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- Training Workshops
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CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

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

## Answering the Call



### November 2008 is National Adoption Month

#### Observing National Adoption Awareness Month

November is National Adoption Awareness Month, a month set aside to raise awareness about the adoption of children and youth from foster care. This year's theme of adopting teens from foster care builds on the Ad Council's new public service announcement (PSA) campaign of the Children's Bureau, the Adoption Exchange Association, and The Collaboration with AdoptUsKids <http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/>.

Activities and celebrations are kicked off with a Presidential Proclamation and while efforts made at the national level certainly help build awareness of adoption, participation in local programs, events, and activities by those of us with a direct connection to adoption

can often be the most effective way to promote positive perceptions, debunk the myths, and draw attention to the tens of thousands of children in foster care who wait and hope for permanent families. <http://national-adoption-month.adoption.com/>

Check out our [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) website and view "Waiting Children" to see some of the children that are looking for "forever homes" in New Jersey. To view waiting children throughout the nation, log onto <http://photolisting.adoption.com/> one of the largest internet listings for waiting children.

To view a calendar of ideas in how to celebrate Adoption Month, log onto [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) and select "What's New"; there you will

find a full list of ideas and activities that you can do within your community, school and home to help celebrate this special month, or log onto <http://www.adoption.com/national-adoption-awareness-month/>.

Take the opportunity to visit your local library, your child's day care or school and offer adoption-related books, videos or materials to the teachers and/or counselors. For ideas in books and articles, log onto our website and select "Lending Library."

Make November a "teachable" month for your family, friends and school; your child will thank you.

## SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:

## ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS: ELEVEN NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED



Judy Foster



Robert Jones, Ph.D.  
President & CEO,  
Children's Aid and Family  
Services with  
Representative  
Steven R. Rothman



Natalie Hamilton

The Angels in Adoption Program, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI's) public awareness program provides an opportunity to all members of the U.S. Congress to honor the work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and those who need forever homes. This year's Angels in Adoption Awards and Gala took place in Washington, DC on September 16<sup>th</sup>. The keynote address was given by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The following are our New Jersey "Angels." Please join us in wishing them the best in their continued good works for those children and families who need it the most.

### Children's Aid and Family Service, Inc.

**Representative Scott Garrett**  
**Representative Steven R. Rothman**

Our own agency, Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. has been providing adoption services continuously since 1899. Since its inception, it has placed more than 10,000 children with adoptive families. Located in Paramus, the agency is a recognized leader in providing innovative, high quality programs that focus particularly on foster care and adoption services to infants, children and teenagers with spe-

cial needs and particularly those who have suffered severe abuse and trauma. In 2007, the agency received the Adoption Excellence Award from the US Department of Health and Human Services in recognition of its many innovative permanency and other adoption support services.

### Mary Daily **Representative Jim Saxton**

As the Director of Social Services at Adoptions from the Heart (AFTH), she is quite experienced in the process of adoption. Ms. Daily has worked for the agency for twenty years and has overseen activities with social workers throughout the agency and has helped both the agency and field of adoption grow. Her years of experience working in the adoption community have led her to expanding the agency. Outside the agency, Ms. Daily conducts workshops at conferences, and is an active member of Adoption Agency Council of New Jersey (AACNJ).

### Judy Foster **Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen**

Judy Foster became involved with the adoption reform movement in 2000 after reuniting with her daughter, whom she surrendered to adoption in 1961. As one of "the girls who went away", Judy

went on with her life, but never forgot her daughter. After 37 years of silence, Ms. Foster joyfully reunited with her 10 years ago, sparking a new "career" and passion for giving back to the adoption community. She is the NJ Representative to the American Adoption Congress (AAC) and an active member of the NJ Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education (NJCARE). Promoting greater public understanding of the need for truth in adoption, she continues to lobby for legislation that would restore access to original birth certificates to NJ adoptees.

