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### NJ•ARCH Features:

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



## Get Involved!

*change a lifetime*

What do Keith Bulluck, All Pro-Line Linebacker for the Tennessee Titans, Chris Eyre, filmmaker and Regina Louise, motivational speaker and author have in common? They were all in foster care.

There are over 463,000 American children and youth currently in foster care; all deserving a safe, happy life. Young people in foster care especially need nurturing adults on their side because their own families are often in crisis and unable to care for them. Each May, we salute the compassionate people who make a difference by

serving as foster parents, relative caregivers, mentors, advocates, social workers, and volunteers.



*May Is National  
Foster Care Month....  
You Can Change A  
Lifetime*

Thanks to these unsung heroes, many formerly abused or neglected children and teens

will safely reunite with their parents, be cared for by relatives, or be adopted by loving families.

*Now is the time to get involved.* No matter how much time you have to give, you have the power to do something positive that will “*Change a Lifetime*” for a young person in foster care. To find out more information about becoming a NJ Foster parent, contact Foster and Adoptive Family Services at 800-222-0047. For more information about Foster Care Month, log onto: [www.fostercaremonth.org/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fostercaremonth.org/Pages/default.aspx).

## RESOURCES FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

Approximately 20,000-25,000 young people age out of the U.S. foster care system each year, many without family or economic support. Alone, these young people are confronting the harsh reality of the gap between the wages they earn and the cost of housing. Anywhere from 12%

to 36% of young people transitioning out of the system experience homelessness; as many as 3 in 10 of the nation's homeless adults have a history in foster care. In an effort to assist youth in their transition to adulthood, the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 established the John Chafee

Foster Care Independence Program (Chafee Program), which allows states more funding and flexibility to help young people transition to adulthood. For a list of resources, log onto: [www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/agingoutresources.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/agingoutresources.htm).

## Do You Know?



**OUR GUEST EXPERT,  
LESLIE BARDA, DIRECTOR,  
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS  
FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE  
FAMILY SERVICES (FAFS)  
1-800-222-0047 EXT. 323  
[LBARDA@FAFSONLINE.ORG](mailto:LBARDA@FAFSONLINE.ORG)**

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**ADOPTION WORKSHOPS  
IN RIDGEWOOD NJ:**

**MAY 19:**

THE ADOPTED CHILD'S  
JOURNEY:

QUESTIONS ALONG THE WAY

**JUNE 9TH**

NAVIGATING THE FEELING OF  
HAVING TWO MOMMIES OR  
TWO DADDIES\*

**OCTOBER 20TH**

ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE IN  
THE SCHOOLS

**NOVEMBER 10TH**

ON YOUR OWN BUT NOT  
ALONE: A WORKSHOP FOR  
SINGLE PARENTS\*

FOR INFORMATION AND TO  
REGISTER, CALL CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES AT  
201-445-7015 EXT. 212

\* FEE FOR WORKSHOP

## ASK OUR EXPERTS

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

*Question: We lived in New Jersey and adopted our two children from the NJ Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) several years ago. We now live in Delaware and continue to receive the NJ Adoption Subsidies for our two boys. Even though we no longer live in NJ, are our children eligible to receive college aid through any programs, particularly through Foster and Adoptive Family Services? Are they eligible to receive financial aid through the Federal Government as well? They both want to go to good schools and we need some information on how to make this work financially. Any help would be greatly appreciated.*

I actually get this question a lot, so thank you for bringing this topic up for discussion. I want to start by saying that this program does change from year to year, so it is very important to get current information when you are getting ready to send your children to college. The best time to do this is in the young person's senior year of high school. For now though, I will base my answer on the current regulations.

In our office, we administer two programs. The first is Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) Private Scholarships and Grants program. These are offered to anyone

who is currently in the care and custody of DYFS, as well as those who were and have been adopted or entered Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG). The number of awards and dollar amounts for this program fluctuates, but your sons would definitely be able to apply for these awards.

