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### NJ•ARCH Features:

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



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

## OLDER CHILD ADOPTIONS MAY RISE WITH DECLINE OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS



Since the implementation of *The Hague Convention*, the international agreement charged with “protecting children and their families against the risks of illegal, irregular, premature, or ill-prepared adoptions abroad”, the number of overseas adoptions has dramatically decreased.

For example, the U.S. Embassy anticipates a 90% decline in adoption case processing from Ethiopia, one of the most recent countries to become active in international adoptions. Prior to March, 2011, the Ministry allowed up to 50 intercountry adoptions per day; now the maximum is five (5) per day.

In 2004, the number of children being adopted by U.S. families peaked at just under 23,000; in 2010 the number totaled just over 11,000\*. This decrease is primarily due to the additional policy restrictions and

rules required by *The Hague*. Also, international adoptions can be costly, averaging \$15,000 to \$30,000 which may or may not include travel to the child’s home country.

The result may be a benefit to those children in the U.S. foster care system waiting for their forever families.

According to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, “Foster children have to wait an average of three years or more for a permanent adoptive home, moving around each year in different foster families. Children enter state custody and foster care for many reasons. Some are orphans, and most are abandoned, abused, or neglected.”\*\*

Adopting from the state foster care system is often low cost if not free. In 2009, there were 423,773 children in foster care. Of those, 114,556 were available for adoption, however only 57,466 were actually adopted.

So consider opening up your heart and your home to an older child. It may not be the easiest road, but it may prove the best path for your family.

For information about how to adopt through the NJ state system, log onto: [www.nj.gov/njfofosteradopt/adoption/path/](http://www.nj.gov/njfofosteradopt/adoption/path/).

To view waiting children in New Jersey, log onto the NJ ARCH at [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) and select “Waiting Children.”

For more information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, call 800-222-0047 or log onto [www.fafsonline.org](http://www.fafsonline.org).

\* [http://adoption.state.gov/about\\_us/statistics.php](http://adoption.state.gov/about_us/statistics.php)

\*\* [www.theepochtimes.com](http://www.theepochtimes.com) / [www.davethomasfoundation.org](http://www.davethomasfoundation.org)

## DID YOU KNOW?

**THE BELOW WEBSITES MAY BE HELPFUL TO YOUR ORGANIZATION OR FAMILY**



### SAMPLE OF INDIA'S



**ART WORK**

## NOTEWORTHY WEBSITES

The Child Welfare Information Gateway connects child welfare and related professionals to comprehensive information and resources to help protect children and strengthen families. Featured are the latest topics from prevention to permanency including child abuse, neglect, foster care and adoption. The Gateway is a program of the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration. To find out more, log onto [www.childwelfare.gov/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/).

Looking for a non-partisan organization that specializes in adoption research? Consider logging onto the

Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute:

[www.adoptioninstitute.org/](http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/). Led by Adam Pertman, the author of *Adoption Nation* and other works, you will see various studies on child welfare topics, trends and issues. Professionals, as well as all members of the adoption triad, will benefit from the research.

Founded in 2005, *Rise Magazine* features newsletters and information based on stories by and for parents affected by the child welfare system. Rise partners with parent advocacy organizations to use stories in child welfare reform.

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

For the last 35 years, Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) has shown a profound dedication to providing foster, adoptive, and kinship families with crucial services, as well as a voice in New Jersey's foster care and adoption system. Services include the Fostering Wishes for Children, Academic and Independent Living and Camp Scholarships, Holiday Gift Giving, as well as support and training for Resource (foster) families. For more information, visit their website at [www.fafsonline.org](http://www.fafsonline.org).

## DYFS WAITING CHILD: INDIA



**India**

**Born November 1997**

India is a warm and loving young lady. She enjoys getting manicures and pedicures and loves to socialize and be with groups of people. India participates in her school choir and loves to sing and is also a talented artist. When India smiles, the whole room

brightens! India is diagnosed with a developmental disability and uses a motorized wheelchair to drive around. India is able to feed herself but sometimes needs assistance. She especially enjoys chocolate pudding, pizza and Cheese Doodles! India also receives supplemental feedings via a feeding tube. India resides in a pediatric medical facility, which provides for her physical, developmental and educational needs. India is currently in the seventh grade. She is doing well in school and learning to communicate more with words and an elec-

tronic device. India especially likes talking on the phone and is in touch with her extended family members. It is important that her forever family help maintain these relationships. An ideal parent for India is someone with a medical background or an interest in learning how to provide for her medical care. India's pediatric medical facility is able to provide training on her medical needs. India is eligible for a subsidized adoption. Her forever family will need to support her through adulthood. For more information on India, call 1-800-99 ADOPT.