### Natalie Hamilton **Senator Robert Menendez**

Adopted as a toddler herself, Ms. Hamilton is a loving adoptive parent of two. As adults, her daughter and her son both search for and found their birth families. She joined the Morristown Post Adoption Support Group seeking guidance and support. Before long, she had initiated a search for her own birth family. She found and was reunited with siblings in Canada and continues to enjoy a close relationship with them. Ms. Hamilton became active in Connected Hearts Adoption Triad Support (CHATS) offering emotional support and often led informational dis-

## ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS:

cussion groups. Ms. Hamilton joined the Children's Aid and Family Services NJ ARCH program at its inception in 2003 as a Warm Line Worker. Her greatest gift is the empathy and support she provides in response to calls and e-mails and as her role as the NJ ARCH librarian.

### Marilou Heim

**Representative Ablio Sires**

With over 35 years experience in child protection and permanency, Ms. Heim's recognition acknowledges a modest, non-assuming social worker who has made a huge difference in the lives of children. She has served in several leadership positions in the state's Adoption Resource Center (ARC), where she worked relentlessly to provide quality adoption services to families. Ms. Heim created a model known as the "Metro Select" which would ensure that children requiring selective home placements received the in-depth services they needed and deserved.

### Najlah Feanny Hicks

**Representative Bill Pascrell, Jr.**

Ms. Hicks is the heart and soul behind one of the most effective and innovative adoption programs in the U.S., the Heart Gallery of New Jersey. The Heart Gallery of NJ is a unique, not for profit corporation dedicated to raising awareness

about local foster children who are available for adoption. Portraits are taken that help capture the individuality and spirit of each foster child. The photos are shared via their website and through the various Heart Gallery exhibits in the hope that potential families will be moved to inquire about adoption. More than 150 considered hardest to adopt children have had their adoptions finalized since 2005. She was able to gather a collection of professional photographers and photo editors to donate their time to the Heart Gallery.

### Harry and Priscilla Hopkins **Senator Frank R. Lautenberg**

The Hopkins adopted five special needs children, including twins, and currently serve as foster parents to a two-year old, whom they also hope to adopt. The two youngest Hopkins children are birth sisters. Due to a medical condition of one of the sisters, she was placed with another Resource Family. The Hopkins eventually were able to have this sister return to their family and both are now thriving.

### William and Patricia Reents **Representative Frank Pallone, Jr.**

The Reents successfully parented two teenaged sons, but welcomed the idea of expanding

their family; they adopted two little girls from India. The family immersed themselves in Indian culture; every summer the family attends an Indian culture camp where children from India and their adoptive parents learn more about the children's native country. They live their culture in their home and assist other parents in educating others about adopting from India.

### Toby Solomon, Esq. **Representative Donald M. Payne**

Over two decades ago, Ms. Solomon formed and also chaired an adoption subcommittee in order to address amendments to the NJ Adoption Statute and other adoption issues. Her prior personal and professional experience made her aware that adoption was an area which needed both reform and advocacy. This committee accomplished the task of writing amendments to the existing adoption legislation as well as getting amendments passed by the Legislature. Ms. Solomon also founded and chaired the Children's Rights Committee. She continues to lecture and has authorized numerous articles on adoption in order to educate both professionals and prospective adoptive parents in adoption matters.

## SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Marilou Heim



Najlah Feanny Hicks



Toby Solomon, Esq.

## DO YOU KNOW?



Dana W. Fried, NJ ARCH  
Assistant Director

*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](mailto:WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG)

**Question:** *My husband and I are feeling stressed these days due to all the talk about the economy; there is also a good chance he is going to lose his job. Do you have any suggestions about how to protect our kids from all the chaos?*

**Answer:** That is certainly a very good question during these uncertain times. The best advice we found was in a great article entitled: **"10 Secrets to Help Your Children Handle the Financial Crisis"** by Dr. Michele Borba. Below is an excerpt from that article:

"These are tough times for us all, but they can be especially hard if you have kids. After all, a big part of parenting is about wanting our children to be happy and shielding them from the more painful parts of life.