We also administer the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars Program on behalf of DYFS. Currently anyone who was adopted after the age of 12 and receives a subsidy is eligible. Moving out of state would not impact eligibility, since the approval is based on the state where the case originated, which in your case is New Jersey. Once approved into the NJFC Scholars Program, a student would most likely be able to attend any school in the country that is accredited to receive federal financial aid. This is subject to review though. It may be true in the future that the program would require participants to attend New Jersey Public Schools, or eligibility guidelines may require the adoption to have occurred at an older age, so please make sure to contact a FAFS representative as the time gets closer. We can be reached at 1-800-222-0047 or on the web at [www.fafsonline.org](http://www.fafsonline.org).

Financial Aid is also a great help when applying for col-

lege. Young people can complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) beginning January 1 of their senior year in high school. The FAFSA allows its applicants to list up to 10 potential schools, so it can be completed even before the final choice of schools has been made. FAFSA policies allow a young person adopted after 13 years of age to complete their form as an Independent. The result is that those who have been adopted later in life are eligible for aid based strictly on their individual income. In many instances, the young person receives more aid than they would get if completing the FAFSA with a parent's income included. If filing as an independent you should expect to be asked to verify this information with the school.

Having a letter from the state or your court papers should satisfy the school's requirements. If you have more questions on this you can again, reach out to FAFS, or call a FAFSA representative at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

Thank you so much for this question and I hope you found the response to be helpful.

## HAITI: ONE YEAR LATER

On January 12, 2010, the lives of people in Haiti were forever changed when a devastating earthquake claimed the lives of 230,000 people and, according to UNICEF, directly impacted more than 750,000 children.

Among those affected were children who either were previously without parental care or had been left without because of this tragic event.

According to the 2010 Annual Report on Inter-country Adoptions, a total of 133 adoptions were finalized in the United States from Haiti. An additional 1,090 Haitian children were also admitted as part of the Special Humanitarian Parole announced by

Secretary Napolitano, US Department of Homeland Security shortly after the earthquake.



As we move into year two, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) report *Renewed Promise: The Welfare of Children in Haiti* highlights lessons learned from the emergency relief and recovery efforts that have taken place this past year, and focuses federal policymakers on the needs that continue to

exist related to orphaned and vulnerable children in Haiti. To read the full report of lessons learned and goals from the various organizations, log onto our NJ ARCH "What's New" section, under the above title or log onto: [www.ccaainstitute.org/images/stories/renewed\\_promise\\_the\\_welfare\\_of\\_children\\_in\\_haiti\\_jan\\_12\\_1.pdf](http://www.ccaainstitute.org/images/stories/renewed_promise_the_welfare_of_children_in_haiti_jan_12_1.pdf)

*Side note:* The number of international adoptions have been the lowest in several years, totaling 11,059 children adopted from overseas into the United States. The top five countries include: China, Ethiopia, Russia, South Korea and India.

## DO YOU KNOW?

THAT NJ RESIDENTS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BY CHECKING LINE 59 ON YOUR TAX RETURN?



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO DONATE ONLINE ANYTIME OF THE YEAR, LOG ONTO [HTTP://WWW.NJ.GOV/DCF/PREVENTION/CHILDHOOD/CHILD\\_TRUST\\_FUND.HTML](http://www.nj.gov/dcf/prevention/childhood/child_trust_fund.html)

### Would you like to "chat" about Adoption?

Visit our Live Chat Rooms :

#### General:

Tuesday: 6 pm – 7 pm  
2nd and 4th Sat. 11 am-12 pm

#### Spanish:

1st Thursday of the month:  
4– 5 pm

#### Teen / Open Chat:

Thursdays : 4 pm– 5 pm

#### Search and Reunion

2nd and 4th Sat. : 12pm-1pm

## DYFS WAITING CHILD: EUGENE: 16 YEARS OLD



Eugene  
Born August 1995

Eugene is maturing into a respectful and polite teen. Eugene loves joking around and has the gift of being able to live in the moment and not take things too seriously. He loves the outdoors, whether playing ball or enjoying time with friends.

Eugene has a flair for music and has a good singing voice. He is very creative and articulate. Eugene loves sports cars

and aspires to own his own business selling and repairing vehicles.

