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

*Answering the Call*



National Adoption Month  
**NOVEMBER**  
2009



**You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent.**

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, ***You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent***, includes a more focused effort that reaches out to the African American community and builds on the Ad Council's new public service announcements (PSA) campaign of the Children's Bureau, the Adoption Exchange Association, and **AdoptUsKids**.

Each year in November, the President of the United States issues a proclamation to announce National Adoption Awareness Month. Many state governors also issue proclamations to raise awareness of the need for adoptive families and citizens to become involved in the lives of waiting children and youth.

November is a wonderful time

to introduce adoption into your schools by reading and/or donating an adoption-related book, meeting with your school social worker or counselor and consider donating *Adoption and the Schools* by Ng and Wood. This book gives wonderful ideas on how to deal with some of the difficult assignments adopted children tend to face in the classroom, such as family tree assignments, first baby pictures and the like.

For ideas on how to celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month, check out the calendar found on [www.adoption.com/national-adoption-awareness-month/](http://www.adoption.com/national-adoption-awareness-month/):

Here are a few suggestions:

- Find an adult adoptee, a coach, a teacher or a babysitter who can serve as a mentor for your child. He/she could be a great role-model for your child or children.
- Create a scrapbook with your child and talk about significant events as you record them

together.

- Spend some time celebrating your child's heritage by looking up recipes from his or her culture. For a list of ideas, log onto

[www.adoptivefamilies.com/heritage](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/heritage).

- Organize a holiday toy drive for children in foster care and/or pass along an adoption-related article to another adoptive parent or friend.
- Go out to dinner at a restaurant that specializes in the cuisine of your child's birth country.

- Rent a movie with an adoption theme and watch it as a family.

- Volunteer with mentor teens close to "aging out" of foster care.

- On Thanksgiving or other family dinners, remember your children's birth parents.

Enjoy the month. Let's celebrate, as well as educate, our community about adoption and foster care.

## SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Ted and Marsha Burke



Victoria Howard



Brenda Mirly

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

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), presented the *Angels in Adoption*™ program on September 30, 2009 by honoring 190 "Angels" in an awards ceremony and gala event in Washington, DC.

The *Angels in Adoption*™ program is CCAI's signature public awareness campaign. It provides an opportunity for members of the U.S. Congress to honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans in the United States and abroad.

"The Angels in Adoption program is unlike any other program in the Nation's capitol. Because of it, over 1400 'Angels' have come to Washington to share their adoption experience and left with a renewed excitement of all that adoption makes possible," said Kathleen Strottman, Executive Director of CCAI. "I learned one simple lesson from my time on the hill, knowledge is power. Angels in Adoption is meant to give Members of Congress the knowledge they need to use the power they have toward making the dream of a family a reality for every child."

*Please help us congratulate our New Jersey Angels in Adoption!*

### Ted and Marsha Burke Nominated by Senator Robert Menendez

The Burkes are loving adoptive parents of a son along with their three birth children. With the adoption of their son, they began their commitment to finding adoptive families for other waiting children. After creating a wonderful relationship with their son's birth-mother, she asked the Burkes to find a family to raise her daughter. As a result, they recruited one of their extended family members to adopt the sister. In addition, the Burkes opened their hearts and dedicated countless hours to help recruit adoptive families, particularly for the older children still waiting for homes in NJ. Mr. Burke has participated in recruitment efforts for Children's Aid and Family Services and has helped to brainstorm a multitude of ways to locate potential families. He also volunteers to produce videos of other children waiting for adoptive families. The videos are featured on Children's Aid and Family Services' website ([www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org)) for potential adoptive families to view. He also completed a video presentation of the Children's Aid and Family Services' annual "Meet and Greet" event held in 2008. These events allow children in foster care to meet and interact with poten-

tial foster parents in an informal, fun setting. The Burke's compassion and selfless dedication, both as adoptive parents and in the adoption community, make them truly angels in adoption.

