the adoption will require them.

You need to be aware that many birth parents decide to parent their child at some time during the pregnancy or shortly after the child is born. No state permits a birth parent to sign a surrender document until after the birth. On average, prospective adoptive couples experience about three adoption situations before they bring a child home. This makes the process both financially and emotionally risky. It's important to have the support of experienced adoption professionals as you navigate this journey.

I do believe there is a child out there for every prospective adoptive parent. I wish you all the best as you make this journey to parenthood.



NATALIE'S BOOK CORNER

Hello, Readers!

Welcome to Natalie's Book Corner.

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. I want to take this opportunity to make you "aware" of some delightful new books for children that are now available from our lending library. The books that I have reviewed for this issue are about children adopted from faraway lands.

"Borya and the Burps, An Eastern European Adoption Story" by Joan McNamara is a story about international adoption as seen through the eyes of a child. The reader is exposed to some unique insights into some of the issues and thoughts of children coming from orphanages and foster care. It is often the smallest things that matter the most when helping a child to adjust; the familiar smells of milk, blue blankets and teddy bears help Borya to know that he is home and he is safe.

Borya lived in an "orphanage" with six other babies in white cribs in a white room. The smells that surrounded him were milk, blankets and diapers. It was familiar. *He liked that.*

The babies' first parents could not be families for them. The

babies did not understand. They were too young.

The babies were not sad. They were happy to have milk, to be burped and changed, to be sung to, to smell the familiar smells, to wave to each other through the bars of their cribs.

A mama and a papa came. The nanny picked up Borya from his white crib in the middle and took him away from the other babies. The mama and papa were crying and smiling at the same time. *This confused Borya.*

"This is your new Mama and Papa," the Mamachka said to Borya. "Now you can all go home together!" *He was confused and a little scared.*

When Borya left the orphanage with his new parents, the noises of the street and being in a car were unfamiliar to him. *Borya worried.*

They went to a strange room with lots of people. This was a courtroom. Borya was adopted.

I absolutely loved this book. It was written so beautifully and so sensitively that it captured my heart. I fell madly in love with Borya.

Another wonderful read is

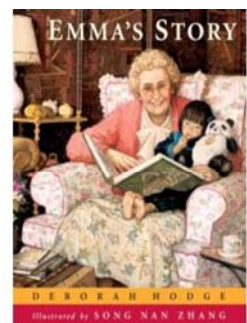
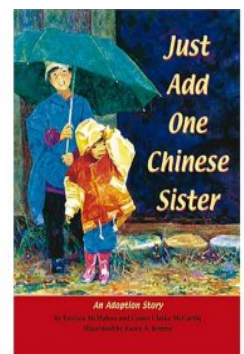
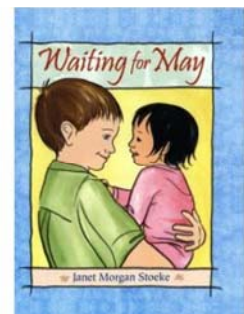
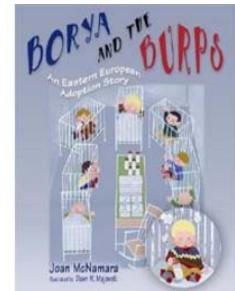
"Waiting for May," by Janet Morgan Stoeke. In this story a young boy tells of his family's and his personal experience during the year in which they waited for his new baby sister to arrive from China. The boy describes his joy and the thrill of seeing his sister's picture for the first time. The family names the little girl May and in their discussions always refers to her by her name. All of the members of the family go to China to bring May home so that she can join their American family.

May has many things to get used to. She holds tightly to her nanny. Her big brother can tell that she is scared. May spends the whole first day crying and crying. She wants to go back to her nanny rather than stay in the hotel room with her new family. This little girl does not want to be held by her new parents; she does not want the milk and cookies that they offer her; she does not want the stroller; she does not want the television.

Finally, May starts to play with a button on her brother's shirt; this gives her brother a chance to make her smile and play. This is what he has been waiting for all along.

DID YOU KNOW?

The NJ-ARCH Lending Library has a variety of children's books.