Eugene is mostly an A and B student. He is aware of areas that challenge him, both at home and in school. Eugene longs to become part of a forever family with an active lifestyle and a structured home environment. For more information on Eugene, call 1-800-99 ADOPT.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**FOR 2010 YOU CAN  
RECEIVE UP TO \$13,170  
TAX CREDIT FOR  
ADOPTION-RELATED  
EXPENSES?**



**FOR DETAILS, LOG ONTO  
THE IRS WEBSITE AT  
[HTTP://WWW.IRS.GOV/  
TAXTOPICS/TC607.HTML](http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html)**

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**DID YOU ADOPT A  
SPECIAL-NEEDS CHILD?  
YOU MAY ALSO QUALIFY  
FOR A TAX CREDIT.  
TO DOWNLOAD THE  
“QUALIFIED ADOPTION  
EXPENSES” FORM  
(IRS FORM 8839),  
LOG ONTO  
[WWW.IRS.GOV/PUB/IRS  
-PDF/F8839.PDF](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8839.pdf)  
OR  
CALL 800-829-1040.**

## NACAC PARTNERS WITH H&R BLOCK ON ADOPTION TAX CREDIT

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) has partnered with H&R Block to help adoptive parents determine whether they are eligible to receive additional benefits. H&R Block is offering:

- Free “Second Look Review”; An H&R Block tax professional will conduct a thorough review of your

prior years, checking to see if any credits or deductions were missed. You’ll receive advice on what to do if you qualify for additional benefits.

- Special pricing on filing amended returns (price will vary by office).
- \$20 discount on 2010 tax return preparation.

To view and download the H&R coupon, please log onto:

<http://www.nacac.org>. The coupon is valid from February 14 – April 30th.

To download benefit details flyer, please log onto [www.nacac.org/taxcredit/taxcreditflyer.pdf](http://www.nacac.org/taxcredit/taxcreditflyer.pdf) or call our NJ ARCH warmline at 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465) and we would be happy to send or fax you a copy.

## BENEFITS OF READING ALOUD TO YOUR CHILD

Reading aloud can play a prominent role in your child's development, growth, and understanding of the surrounding world and the people in it. It not only benefits your child--emotionally, mentally, and developmentally--but it could benefit you and your family relationships as well. Reading aloud benefits children of all ages--from infants to toddlers to older children. Your child will start out hearing stories or words

from simple board books, and he or she will then graduate to more complex books.



The benefits for each family may be different and unique.

Some of the many benefits include language development, increased attention span, encouraging the love of reading and strengthening the bond between you and your child. For more information on the benefits of reading log onto: <http://e-magazine.adoption.com/2011-03/post-adoption#article> or call us. One of our warmline staff would be happy to send you the full article.

## SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

Is your child disabled? Do you have questions about your Supplemental Security Income (SSI)? Log onto <http://www.ssa.gov/> to view information about SSI. To

download brochures specifically about SSI, log onto [www.ssa.gov/pubs/11011.html](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/11011.html) or call 1-800-772-1213 to get your questions answered.





## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

*Hello, Readers. Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner.* The topic I have chosen to write about in this edition of *Under the Arch* is open adoption, a subject that is becoming more and more discussed in the adoption community. Although the State of New Jersey does not do open adoptions, families who adopt older children through DYFS are encouraged to have their adopted children maintain some contact with either their birth siblings and/or birth parent(s). The books identified in this article speak about open adoptions, however, this term may hold different meanings not necessarily the "legal" meaning for any particular state.

*Children of Open Adoption* by Kathleen Silber and Patricia Martinez Dornier, was published in 1990. According to the publisher, "For nearly a decade, open adoption has been rapidly gaining ground, replacing the sealed records and the secrecy and shame that were for so long attached to the subject. One persistent question has not been answered until now: What is the effect of open adoption on the children?...At last, two pioneers in the field present important evidence that begins to answer this complicated question. Examining scores of actual adoption experiences, they focus, in separate chapters, on infants, preschoolers, school-age children, and teenagers. They

show how love is multiplied and energies are used more productively when family ties are not a mystery."

Lois Ruskai Melina and Sharon Kaplan Roszia co-authored *The Open Adoption Experience: A Complete Guide for Adoptive and Birth Families—from Making the Decision through the Child's Growing Years* in 1993. These two women, both of them nationally recognized adoption experts, help demystify open adoption, describing with vivid examples all stages of the relationship—from the initial preparation for open adoption, to placement and the adjustments of the first year, through the challenges of adolescence. The book offers a detailed discussion of the many advantages of open adoption as well as the common problems, helping adoptive and birth parents to know what to expect as the relationship unfolds and how other families have coped with the unexpected.