This financial crisis will affect each family a bit differently, but the key concern is: **How will these tough times affect our kids?** Research has found that the emotional affects of financial woes on children can be considerable: triggering depression, anxiety, adjustment problems and poorer peer relationships in the kids. But the researchers also found one critical nugget: *The parents' constant conflicts, irritability and hostile*

*exchanges over money matters was what greatly increased the likelihood of their children's emotional and behavior problems. The parents' constant stress over their money matters also reduced their parenting abilities so the kids' problems remained with them through adulthood.*

There is an important parenting secret here: Recognize that how you act and what you say these next days, weeks or even months can affect your children's emotional well-being not only now but long-term.

Here are "10 Secrets" to help your children handle this financial crisis and get you through these tough times:

**1. Don't hide the truth.** Kids are perceptive and know something is up, so trying to cover up a harsh reality to protect them only fuels their worries more. While you don't need to tell kids all the facts, you owe them an explanation tailored to their level of understanding.

**2. Acknowledge your worry.** Your child is picking up your worries so own up. Begin with a simple: "I know you've noticed that Dad and I have been upset lately, so we wanted to let you know what's going on".

**3. Keep an open dialogue.** Kids are going to hear all kinds of rumors and misinformation from other kids. Keep an on-going dialogue with your child.

**4. Set a budget.** Sit down with your kids and explain that you need to cut back. Don't go into details about your finances. Enlist your kids to help prioritize family spending.

**5. Reduce conflict.** Don't yell in front of the kids. Studies show that during tough economic times the constant parental conflicts cause kids the most emotional damage. Call a truce. Go to a counselor.

**6. Stick to routines.** Sticking to a routine helps reduce worries because it boosts predictability and security.

**7. Monitor the news.** Limit viewing those stressful news stories or better yet, turn the TV off during the news hour.

**8. Reduce stress as a family.** Children mirror our moods and if they see us upset their worries only escalate. Staying calm yourself is the best way to reduce your children's worries. Find no-cost ways to reduce stress as a family.



(Continued on page 6)

## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Hello, Readers!

The conditions in the financial markets has produced economic problems of a magnitude that people with children have never experienced.

This month I have chosen to review **"Finding the Right Spot,"** by **Janice Levy**, because it brings to mind, in a very real sense, situations that today's parents are living. All of the events described in the story could result in stress overload culminating in substandard parenting.

A little girl lives with her mother in a women's shelter. The child tells the social worker and the judge that life there is not so bad. You get used to the noise and to hearing people talk to themselves. You learn to share your food and other things. You learn what's important.

"Why aren't you going to school everyday and learning there?" the judge asked. The little girl did not have an answer for that. The judge did.

"So now I'm going to school and living with Aunt Dane."

"She's not my real aunt, but says she loves me as if she was. Aunt Dane takes care of kids like me, when their real parents can't. Like when your mom loses her job and can't pay the rent for the apartment and drinks too much and gets sick

so you stay home from school to take care of her."

That is exactly what happens to this little girl.

The judge sends the mom to a rehab center to help her stop drinking. Then, the little girl imagines her mom getting a good job and finding a nice place for the two of them to live.

"Sometimes Mom visits me. We sit on the porch swing and eat peanut butter sandwiches and she does up my hair fancy like a movie star."

"But sometimes Mom's voice sounds wobbly on the phone and she laughs all the time or not at all."

"I can hear her smoking and yawning and tapping her fingernails."

"Her stories don't make sense."

"On those days, she doesn't mention the ranch."

"On those days, she doesn't come to visit."

The book goes on to describe the love, the hugs, the security the little girl feels with Aunt Dane. "Aunt Dane smells like whatever she is cooking."

Aunt Dane tells the little girl that what she needs is a best friend, so Aunt Dane gets her a dog named Jake. "Jake's mom has problems too. So we're his foster family now."

Then the little girl's birthday

comes. She and Aunt Dane clean the house. She wears her favorite shirt. Aunt Dane braids her hair. Aunt Dane bakes a cake and decorates the house.