### Victoria Howard Nominated by Representative Scott Garrett

Victoria Howard is a franchisee of 10 Wendy's restaurants in the tri-state area, a business highly recognizable for its commitment to adoption issues. She has been a strong proponent of Wendy's Wonderful Kids, a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and is constantly bringing adoption issues to the attention of other Wendy's franchise owners. She utilizes her stores and her staff to raise the profile of children seeking permanent families. She also gets directly involved by personally donating food, gifts and entertainment to the various events. In addition to her involvement with the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program, Ms. Howard is a strong supporter of Children's Aid and Family Services. The agency has had multiple in-store information booths and fundraisers in Ms. Howard's stores. She has also sponsored several "meet and greet" BBQ and picnic events which allow children in foster

## ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS:

care to meet and interact with potential adoptive parents in an informal, fun setting.

### Brenda Mirly

#### Nominated by Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen

Ms. Mirly manages the Summit, NJ office of Spence Chapin Services to Families and Children. In her role as a social worker, she reaches out to the community to raise awareness of the services for expectant parents provided by the agency. Ms. Mirly is insightful, intelligent, fair and open to new ideas, dedicated to assisting women in their decision-making at a crucial point in their lives. She is the quintessential advocate in her work with expectant parents, very creative in problem-solving and supportive of her clients. For years, Ms. Mirly was an active participant in the NJ Inter-agency Council, which meets regularly with representatives of both private and public agencies to discuss issues of concern. She is also involved with the NJ Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education (NJCARE). Ms. Mirly is a person who makes a marked difference in the lives she touches both personally and through her vocation.



### Alice Nadelman, Ph.D.

#### Nominated by Representative Albio Sires

For over 30 years, Dr. Nadelman has worked diligently across the state of NJ to aid children in crisis, help make adoptions successful for new families and assist struggling families. She has taken personal initiative to help the state offer post-adoption support to families, establish service protocols, and train public and private staff on counseling methods.

Dr. Nadelman has worked with Rutgers University to develop the first university-based training program designed to augment the clinical education of the mental health practitioners who support adoptive families. She has also created a Rutgers University program to train mental health professionals for expert witness testimony in court. Dr. Nadelman is highly recognized by the NJ Family Court and the Attorney General's office for her expertise in situations in which a child's permanency plan is challenging. She is one of the most requested evaluators in the Hudson, Union, Essex and Middlesex County Family Courts. Her dedication to adopted children is well recognized by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families who proudly nominate her as a 2009 Angel in Adoption.

### HONORABLE MENTION:

#### Cecilia Zalkind

On October 18<sup>th</sup>, the Star-Ledger featured an article in the New Jersey Section, entitled *A Life Spent Advocating Fiercely for Children*. This article spoke about Cecilia Zalkind, who has done much for the children in New Jersey. Here is an excerpt of this article:

..."Over the past 25 years with the Association for Children of New Jersey -- a period spanning the terms of seven governors - Zalkind has become the fiercest child advocate in New Jersey. Governors seek her counsel. Lawmakers solicit her input. This summer brought national recognition: *The Florette Angel Memorial Child Advocacy Award, from VOICES For America's Children*.

..."In addition to working to improve the child welfare system, Zalkind has played a role in creating the state's first health insurance program for children, and a preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds that she believes is the nation's best."

A hearty congratulations to Ms. Zalkind for all her accomplishments in child welfare in New Jersey. To read the whole article, log onto the NJ ARCH "What's New" section on [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org).

## SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Cecilia Zalkind, JD,  
Executive Director for the  
Association for Children of  
New Jersey (ACNJ)



Alice Nadelman, Ph.D.

## DO YOU KNOW?



**LISA M. DUFF, ED. S., LPC**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**  
**POST ADOPTION**  
**COUNSELING SERVICES**  
**(PACS)**

*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:

*Our son just turned 13 and is driving us crazy. He seems very angry at my husband, his sister and me all the time. I personally think that something is brewing in his head and think that he needs some counseling to help control his anger and behavior. We adopted him when he was 3 years old and think that some adoption and identity issues are now coming out. Can you give some recommendations of what to do and where to go to get some support for him and our whole family?*

The feelings of concern and frustration you express are common for parents of a teenager. Parents often worry about their teenage children, as adolescence is a time when children begin to move toward independence and are developing both physically and cognitively. Children may struggle in exploring and establishing their identity, values and personal direction, and in their struggle present a challenge to their families. Teenagers become aware of their growth and separation from their families, but at the same time are uncertain about their abilities as they try on increasing degrees of self-sufficiency. Tension and conflict with parents and families are common.

