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### NJ•ARCH Features:

- Chat Rooms
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CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

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



## WHO MENTORED YOU?"

Thank them...and pass it on. Mentor a child.

What do Bill Clinton, Richard Dryfuss, Tom Brokaw, Oprah Winfrey and Tim Russert all have in common? They were all mentored as kids, by adults who really cared.

When you were a child or young adult, was there someone in your life—a teacher, neighbor, relative, coach, friend, or boss—who encouraged you, showed you the ropes, and helped you become who you are today? That person was a mentor to you.

There are 17.6 million young Americans who need or want mentoring; only about

2.5 million are in formal, high-quality mentoring relationships. That means more than 15 million young people still need mentors. That unmet need constitutes a "mentoring gap." (1)

January celebrates the fifth Annual National Mentoring Month (MNN). This nationwide drive's goal is to recruit volunteer mentors for young people. This campaign is targeting the 77 million baby boomers...the message:

**"Share what you know. Mentor a Child."**

January 2006 marks the milestone 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of

the Baby Boomer Generation. A recent report from the Harvard School of Public Health/MetLife Foundation Initiative on Retirement and Civic Engagement documents an "unprecedented opportunity" to mobilize leading-edge boomers to share their experience and skills as community volunteers." (2)

1.[http://www.mentoring.org/about\\_us/index.php](http://www.mentoring.org/about_us/index.php)

2.<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/reinventingaging/index.html>

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## "THANK YOUR MENTOR" DAY

JANUARY



January was National Mentoring Month, and

Wednesday, January 25, 2006 was the third annual *Thank Your Mentor Day*. Millions joined in honoring an important mentor in their life. It's still not too late to honor your mentor; here are some ideas:

**Send an E-mail or an E-Card:** Hallmark offers on their on-

line service, a free e-card especially designed for National Mentoring Month. If you lost touch with your mentor(s) and want to try to locate them, try using a free service such as People Search on Yahoo.com or AOL White pages at AOL.com.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

**MENTOR:** THE WORD ORIGINATES IN THE ODYSSEY BY HOMER, WHO DESCRIBES THE CHARACTER MENTOR AS A "WISE AND TRUSTED FRIEND."

"THE NUMBER ONE INDICATOR OF SUCCESS FOR A CHILD IS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH A CARING ADULT."  
- FORTUNE MAGAZINE

A RESEARCH STUDY BY PUBLIC PRIVATE VENTURES FOUND THAT YOUTH WHO REGULARLY MEET WITH THEIR MENTORS ARE:

- 46% LESS LIKELY TO BEGIN USING ILLEGAL DRUGS
- 27% LESS LIKELY TO BEGIN DRINKING ALCOHOL
- 52% LESS LIKELY TO SKIP SCHOOL
- 33% LESS LIKELY TO HIT SOMEONE

## WHO MENTORED YOU?

(Continued from page 1)

Log onto [www.mentor.org](http://www.mentor.org) or [www.volunteermatch.com](http://www.volunteermatch.com) and type in your zip code; there, you will find a list of possible organizations in your area.

Most mentoring programs offer training, support and frequent contact with the sponsoring agency. The amount of time you spend with your child or "mentee" depends on the program you join; most request four to eight hours per month. Contact, depending on the program, may be one-on-one, e-mail and/or phone calls. Criminal and other checks are required for most programs.

There are also several social service agencies that offer mentoring programs. Below are brief descriptions of just a few of the programs offered in NJ:

### Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc:

Offers many types of mentoring opportunities for younger children, as well as adolescents who are in the care of the Child Welfare System (DYFS) and are under the auspices of Children's Aid and Family Services. Prospective mentors

participate in Mentor Training designed to develop the skills and confidence to effect positive youth development.

Some of the mentoring opportunities include:

**Strength-Based Mentoring**, where youth (13-18), currently living in group or treatment homes can be matched with mentors with similar talents and strengths. These relationships support the teenager in the development or mastery of specific talents, hobbies and/or vocational interests.

**Self-Esteem Building** offers children from ages 5 to 12 the presence of a positive, caring adult role model. Shared time and activities help the child feel safe, as well as develop self-confidence and self-esteem.

**Visions** is another mentoring program that connects adolescents from one of the group treatment homes with a local business where the employers provide on-the-job mentoring, guidance and support in the development of work and independent living skills.

**Host Family Mentoring** serves youth between ages 17-21 who have graduated

from the Children's Aid and Family Services residential programs and are participating in college or other post-secondary education programs. Volunteer families provide a safe, homelike environment for these young adults during holidays, school vacations, etc. Families provide role modeling and problem solving as well as relationship building skills.