They wait. And wait. And wait. And wait.

"She's not coming," says the little girl.

"Sorry," says Aunt Dane. "Sorry."

Aunt Dane gives the little girl two presents, one from her and one from Jake. The little girl is sad, angry and disappointed.

Mom calls later that night to apologize. She says she took a nap and overslept.

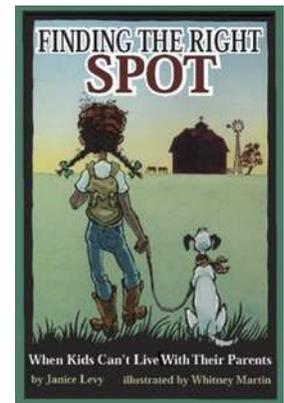
"Don't give up on me, Cow-girl," Mom says. "Don't give up on us."

The little girl asks her mom when she will see her. Her mom says, "Soon."

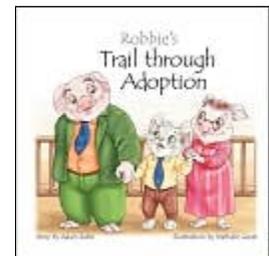
**"Finding the Right Spot,"** is a great book for all kids who can't live with their parents, despite the reasons. It provides examples of resilience and loyalty, hope and disappointment, love, sadness, and anger, too. It shows that sometimes life is not fair, and that some children are always wondering what will happen tomorrow, and talking about all of it.

### DID YOU KNOW?

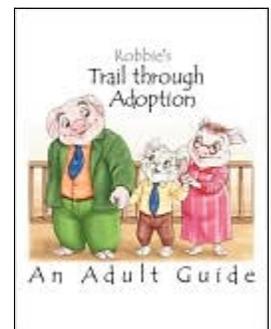
The NJ ARCH Lending Library has over 1200 books to borrow for free



Finding the Right Spot  
by Janice Levy



Robbie's Trail through  
Adoption: By Adam Robe



**DID YOU KNOW?**

**THE STATE'S  
LARGEST  
NATIONAL  
ADOPTION DAY  
CELEBRATION WILL  
BE HELD IN  
NEWARK ON  
SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 15TH**



**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.*

**NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY: NOVEMBER 15TH**

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families.



For the last eight years, National Adoption Day has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with courts, judges, attorneys, adoption professionals, child welfare agencies and advocates to finalize adoptions and find

permanent, loving homes for children in foster care.

National Adoption Day is celebrated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Traditionally, National Adoption Day is celebrated the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Out of respect for the nation's remembrance of the 45th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, the National Adoption Day Coalition elected to move the celebration of National Adoption Day this year only to the

Saturday prior.

The Department of Children and Families will co-host 14 events during the week of November 8-15th to honor adoptive families and finalize adoptions of about 260 children currently in foster care in NJ. For more information, log onto [www.nationaladoptionday.org](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org).



**ASK OUR EXPERTS**

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

(Continued from page 4)

**9. Tune into your child and ask for help.** Watch for stress signs or behaviors that are not typical for your child. Enlist a relative or friend who cares about your child to spend a bit more time with him or her.

**10. Offer hope.** Your family may be hurting and your devastation may be severe. But remember kids are resilient and what they need most is reassurance that you will make it through this together.

Above all, give your kids a message of hope, "Whatever hap-

pens, we're together." When all is said and done that really is what matters most."

To download the whole article log onto: <http://micheleborba.ivillage.com/parenting/archives/2008/09/10-secrets-to-help-your-childr.html>

Dr. Borba is also the author of "12 Simple Secrets Real Moms Know."

For a list of free or reasonable activities in NJ, log onto: [www.familyfriendlyamerica.com/newjerseyfree.html](http://www.familyfriendlyamerica.com/newjerseyfree.html)

The following are some fun free activities you may want to do with your kids:

- Plant fall bulbs
- Enjoy walks in the park or neighborhood
- Do craft projects
- Play a board game
- Rent a movie from the library
- Read a book together
- Just have fun!