The changes and turmoil of adolescence are likely regardless of whether a child is being raised in a birth or adoptive family. For the child that is adopted, though, the tasks of adolescence may take on additional meaning. With cognitive growth, they may experience a change in understanding of and meaning around adoption.

Separation involves loss, and this may trigger unresolved grief, fears and feelings of rejection and abandonment for the adopted teen. In sorting out their perception of who they are, missing pieces of history and not knowing can present stumbling blocks. For a child adopted into a family of a different race or culture, identity formation and integration of multiple cultural pieces may prove complicated. Overall, the tasks of adolescence may bring to light the pain and loss of an adopted child's story.

It is positive that you recognize that your child may be struggling. Anger and conflict are common experiences with an adolescent, but it is particularly important to keep the lines of communication open and to send the message that you are open to talking about adoption

If your son seems unwilling to

let you help, or you feel he may be experiencing loyalty conflicts, the additional guidance of a therapist may be helpful. Post-adoption counseling therapists offer support to children and their families at all stages of development, but are keenly aware of and trained in the special challenges adolescence can present to adoptive families.

You can find a Post-Adoption Counseling Service (PACS) program in your county among the resources listed on the NJARCH website, [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org). If there is no post-adoption counseling program in your county, you can also find therapists in private practice who specialize in adoption concerns.

Best of luck on your family's journey through adolescence.

The following are samples of books and articles from our free lending library related to this topic:

***The Face in the Mirror: Teenagers and Adoption***  
 by Marion Crook

***Preparing for Adolescence***  
 by Dr. James Dobson

***Article: Going and Growing Through Grief and Loss***  
 by Dee Paddock

## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

### *Hello Readers and welcome to Natalie's Library Corner.*

Recently, I have been reading some teen fiction. Three books in particular have captured my attention because of the pictures on their covers.

**Dacey's Song**, by Cynthia Voigt, a Newbery Medal winner, tells the story of 12-year-old Dacey and her three younger siblings. The four Tillerman children finally move in with their grandmother, who lives on a rundown farm on the Maryland shore.

Dacey became the caretaker for her family when their mother left. After being the responsible big sister for so long, she finds it difficult, if not impossible, to let go. If she is no longer the pre-adolescent in charge, who is she?

As the story unfolds, Dacey finds herself with new friends, a growing relationship with her grandmother, and the sense of accomplishment which accompanies her refinishing the old boat she found in the barn.

Then, suddenly, the past comes back with brutal force, and Dacey learns how necessary and how painful letting go can be.

**The Ocean Within**, by V. M. Caldwell, a winner of the Milkweed Prize for Children's Literature, is the story of a foster child and her new family. Elizabeth is the newest member of the large and boisterous

Sheridan family. They try to make her feel at home, but she keeps her distance. Elizabeth, a pre-adolescent girl, knows from her past experiences in foster homes that one day she will be sent away.

The family is taking a vacation at their grandmother's beach house. Elizabeth has always dreamed of seeing the ocean, but all the members of the Sheridan family are just too much – too loud, too enthusiastic, too prone to hugging.

The attitude of indifference portrayed by Elizabeth is one that threatens to ruin the family's vacation. It is only a matter of time before a showdown between Elizabeth and the grandma she calls "Iron Woman" ensues.

**Anna Casey's Place in the World**, by Adrian Fogelin, tells how Anna sees the world, one neighborhood at a time.

All out of relatives, 12-year-old Anna Casey arrives at Miss Dupree's house wondering what it will be like to be a foster child. Her backpack holds her explorer's notebook, which is filled with carefully drawn maps of her earlier neighborhoods and her collection of rocks from all the places she has called home.