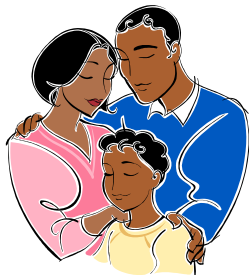


DID YOU KNOW?

NJ's National Adoption Day will be celebrated on November 19th at the Essex County Court House and the Rutgers Law School, Newark.



Approximately 100 DYFS children will have their adoptions finalized.



NJ ARCH WEBSITE CELEBRATES SECOND ANNIVERSARY

In the last ten years the Internet has become one of the best information resources available to the public; recognizing and responding to the challenges of the quickly changing face of modern technology, Children's Aid and Family Services created and maintains a web site at www.njarch.org.

As the web grows so does our website, updated daily with photos in a gallery of children awaiting adoption, conferences and events related to families and adopted children as well as news on related topics on both the local and the national level.

The NJ ARCH website has grown from a simple Home Page to a sophisticated inter-

linked information provider hosting more than 800 pages with a variety of information and referrals to different resources located in the State and on the World Wide Web.

The 21,600 page views in the month of September are testimony to how sorely needed this service has been.

In other words, our website was visited on 5,025 occasions during the last 30 days!

At present NJ ARCH is hosting not only an information website but also English and bilingual (English/Spanish) chat-rooms on a variety of adoption related topics, a quarterly newsletter (viewed on line by 241 people in September) and a variety of links

to adoption related information and resources.

However, in order to grow and meet all requirements we need to hear from you! We need your feedback on the NJ ARCH website itself, our level of service and your satisfaction with the services we provide.

Visit www.njarch.org soon to complete a Satisfaction Survey or a Needs Assessment and let us know what you think. We look forward to your feedback.



A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS TO AIR DECEMBER 21ST; 8PM ON CBS



Stay Tuned for the next Dave Thomas Foundation, "A Home for the Holidays", airing December 21st on CBS at 8:00 pm. This broadcast offers the opportunity to increase public

awareness about waiting children, and to recruit families to adopt them.

NJ ARCH will again be the NJ coordinator for this event. For more information about this broadcast, to receive The Dave Thomas Foundation "How To" booklet, or NJ ARCH's "How to Adopt in

New Jersey" handbook, call our Warm Line at 877-4ARCHNJ.

For more information about this broadcast or related information check out www.davethomasfoundation.org.

NATIONAL ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH: HOW YOU CAN CELEBRATE:

(Continued from page 1)

There are many activities you can do within your community to assist in celebrating "National Adoption Awareness Month". Here are some ideas:

Kick off National Adoption Month by contacting your local TV station or newspaper and encouraging them to run the free "Answering the Call" Public Service Advertisements (PSAs) about adoption produced by the Ad Council: <http://www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/adoption/>

Plan an activity to celebrate National Adoption Day, November 19, with your adoptive family support group.

Contact your local public library to request they include stories about adoption in their story hour for children during November.

Create a life book with your child, or work on updating his or her life book together. Read *Helping Your Foster Child Transition to Your Adopted Child*; for additional ideas check out, http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/f_transition.cfm

Contact clergy of area churches to see if your group can present at or distribute information at the church. Be sure to include Spanish-speaking churches or parishes.

Meet with your child's teacher to discuss adoption, and ways to incorporate adoption-friendly assignments into the curriculum. Start with the Resources for Teachers section of the National Adoption Month website: http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/general/adoptmonth/resources_teachers.cfm

If you have adopted transracially, identify role models from your child's heritage. Plan to invite a friend or neighbor of your child's race over for dinner.

Start a journal for your adopted child. Write at least one entry a month and plan to give it to your child when he or she is an adult.

If your children are of a different race than you, learn what it means to be a trans-racial/trans-cultural family. Resources from the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse can help: <http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/profess/families/familiestype/transracial.cfm>.

Light a candle to honor and remember your child's birth family members.

During the Thanksgiving meal, give each family member the opportunity to give thanks and remember the people in their life.

Consider ways you might keep the issue of children waiting for adoptive families in the public's eye.

Again, encourage your local TV station or newspaper to run the adoption PSAs or see how you might assist the Recruitment Response Teams from AdoptUsKids in your State: <http://www.AdoptUsKids.org>.



DID YOU KNOW?

Check out Adopte1.org to view Spanish Information on National Adoption Awareness Month.