**Post-Adoption Mentoring** offers mentoring for special needs children who have been adopted. The role of the mentor is to be a friend, role model and engage the child in out of home activities. This type of relationship can have lasting benefits to the child and adoptive family alike. For more information on this particular program, please contact Jacqueline Adams at 973-763-2041 Ext. 213.

So, if you are looking for a great opportunity to work with children who really need your help and would like more information on any of these programs, please contact Kelly Guerrieri at 201-226-0300.

(Continued on page 3)

## WHO MENTORED YOU?

(Continued from page 2)

Other mentoring opportunities include:

### Mentoring Children of Prisoners:

In New Jersey, there are currently over 40,000 children with one or more parents incarcerated; statistics show that without support services such as mentoring, 70% of these children will likely end up in the Juvenile or Adult System.

The goal of this Federally Funded Mentoring Program is to match volunteer mentors with children who need their help, guidance and friendship.<sup>1</sup>

**Youth Consultation Services (YCS)**, located in Essex County NJ, is just one of the NJ agencies that offers this type of mentoring program. YCS's program focuses on children ages 4 to 15 who reside in Newark, Irvington, Orange, or East Orange, who have one or both parents incarcerated in State or Federal prison. These children are the "silent victims of the criminal justice system." They need someone like you to help them through these difficult times. There are many other agencies throughout NJ that offer

this type of mentoring program.

For a complete list of these agencies, call Cari Macfie at 973-854-3605. Or check out their website at [www.ycs.org](http://www.ycs.org).



SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW. BECOME A MENTOR.

### Big Brothers Big Sisters:

Founded in 1904, Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest and largest youth mentoring organization in the United States. In 2004, the organization served more than 225,000 youth ages 5 through 18, in 5,000 communities across the country through a network of 470 agencies. Research has shown that the positive relationships have a lasting impact on children's lives.

To find a Big Brothers Big Sisters in your location, log onto:

<http://hosted.bbbsa.org/big/index.asp> and type in your zip code, or check out their National Website at <http://www.bbbsa.org>.

### Orphan Foundation of America (OFA):

Since 1981, it has been OFA's mission to provide financial and moral support to foster teens who "age out" of State care when they turn 18 or graduate from high school and pursue post-secondary education. Overnight, these youth must somehow figure out how to put a roof over their head, obtain health insurance and reliable transportation, and pay for college. Few have relatives to help them or give advice, so OFA recruits responsible adults to provide e-mail mentoring. Mentors are thoroughly screened and receive ongoing training. To check out more about this program, go to [www.vmentor.com](http://www.vmentor.com).

1. [http://www.ycs.org/main\\_layout.php?content\\_id=72](http://www.ycs.org/main_layout.php?content_id=72)

## DID YOU KNOW?

### February is *Black History Month*



To learn more about black history in the U.S. visit the following sites:

The Underground Railroad:  
[www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad)

Black History Past to Present, an Interactive Treasure Hunt:  
[http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/bh\\_hunt\\_quiz.html](http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/bh_hunt_quiz.html)

African American World:  
[www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld)

## DID YOU KNOW?

AFTER THE "A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS" BROADCAST, THE DAVE THOMAS FOUNDATION HAD OVER 1690 INQUIRIES

THE FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO RECEIVE CALLS AND WEB SITE INQUIRIES

MANY EMPLOYERS OFFER ADOPTION BENEFITS SIMILAR TO MATERNITY BENEFITS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT WWW.ADOPTIONFRIENDLYWORKPLACE.ORG OR CALL 877-777-4222

ALL FAMILIES WHO WISH TO ADOPT MUST COMPLETE A HOME STUDY. TO LEARN MORE, CALL 1-800-TO-ADOPT OR VISIT THE ON-LINE LEARNING CENTER AT WWW.ADOPT.ORG

## "A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS" UPDATE

The Dave Thomas Foundation aired their seventh annual "A Home for the Holidays" on CBS, December 21st. Celebrity performers shared the stage with extraordinary American families who told their stories of foster care adoption.

Performers this year included Sheryl Crow, Daryl Hannah, Jesse McCartney and Jamie Lee Curtis.

Currently, half a million children are in foster care in the United States; 119,000 of these children are available for adoption. The goal of this broadcast was to raise national awareness about this

important social issue and connect waiting children with potential adoptive families. The show was a joint project of CBS, the Children's Action Network, Wendy's International, Triage Productions, Goldsmith Entertainment and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.