## ASK OUR EXPERT

*Question: I'm interested in adopting an older child from the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). Can you share with me an example of a successful adoption?*

Thank you for your question. Here is an example of our agency's experience with one older child adoption: A nine year-old girl who had been in foster care for years with multiple placements, was placed in a pre-adoptive home of a single woman. She had day visits, which progressed to weekend visits over the course of several months. Since this child was under the care of DYFS, her caseworker made a referral to the Pre- and Post- Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) shortly before she was formally placed in the home. The PACS clinician began meeting with the child and her pre-adoptive mom in the home on a weekly basis. The sessions focused on providing parent

support, addressing behavior concerns, working on a Life-book and preparing the child and her pre-adoptive mom for the adoption process.

Since this was a child who had developed some behavior problems, including difficulty in school, she was enrolled in an intensive outpatient program, in addition to the weekly counseling with the PACS clinician. She and her pre-adoptive mother also received weekly family counseling at the outpatient program. One of the reasons that this was a successful placement was that the pre-adoptive mom spent a lot of time talking to and reassuring the child of her commitment to her. Gradually, this child became more comfortable in this home and began calling her pre-adopt mother "mom." There were times before the adoption that this child had severe temper tantrums which resulted in her being evaluated

at the hospital. PACS counseling helped the pre-adoptive mom understand the root of this child's behavior with the emphasis on discussing reactions to and concerns regarding the child's behavior.

The adoption took place recently and the family has continued to receive post-adoption counseling for support to continue to process concerns. The adoptive mom is also aware of other resources that she can and has used, including FAFS (Foster and Adoptive Family Services), Mobile Response, NJARCH and our agency's PACS Respite Services program.

An older child adoption can be successful, but it is not an easy road. However, there are support services available for families who adopt an older child. Best of luck to you and your family.

## DO YOU KNOW?

*Kristin Dunne, LCSW  
Pre- and Post-  
Adoption  
Clinician at  
Children's Aid and  
Family Services*



*Have a question  
that needs  
expert advice?  
E-mail or  
contact the warmline.  
we will be happy  
to assist you!*

*Frequently asked  
questions and responses  
from the staff will be  
published in future  
newsletters.*



## ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE IN THE SCHOOLS

With the onset of school starting, many adoptive parents wonder if they should let their child's teacher know their child is adopted. Some parents believe it is best not make the child feel different; others feel the more information the teachers have, the better. Ultimately, as an adop-

tive parent, it is your decision what to share about your child. However studies have shown that sharing the simple fact that your child joined your family through adoption or foster care may prove to be helpful. Borrowing a book such as "Adoption and Foster Care in the Schools" by Wood and Ng or

other books and articles from our free NJ ARCH library could give your family and teachers wonderful alternatives to sensitive assignments such as first baby picture, family tree, genetic science projects and alike. Feel free to call or e-mail us. We will be happy to help. Happy fall!

## DID YOU KNOW?

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NJ ARCH OFFERS TRAINING  
WORKSHOPS FOR ADOPTION  
SUPPORT GROUPS:

ADOPTION: A LIFE-LONG LOSS

TELLING YOUR CHILD  
DIFFICULT HISTORY

TRANS-RACIAL  
ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE

BASICS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION  
IN NEW JERSEY

ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE IN  
THE SCHOOL

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE CARE  
SITUATIONS: WORKSHOP TO  
HELP FOSTER PARENTS DEAL  
WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS

FROM TERMINATION OF  
PARENTAL RIGHTS (TPR) TO  
ADOPTION: THE JOURNEY  
TO PERMANENCY

THE ADOPTED CHILD'S  
JOURNEY: QUESTIONS ALONG  
THE WAY (NEW WORKSHOP)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO  
SCHEDULE A WORKSHOP,  
PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL  
[DWFRIED@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:DWFRIED@NJARCH.ORG)  
Or call 973-763-2041 Ext 207

## TWO CHILD WELFARE ADVOCATES RETIRE FROM CURRENT POSITIONS

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**Ellen Kelly, MSW, LCSW**

When you mention Ellen Kelly's name in almost any child welfare agency in New Jersey, you realize how well respected she is as a tireless advocate for vulnerable children.