*How to Open an Adoption: A Guide for Parents and Birthparents of Minors* by Patricia Martinez Dornier, was published in 1998. It is both a guidebook and a reference book. Ms. Dornier takes us through the process step by step, examining along the way the emotional issues for all involved. She gives readers the tools they need to make

opening their adoption the best experience it can be. It is also an invaluable tool for the adoption professional.

*Everything In Its Own Time: A Mother's Memoir About Adopting Five Children, and the Ones That Got Away* was written by Rebecca Patton Falco in 2010. It speaks to those who long for children but do not have them and reminds us that, "everything happens in its own time."

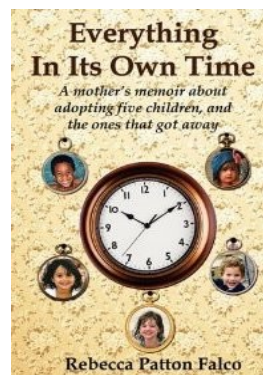
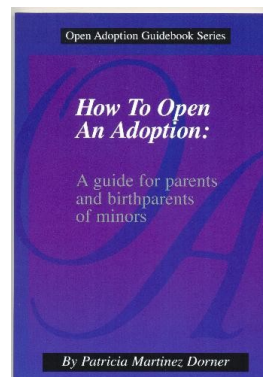
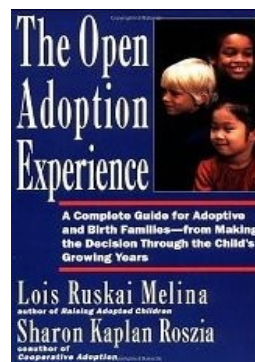
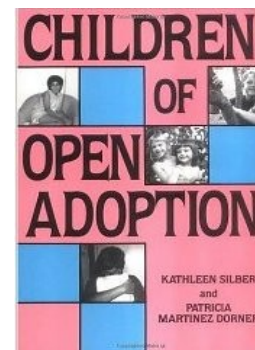
This book is one family's story of its quest to complete itself. It is part memoir, both raw and reflective, part guidebook for potential adoptive parents and birth parents, part tale of courage, love, divinity and direction. It is humorous, gut-wrenching and informative.

The following are books that discuss the birth mother's or birth family's point of view:

- *Affirming the Birth Mother's Journey: A Peer Counselor's Guide to Adoption Counseling* by Wendy Lowe and Jutta Wittmeier, 2005.
- *Adoption and Loss: The Hidden Grief, Revised Edition* by Evelyn Burns Robinson, 2005.
- *Birth Mother Trauma: A Counseling Guide for Birth Mothers* by Heather Carlini, 1997.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The NJ ARCH Lending Library has a variety of books to borrow



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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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CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

[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 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, Inc.

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## SUMMER CAMPS AND MORE

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Even though it is only March, now is the time to research and register for summer camp for your child. Looking for a heritage camp? A special needs camp? A YMCA camp? The NJ ARCH website can be of great assistance. Log onto [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) and select "Resources" on the left side of the Home page. Select the alpha listing and see all the various camps listed. Cannot find one on our list? Log onto: My Summer Camps at [www.mysummercamps.com](http://www.mysummercamps.com) and type in your town. A list of camps should appear. For a list of accredited sleep away summer camps, log onto the American Camping Association at [www.acacamps.org/](http://www.acacamps.org/).



*Happy camping!*

Join the Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) for a series of short sessions on: *Adolescent Brain Development, Child Emotional and Social Health* as well as *Effective Parenting in the Elementary Years*. The "On the Issue" series will be offered on April 13th, May 11th and June 7th. For more information, log onto [www.acnj.org](http://www.acnj.org).

Looking for a conference that focuses on adoption? The following are conferences that you may want to pencil in your calendar:

- Joint Council Medical Institute & Conference April 11-13, NYC.; [www.jcics.org/Conference.htm](http://www.jcics.org/Conference.htm).
- American Adoption Conference:: April 13-17, Orlando Florida; [www.americanadoptioncongress.org/](http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/).
- North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC): August 4-6, Denver, Colorado; [www.nacac.org/conference/conference.html](http://www.nacac.org/conference/conference.html).