Over 60 New Jersey families and individuals contacted

the Dave Thomas Foundation after the broadcast. As the state-wide coordinator, NJ ARCH is in the process of following up with each family by sending materials and referring them to resources that may assist in their adoption journey.

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- 4ARCH NJ and/or check out the Dave Thomas Foundation website at:

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

## WAITING CHILDREN: RAYMOND AND BRIANNA



Raymond and Brianna are endearing nine year old twins who are in need of a strong, loving family, capable of providing them with close supervision and channeling their energy. Raymond and Brianna reside together in a residential setting. Raymond is a gentle, affectionate and cooperative

boy with a special affinity for blue and green pencils, puzzles, and balls. He's "nuts about music" and enjoys singing to nursery rhymes or listening to Disney songs on his walkman. Raymond is autistic, very active, and in need of constant supervision. Raymond is becoming in-

creasingly interactive, and he and Brianna enjoy chasing each other and laughing. Spunky, affectionate Brianna is active and enjoys exploring her surroundings. She likes to sing, listen to music, play on the computer, and watch cartoons. Brianna also is autistic, and responds best to consistency, structure, and routine. A financial subsidy and assistance with medical needs are available to the special family who opens their hearts and home to these adorable children. Raymond and Brianna are waiting.

## THINKING ABOUT “CULTURE” CAMP?

The holidays are over, the kids are back at school and you are back to your “normal routine”. You would like to slow down, but guess what? It’s time to think about summer camp!

Believe it or not, many summer camps begin to fill up in February and March. What kind of summer camp experience do you wish to give your child this year?

If he/she is adopted, you may want to consider a “culture camp”. Whether your child was born domestically or in another country, sending your child to a camp that specializes in adoption or “culture” could be a life changing experience for them.

So, how do you start? Check out the NJ Arch website for

a list of summer camps that may be of interest to your family. 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/> Not quite ready to send your child to a sleep away “culture camp”? If you belong to an



adoption support group, consider attending some of their social events.

Many support groups such

as Concerned Persons for Adoption ([www.cpfan.org](http://www.cpfan.org)), in Whippany, offer a Heritage Party in early March that celebrates various heritages with music, food and activities. This type of event is a wonderful way for you and your children to meet others with similar backgrounds or experiences.

The message: you are not alone. Whether you choose camp, social groups or other avenues, it’s important for you and your child to connect with those “touched by adoption.”

Check out these camp information sites:

<http://campsadoption.com>

<http://www.babyzone.com/features/content/display.asp?contentid=1735>

## DID YOU KNOW?

NJ ARCH OFFERS THE FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS:

HOW TO ADOPT IN NEW JERSEY

ADOPTION: A LIFE LONG LOSS

TELLING YOUR CHILD DIFFICULT HISTORY

TRANS-RACIAL ADOPTION

GROUP FACILITATION FOR SUPPORT GROUP LEADERS

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SCHEDULE A WORKSHOP PLEASE GIVE US A CALL OR

E-MAIL  
BRALL@NJARCH.ORG

## “THANK YOUR MENTOR” DAY:

(Continued from page 1)

### Write a Tribute:

Say a “Thank you” to someone who encouraged you, gave you confidence, or just pointed you in the right direction, or you can remember them by writing about how they made a difference in your life.

What lessons—or words—of lasting value did they impart to you?

Are there particular events or moments in your life that you recall in connection with your mentor? Submissions were collected on [www.WhoMentoredYou.org](http://www.WhoMentoredYou.org) website.

To view some of these tributes, log onto this website to check them out.

### “Pass it on”

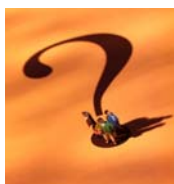
Become a mentor to a young person in your community. Visit [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org) to find mentoring opportunities near you.





**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 EXPERT

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

*My grown adopted daughter Martha\*, has been in reunion with her birth mother Matilda\*, for five years. Two years ago Martha became a mother. Both Matilda and I were present at the birth and very involved with the baby. Nine months ago, Matilda moved out of state, and she has since shown little interest and rarely makes contact. My daughter is hurt and angry, and I feel angry too. What should I do?*

Experts often describe search and reunion as an emotional roller coaster for the adoptee and birth parents—and for everyone else in their lives as well.

Birth parents struggle with guilt and shame as well as feelings of loss. Matilda may

keenly feel what she gave up when she relinquished her daughter. And, seeing her in a loving relationship with your grandchild may remind her of what she never had. It may be very difficult for her to enjoy visits or select gifts. I say this to help you understand her, not necessarily to excuse her behavior.