Ms. Kelly recently made the decision to retire from the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) after 37 years of service. Ms. Kelly's career began as a Social Worker in Essex and Sussex Counties. Ms. Kelly was promoted to Unit Supervisor, Casework Supervisor and then became the Manager of the Metropolitan Adoption Resource Center (Metro ARC) for Essex and Union Counties. She managed the Metro ARC for 10 years before moving on to various statewide support roles. Before retiring, she served as Director of Adoption Operations.

Ms. Kelly helped implement new initiatives such as the

Post-Adopt Program, Concurrent Planning and Child Specific Recruitment. She helped develop both the New Adoption Worker Training for DYFS staff and the Adoption Certificate Programs at Rutgers University. Ms. Kelly was also involved with the DYFS inception and support of NJ ARCH. Ms. Kelly's professionalism, passion for adoption and dedication to permanency for the children of New Jersey have made a lasting impact on Division of Children and Families staff, and more important, on the children and families of New Jersey. Please join us in thanking Ms. Kelly for being such a strong advocate for our most vulnerable children.



**Kathleen Russo, LCSW**

As an adoptive parent and licensed clinical social worker, Ms. Russo has been a tireless advocate for those touched by adoption, foster care and/or kinship care. She actively participated in the DYFS State-

wide Post Adoption Counseling (PACS) group which included various PACS providers throughout the state. She is a member of the Adoption Advisory Services Committee as well as APSAC (American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children).

For the last 12 years, Ms. Russo has held several supervisory and administrative positions at Children's Aid and Family Services. During the past 10 years she has served as the Program Director of the Pre- and Post-Adoption Counseling Services (PACS), NJ ARCH (Adoption Resource Clearing House), KinConnect (NJ Kinship Care Clearing House), Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG) Counseling programs as well as being the Administrator of Clinical Services.

After a 25-year career, Ms. Russo has decided to retire. However, she will continue to work with the agency as a clinical supervisor on a part-time basis.

Ms. Russo has been the "glue" that has held together these diverse programs throughout the years. Please join us by thanking Kathleen Russo for all her contributions in helping families in New Jersey.

## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

*Hello Readers. Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner.* The NJARCH Lending Library has some new books that focus on domestic abuse.

Talking to My Mum by Cathy Humphreys, Ravi K. Thiara, Agnes Skamballis and Audrey Mullender is an activity workbook for workers, mothers and children. It is geared to children ages 5-8 whose families have experienced domestic abuse, to help them in recovery. It contains illustrated activities with animal characters that encourages young readers to build their confidence working with their mothers and explore a range of memories and feelings, including changes in the family's living arrangements, talking about the father, or happy times with siblings and friends.

Talking about Domestic Abuse by Cathy Humphreys, Ravi K. Thiara, Agnes Skamballis and Audrey Mullender is a photo activity workbook to develop communication between mothers and young people. The target audience for this book is children age 9 to 13. The activities are designed around four main themes: Talking about personal experiences, including domestic violence; building self-esteem; naming feelings and facilitating mother-child communication. Activities are

accompanied by photographs that prompt discussion.

The above books are recommended for social workers and other professionals who work with families.

Talking about Domestic Violence by Nicola Edwards looks at different types of violence in the home and how children can be affected by it. The book encourages children to talk to someone they trust and reassures them that help is there. It describes how families have left violent homes and built new lives.

A Family That Fights by Sharon Chesler Bernstein tells Henry's story. Henry's parents fight often and his father sometimes hits his mother, causing Henry to feel frightened and ashamed. The book includes a list of things children can do in situations of family violence. A note from the author suggests that a caring adult should share this book with a child or a group of children.