## DYFS FEATURED CHILD: RODNEY



If Rodney doesn't succeed as a rap artist, he's got a Plan B: go to law school and become a sports attorney.

"I like sports, but I know I'm not going to be in the NBA. So if I can't be a professional athlete, I

could be the lawyer who represents one," he says.

In preparation for both potential careers, Rodney performs his raps, which he writes himself, in front of an audience whenever possible. It's Rodney's way of building self-confidence.

"It will help me in a courtroom, and to become a rapper," he says.

When asked to perform one of his original works, Rodney happily obliges. The piece is called "Growing Up," and it's an autobiographical narrative

about his challenging past and his hopes for a better future.

Rodney has been in foster care for his entire life and wants very much to be part of a loving family that will help him achieve his ambitious goals.

In addition, an adoptive family will need to provide structure, positive reinforcement and an opportunity to have contact with his two brothers.

For more information on Rodney, call 1-800-99-ADOPT.

## DID YOU KNOW?

HAVE SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO "CHAT" ABOUT?

LOG ONTO ONE OF OUR WEEKLY ON-LINE CHATS

### Live Chat Room Schedule:

General :

Sat. 11 am-12 pm

Tues. 7 pm -8 pm

Spanish:

1st Sat. of the month

10 am -11am

Search and Reunion:

2nd and 4th Sat. of the month 12pm-1pm

## A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS TO AIR DECEMBER 23RD, 8PM ON CBS

Stay Tuned for the next "A Home for the Holidays" sponsored by Wendy's International and The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.

This special 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary broadcast will be aired on Tuesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 8pm on CBS. Following the success of the past nine annual shows, this year's special continues to tell touching stories about foster care adoption to raise awareness of this important social issue.

This broadcast is presented in association with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and Children's Action Network. The goal of the Dave Thomas Foundation is to increase the awareness of the 129,000 children in the United States foster care system that are currently free for adoption.

The inspirational stories of adoptive families are enhanced by the performances of Faith Hill, Melissa Etheridge and Kristin Chenoweth.

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 the Warm Line at 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465) or send an e-mail to the Warmline at [Warmline@njarch.org](mailto:Warmline@njarch.org).

For more information about this broadcast or related information check out:

[www.davethomasfoundation.org/Our-Work/A-Home-for-the-Holidays](http://www.davethomasfoundation.org/Our-Work/A-Home-for-the-Holidays).



"HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS" 10th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

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# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

76 SOUTH ORANGE AVENUE  
SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079

VISIT US AT [WWW.NJARCH.ORG](http://WWW.NJARCH.ORG)

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EDITOR:  
DANA WOODS FRIED  
973.763.2041

WARMLINE  
877.4.ARCHNJ  
OR  
877.427.2465

FAX  
973.378.9575

EMAIL  
[WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG)  
[LALINEACALUROSA@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:LALINEACALUROSA@NJARCH.ORG)  
[WWW.NJARCH.ORG](http://WWW.NJARCH.ORG)



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



*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.

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## NJ-ARCH CELEBRATES FIFTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

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The NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House, a program of Children's Aid and Family Services officially opened for business in November 2003. It was then that our first *Under the ARCH* newsletter was published. We have come a long way since then and many of you have made use of our services.

Since the program was launched, over 4,453 have phoned the Warm Line, and 1,009 people have e-mailed us questions about adoption.

Our lending library continues to grow with over 1,200

books, 1,000 articles and over 100 videos.



During the last five years, we have had over 334,197 hits to our home page website, offered over 840 live on-line chat rooms, (averaging three per week), presented over 40 training workshops, and manned

over 200 outreach tables at state wide conferences or events.

We have also trained and helped launch numerous support groups throughout the state.

Our thanks goes to the exceptional NJ ARCH team, who works each day to make our customer's adoption journey just a little bit easier.

Thank you for making NJ ARCH your *one stop resource for those touched by adoption.*