Your daughter may also be longing for the biological connection she did not have growing up. Every triad member who initiates a search has fantasies of the reunion. Searchers are not always aware of the difficulty of building relationships with people with little shared history and painful memories. Often it's not

possible to have the relationship one dreamed of.

This often leads to serious disappointment and a reenactment of the original feelings of rejection. I'm sure your daughter feels close to you and appreciates all you do. Unfortunately you can't "fix" her relationship with Matilda; we can never control the reactions and behavior of others. Be supportive; validate her feelings of anger and disappointment. And enjoy your grandchild.

As much as you would like to protect your daughter from painful feelings, this is not possible.

\* Names were changed.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: BIRTH MOTHERS SUPPORT GROUP OF BURLINGTON COUNTY

**The Birth Mothers Support Group**, led by Irene Gendron, a birth mother and a Certified Post Adoption Counselor, has been serving triad members in the Burlington County area for five years.

Meeting once per month gives birth parents, adoptees or others "touched by adoption" the opportunity to talk about and share with others how it feels to be a birth parent, have a birth child search

for you and/or other adoption-related issues. Since this topic can be somewhat sensitive and private, it's good to know that others in the group, including the leader, have experience in this part of the triad.

This intimate group is a terrific way to connect with others who share your feelings. Over the years a number of close friendships have resulted from the sharing and

and support provided during the programs. Meetings are held either the third or fourth Thursday of each month at the Pemberton Public Library, 16 Broadway Ave., Browns Mills, N.J. beginning at 6:30 pm.

For more information and details about this group, contact Irene Gendron at [Eastwestig@aol.com](mailto:Eastwestig@aol.com) or give Ms. Gendron a call at 609-893-6086.

## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

### Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner.

Now that the hustle and bustle of the holidays is behind us, we can settle in on those chilly winter evenings and watch some good movies.

I would highly recommend that the following videos be part of your viewing plan this season: "Secrets and Lies," "Antwone Fisher" and "Stuart Little". All three have an underlying theme of foster care or adoption.

*Secrets and Lies*, a 1996 theatrical release, was the winner for best picture and best actress at the Cannes Film Festival. Siskel and Ebert rated it a real triumph giving it "Two thumbs up! Way up!"

The main character, Cynthia, gets a phone call from a young woman named Hortense who claims to be the daughter she relinquished for adoption many years before. Hortense is a lovely soft-spoken and well-mannered eye doctor who happens to be black. The two women develop a warm relationship. When Cynthia invites Hortense to a small birthday celebration, the family is stunned by the truths that are finally revealed. At last, all of them are forced to face the "secrets and lies" of the past.

Brenda Blethyn earned an

academy award nomination as best actress. Marianne Jean-Baptiste was nominated as best supporting actress. The dramatic roles were played beautifully. The story was entirely possible.

*Antwone Fisher* was inspired by a gripping true story of survival and triumph. It describes the life experiences of its title character. Fisher, expertly played by Derek Lake, is a troubled sailor who is ordered to see a navy psychiatrist about his volcanic temper that is always ready to erupt.

Denzel Washington makes his directorial debut and also plays the part of Fisher's psychiatrist. Over time, the doctor draws the conclusion that the best thing for his patient to do is to find the family he never knew. Healing and its accompanying peace can only come from the emotional journey to confront his painful past.

As an adopted adult who has made this journey into my past, I was riveted to my seat until the movie ended. Along with Fisher, I suffered the feelings of pain, grief and loss but came away from the experience with newly acquired knowledge and a sense of freedom from the "secrets." This was an out-

standing film that is well worth the time.

E.B. White's classic children's book, *Stuart Little*, was first published in 1945. It began its transition to the screen in July of 1997.

The Littles want to adopt a sibling for their young son, George. They go to the adoption agency and have an interview with the social worker. Everything is lovely and very formal. Then the story unfolds with their adoption of a mouse that George decides to name Stuart.

The Little family just got bigger.

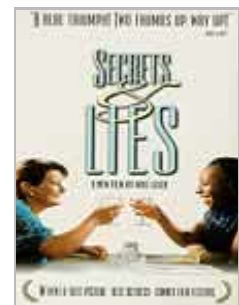
This is a must-see movie. It is an animated full-length feature film that is a delightful entertaining event for the entire family.

You will be hearing from me again in the spring. In the interim, make some popcorn, sit down in your favorite chair, relax and enjoy watching some excellent adoption-related videos.

To view these or other videos, please contact NJ ARCH.

### DID YOU KNOW?

THE NJ-ARCH LENDING LIBRARY HAS A VARIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS, ARTICLES AND VIDEOS.



# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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*The one-stop  
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