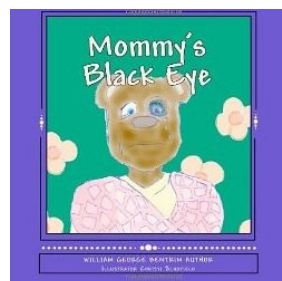
Something Is Wrong at My House: A Book about Parents' Fighting (Revised Edition) by Diane Davis is another new book in our library about the topic of domestic violence.

Hear My Roar: A Story of Family Violence by Gillian Watts is a story about The Bear Family told in comic-book style. It provides a gentle, non-threatening approach to talking with children about family violence.

Finally, Mommy's Black Eye by William George Bentrim tells about a brother and sister bear who come home from their friend's house to find their mother sitting in the living room with the lights out crying about her husband hitting her and giving her a black eye.

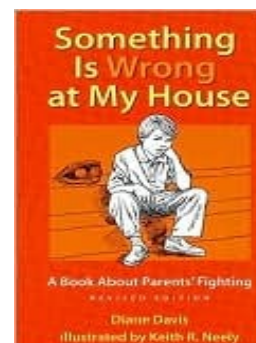
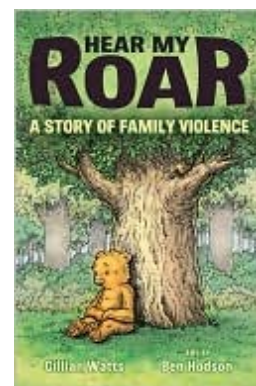
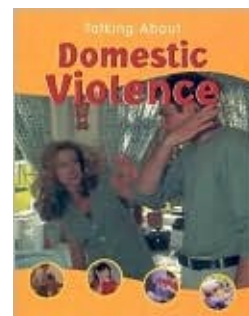
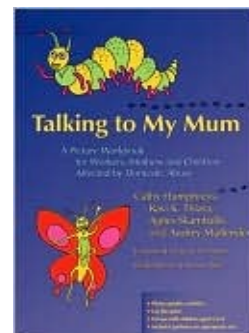
*The fact is family violence exists.* It is a strong subject for children's books, but it is both important and necessary that the subject be addressed and be brought out in the open. I believe that all of the authors mentioned in this review have approached the topic with caring and sensitivity.

Reading and reviewing the above books has certainly increased my awareness about ways in which domestic violence can be dealt with so families can heal.



## DID YOU KNOW?

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



# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079

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*The one-stop  
resource  
for those  
touched  
by adoption.*

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## CONFERENCES AND MORE

Saturday, October 1: Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA), 30<sup>th</sup> Annual "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference. Rutgers University, Piscataway, [www.cpfanj.org](http://www.cpfanj.org).

October 2011 – May 2012: Free Support Group for Adopted Pre-Teens: Sponsored by Children's Aid and Family Services; sessions located at Family and Adoption Service Center, Ridgewood NJ. Meets once per month beginning October; no additional registries after November 1<sup>st</sup>. For more information, contact Christie Sutera, LCSW at (201)445-7015 Ext. 222.

Thursday, October 20: Free workshop: "Adoption and Foster Care in the Schools." 7:30 – 9:30 pm; The Family and Adoption Services Center, 148 Prospect Street, Ridgewood, NJ. For more information and registration, contact Debbie Capalbo at 201-455-7015.

Sunday, November 30: Adoptive Parent Committee (APC): 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Adoption Conference: Brooklyn, NY. <http://adoptiveparents.org/APC/Welcome.html>

November is National Adoption Awareness Month: To help plan and for more information, log onto: [www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/).

VISIT OUR LIVE ON-LINE  
CHATS LOG ONTO  
[WWW.NJARCH.ORG](http://WWW.NJARCH.ORG)  
AND SELECT "CHAT ROOM"

GENERAL :  
TUESDAYS: 3:30—4:30 PM  
THURS. 6:00—7:00 PM  
2ND AND 4TH SATURDAY  
11-NOON  
SPANISH:  
1ST THURS. OF THE MONTH  
4– 5 PM  
SEARCH AND REUNION:  
2ND AND 4TH SAT. OF THE  
MONTH; 12PM-1PM