A young girl with a strong sense of survival, Anna is determined to become a part of a

real family. With the help of her new friend named Ebenezer or Eb, an unconventional biology teacher in combat boots, a homeless Vietnam vet, and a crew of kids from the neighborhood, she finds a feeling of belonging. Anna learns what it means to have a "place in the world."

All of the stories feature a young girl entering a new family where there is a grandmother or a woman of strength and capability in charge. The girls all have to make adjustments to fit into their new families.

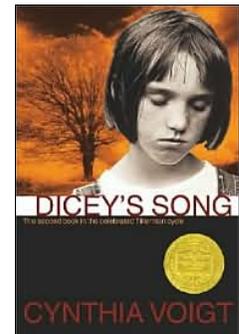
Change, loss and letting go are significant parts of the storyline in each book. The main character in all three of the books has suffered profound losses, the most important being the loss of family members. All three lost their homes, their personal belongings and the comfort that comes from having daily routines.

I enjoyed each book immensely and would highly recommend all of them. I felt a strong admiration for Dacey, Elizabeth and Anna for their perseverance in spite of the adversities each of them endured.

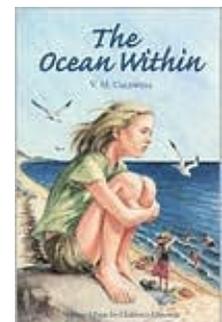
To borrow these or any other books, please log onto our website at [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) or call our warmline at 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465).

## DID YOU KNOW?

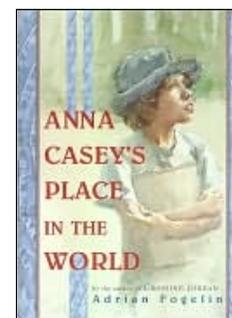
The NJ ARCH Lending Library has over 1200 books to borrow for free



**DACEY'S SONG**  
BY CYNTHIA VOIGT



**THE OCEAN WITHIN**  
BY V.M. CALDWELL



**ANNA CASEY'S PLACE  
IN THE WORLD**  
BY ADRIAN FOGELIN

## DID YOU KNOW?

THE STATE'S  
LARGEST  
NATIONAL  
ADOPTION DAY  
CELEBRATION WILL  
BE HELD IN  
NEWARK ON  
SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 21ST



### History of National Adoption Day

*National Adoption Month roots can be traced back more than 30 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.*

## NJ ARCH BEGINS IT'S SEVENTH YEAR

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 4,890 have phoned the Warm Line, and 1,137 people have e-mailed us questions about adoption.

Our lending library continues to grow with over 1,200 books,

1,200 articles and 100 videos.

During the last six years, we have had over 416,238 hits to our Home Page website, offered over 975 live on-line chat rooms (averaging three per week), presented over 60 training workshops and manned over 220 outreach tables at statewide conferences or events.

During this last year, the NJ ARCH team expanded its role to support kinship families by offering **KinConnect; A Resource for Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG) or Kinship Families.** Funded by

the Division of Youth and Family Services, KinConnect is a web-based information and resource center for those involved with kinship care. Check out the website at [www.kinconnect.org](http://www.kinconnect.org) or call 1-877-KLG-LINE to speak to a warm line worker about your concerns.

Our deepest thanks goes to the NJ ARCH and KinConnect team, that works each day to make the NJ's consumer's adoption and kinship journeys just a little bit easier.

Thank you for calling and visiting our website, and allowing us to help you.

## NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY: NOVEMBER 21st

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the 129,000 children in foster care in the U.S. waiting to find permanent, loving homes. This year will be the 10th anniversary of National Adoption Day and will be celebrated on Saturday, November 21, 2009.

Last year, on National Adoption Day, an unprecedented number of courts and committees across the nation came together to finalize 4,465 adoptions of children from foster care and to celebrate families who adopt. In New Jersey alone, 341 adoptions were final-

ized. Nationwide, 325 events were held in 2008. Since its inception nine years ago, more than 25,000 children have been adopted from foster care on National Adoption Day.\*

There are many national partners who support this effort, including Casey Family Services, Children's Action Network, CCAI, The Dave Thomas Foundation and more.