To find out more about National Adoption Day log onto: <http://www.nationaladoptionday.org>

History of National Adoption Day

National Adoption Month roots can be traced back more than 25 years. In 1976, the governor of Massachusetts first proclaimed Adoption Week and, later that year, President Gerald Ford made it official nationally. The number of States proclaiming the observance of Adoption Week in November grew, and in 1990, National Adoption Week became National Adoption Awareness Month.

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 523,000 children are living in Foster Homes in the U.S.; 118,000 are waiting to be adopted.



The medium age of a child waiting to be adopted is 8 years old.

40% of the waiting children are African American, 37% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic and 9% other.



For more information about employers that provide adoption benefits or other related information, call 1-877-777-4222 or visit www.AdoptionFriendlyWorkplace.org

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: CAPE MAY COUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILY SERVICES

Where would you look for support, guidance, a helping hand, and some fun in Cape May County if you were a foster or adoptive family? The Cape May County FAFS Group, of course!

Every last Wednesday of the month, six to twelve families who are fostered and/or adopted, join together to give each other support, information and companionship. These monthly meetings are held at the County Administration Building in Cape May Court House, NJ.

Thanks to Stacie Greene, Sharon DeHainaut and Amber Pitts, who all did a terrific job in leading this group, over 80 foster, adoptive and kinship families are currently active within this Cape May FAFS group.

Each year, the group offers many social and supportive activities such as events, holiday dinners and the like. Most of the holiday gifts for the children are donated from many local stores and vendors. Local businesses such as video stores (free rentals for toy donations), deli's, insurance companies, Wa-Wa supermarkets and other local companies assist this group in donating cash, toys and food. "We just go around and

beg," says Ms. Amber Pitts, co-chairperson for this support group. "We even purchase food on a monthly basis from the Atlantic County Food Bank." The organization tries to purchase the more expensive items such as diapers and detergent there. These purchases really help families make ends meet.

Each year this group also offers an Easter Egg Hunt, summer picnic and an end of summer trip. This year, many families went to Dorney Park in PA for the weekend. Trips are paid for by fundraising,



such as bake sales run by the foster families along with some other local donations.

When Ms. Pitts was asked what the group's major challenges were, she stated that currently they are looking for a house to rent so they could have a place to hold their monthly meetings as well as store the group's "clothing closet" for members. Since the clothing allowance for foster children is relatively small, the group is planning to create a formal "clothing

swap"; that way parents can donate as well as receive/borrow clothes for their children. Currently, clothing is located in bins in various members' homes. Their dream is to find a house that they can rent (for a minimal amount) to store all the clothes, and donations, as well as hold their monthly meetings.

For more information about the Cape May County Foster and Adoptive Family Services, contact Stacie Greene at 609-463-9210, Sharon DeHainaut at 609-465-4599, Amber Pitts at 609-463-8499, or e-mail them at ashes57@comcast.net.

Want to learn more about Foster and Adoptive Family Services? Please call 800-222-0047 or check out their website at www.fafsonline.org.



DYFS FEATURED CHILD: CHRISTOPHER



About Christopher
Born September, 1994

Christopher is an outgoing young man who gets along well with his peers. They find him to be affectionate, thoughtful and generous. Always on the go, Christopher

has a number of interests, which include Harry Potter movies, power rangers and sports. Being in a special education program in school allows Christopher to move ahead academically at his own pace .

Presently, he is achieving below grade level. Therapy is helping Christopher to process his past; and medication helps him to increase his attention span and impulse control. He has made significant progress in residential treatment. It is believed that, with the stability of a loving and supportive family who

can provide structure and access to continuing services, he will continue to develop and grow.

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

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 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 did!

General Adoption Chat:

Tuesdays 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
 Saturdays 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Spanish Chat:

1st Saturday of the month—10:00—11:00 am

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

Special Hosted Chat:

4th Wednesday of the Month 9:00-10:00pm

DID YOU KNOW?

To learn more about adopting a waiting child, call 1-800-99-adopt or visit www.njadopt.org



To learn more about children waiting for "forever families" please check out The Heart Gallery at www.heartgallery.com



Children's Aid and Family Services also has a site to view waiting children. Please visit www.cafsnj.org to see pictures and more.

NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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