Numerous adoption events and celebrations will be taking place in NJ, including Cherry Hill, Elizabeth, Free-

hold, Mount Holly, New Brunswick, Newark, Trenton and Voorhees.

To view the 30-second Public Service Announcements about "Waiting for One Day..." log onto:

[www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/video/nad\\_video.asp](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/video/nad_video.asp);

For more information about National Adoption Day, log onto:

[www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/index.asp](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/index.asp)

\* 2008 Results and Highlights: : [www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/edata/NationalAdoption-Day\\_2008\\_DetailedResults.pdf](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org/2009/edata/NationalAdoption-Day_2008_DetailedResults.pdf)

# “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 (DTF) for Adoption.

This special 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary broadcast will be aired on Wednesday, December 23rd at 8pm on CBS. Following the success of the past 10 annual shows, this year’s special continues to tell touching stories about foster care adoption to raise awareness of this important issue.

This broadcast is presented in association with the DTF for Adoption and Children’s Action Network. The goal of the Dave Thomas Foundation is to in-

crease 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, Tim McGraw, Nia Vardolos and more.

NJ ARCH will again be the New Jersey statewide coordinator for this event, which means anyone who contacts the DTF will receive a follow-up call and information from NJ ARCH. 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 visit:

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



## DID YOU KNOW?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHAT ABOUT ADOPTION? WE WELCOME YOU TO JOIN ONE OF OUR LIVE CHATS!

### Live Chat Room

#### Schedule:

#### General :

Every Tuesday  
7:00—8:00 pm

2nd and 4th Sat. of the month: 11 am-noon

#### Teen/General Chat:

Each Thursday,  
4:00—5:00 pm

#### Search and Reunion:

2nd and 4th Saturday of the month  
12:00—1:00 pm

## DYFS FEATURED CHILD: DARRYL BORN OCTOBER 1994



for and grasp objects. Darryl enjoys all musical activities, often clapping and rocking to the beat. Darryl is non-verbal, and will let everyone know he is happy by smiling and laughing. He resides in a rehabilitation program due to global developmental delays. Darryl is diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and has seizures. He can sit and stand with supports. Darryl loves to move about and explore his environment. He uses a wheelchair for mobility and receives nutrition through a gastric tube. Darryl needs a

loving, supportive family willing to make a life-long commitment to his daily care. Darryl’s adoptive family will be provided training for his special needs. A financial subsidy and medical assistance are available to the adoptive family who can open their hearts and home to Darryl.

For more information on Darryl, please call (800) 99-ADOPT.

Affectionate, alert, and very interactive, Darryl loves hearing people’s voices, whether from a storybook or daily speech. Darryl is comforted by a gentle touch. He can reach



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# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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[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. makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither NJ-ARCH or Children's Aid and Family Services 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 Children's Aid and Family Services.*

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## CELEBRATIONS AND MORE

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### Adoption Celebration:

Children's Aid and Family Services is hosting a National Adoption Month Celebration at its Adoption and Family Services Center at Riggs House, 148 Prospect Street, Ridgewood on Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. Come help celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month and help Children's Aid and Family Services launch its new Adoption Services Program.

Included in the day will be activities for children and adults, talks, refreshments,

walk in the healing garden, music and giveaways. Special guest, Darryl McDaniels, "DMC" of RUN – DMC will share his adoption journey. For more information or to RSVP, contact call 201-455-7015 or visit [www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org).

### APC Conference:

The Adoptive Parents Committee will host a tri-state conference on Sunday, November 22nd, 2009 at St. Francis College, Brooklyn, NY. Their keynote speaker will be Holly van Gulden, author of *Real Parents, Real Children*. For more information about

the conference, log onto [www.adoptiveparents.org](http://www.adoptiveparents.org).

### The Heart Gallery:

Looking to adopt an older waiting child in New Jersey? Visit [www.heartgallerynj.org](http://www.heartgallerynj.org) to view these children or log onto the NJ ARCH "Waiting Children" page to possibly find a child of your dreams.

