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NJ•ARCH Features:

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



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

www.cafsnj.org



National Adoption Month 2011

November is National Adoption Month, a time to raise awareness about the adoption of children and youth from foster care. This year's initiative focuses on building capacity of adoption professionals to recruit and retain parents for the 107,000 children and youth waiting for permanent families in the U.S. foster care system.

The 2011 theme for National Adoption Month is *Build Capacity to Make Lasting Change*. The National Adoption Month initiative supports the national adoption recruitment campaign and public service announcements produced in partnership with the Ad Council, AdoptUSKids, and the Children's Bureau. This year's campaign is targeted toward the recruitment of families for preteens (8-12 year olds).

The first major effort to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in foster care occurred in Massachusetts in 1976, when Governor Michael Dukakis announced an Adoption Week. The idea grew in popularity and spread nationwide. In 1984, President Reagan proclaimed the first National Adoption Week, and in 1995, under President Clinton, the week was expanded to the entire month of November.



Every November, a Presidential Proclamation launches activities and celebrations to help build awareness of adoption throughout the nation. Thousands of community organizations arrange and host programs,

events, and activities to share positive adoption stories, challenge the myths, and draw attention to the thousands of children in foster care who are waiting for permanent families.

So consider making a difference in a child's life; consider adopting a waiting child.

For more information on National Adoption Awareness month, log onto: www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/index.cfm.

To view an Awareness poster in English log onto: www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/nam_poster_english.pdf

To view an Awareness poster in Spanish log onto: www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/nam_poster_spanish.pdf

SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Stephanie Berry



Robert Berry



ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS

NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) *Angels in Adoption™* Program provides Members of Congress the opportunity to honor an individual, couple, or organization from their district that has made an extraordinary contribution on behalf of children in need of homes. These heroes hail from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and represent the wide spectrum of individuals involved in the adoption and foster care process. Since the program's inception in 1999, over 1,700 Angels have received this honor. CCAI also honors a select number of National *Angels in Adoption™*. On October 3-5th, these unsung heroes traveled to Washington DC to participate in three days of events designed to train them in using their personal experience to affect change on behalf of children in need of homes and to celebrate their hard work and dedication to the issue. Many met their NJ Congressman as well. Please meet our angels:

Stephanie and Robert Berry Representative Christopher H. Smith

Stephanie and Robert Berry have fostered 14 children and adopted their first child last year. They are in the process of

adopting two more children, a brother and sister who have been in their care as foster children. Friends, neighbors, and community leaders report that they are loving parents who go above and beyond to make sure that the children they are caring for have everything they need, both physically and emotionally. They also report that the love that the Berrys have for the numerous children they have cared for is reflected in the improvements that these children demonstrate while in their care. The Berrys have fostered many children with medical and emotional needs, and have advocated for a loving environment and access to all the resources necessary to help these children grow and develop. They are also sure to involve the children in many extracurricular activities and educational programs to allow them to make friends and take part in the kinds of fun that all children should have access to, but are sadly sometimes denied. Stephanie has spoken at Division of Youth and Family Services events in New Jersey and has also served as a foster parent co-trainer to help train and license new foster parents. The Berrys are passionate about helping children who come from broken places find happiness and love in their home.

Harvest of Hope Representative Frank Pallone

The CEO and founder of Community Development Corp.'s Harvest of Hope, Reverend Soaries, continues to improve the lives of many in the community. Founded in 1996 and utilizing a network of churches throughout the state, Harvest of Hope works to find safe, loving homes for children in need. The organization has built a successful program to recruit and train foster and adoptive parents. Since 1986, 285 families have been approved as foster parents, allowing for 490 children to be placed in their homes. In addition, 134 families have adopted nearly 200 children. Also, approximately 60 children have been reunified with their biological parents or other relatives. The organization works with the families on an ongoing basis to help ensure successful placement, hosting regular support groups and celebrations. Harvest of Hope provides tremendously needed community service to the children of New Jersey in need of placement. Through its unique work with partnering churches, a successful program has developed and improved the lives of the children it serves.

ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS

Christine Letizia

Senator Robert Menendez

Christine is the co-founder of A Loving Choice Adoption Associates, where she currently serves as director of social work. As the proud mother of two sons and an adopted daughter, she has the unique ability of speaking from experience and understanding both the needs of birth mothers and potential adoptive parents. Christine is the first person on the scene when a birth mother wants to make an adoption plan for her baby, and she will open her home to these babies and care for the newborn if an adoptive family cannot be found right away. She has the uncanny ability to relate to all parties involved and goes beyond her duties at the agency, speaking publicly at churches, universities and adoption forums about the adoption process. Christine has made such an incredible impact on the lives of both the birth mothers and adoptive parents she has worked with that her hard work and dedication cannot go unnoticed. Her sincere compassion and dedication, both as an adoptive parent and in the adoption field, are what make Christine an exemplary Angel in Adoption™.

Kathleen Strakosch Walz

Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen

Kathleen Strakosch Walz displays a passion for adoption and adoption-related issues. While most adoptive parents are deeply interested in the issues and concerns relating to the process of adopting their own child, Kathleen has developed an understanding of adoption across countless families and adoption professionals. She read books, attended conferences and joined parent support organizations even before she and her husband initiated their international adoption. She has helped mentor numerous families working with the agency through which she completed her own adoption: answering questions, providing support and acting as a resource to families as they navigated their own adoption journeys. Kathleen has taken on leadership roles in Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA), a non-profit volunteer organization in New Jersey dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a family, serving as the president, adoption book group leader and, most significantly, as the coordinator of its annual "Let's Talk Adoption"

Conference, which is co-sponsored by Rutgers University.

Although Kathleen has a demanding full-time job as New Jersey's Natural Heritage Program Ecologist, she has been a tireless volunteer and is a hard-working advocate for adopted children and their families.

For more information on the Angels in Adoption program, please log onto:

www.angelsinadoption.org.

Do you know someone who may be a great candidate to nominate as an Angel in 2012? Log onto the Angels in Adoption website to find out all the details.

Congratulations again to all the Angels in NJ and around the United States! We wish you all continued success!



SOME OF NJ'S ANGELS:



Christine Letizia



Kathleen Strakosch Walz

DID YOU KNOW?



**CHECK OUT A SONG
DEDICATED TO
NATIONAL ADOPTION
DAY ENTITLED
"RISE AND SHINE"
BY JIM BARFIELD
TO LISTEN, LOG ONTO
[www.NATIONAL
ADOPTIONDAY.ORG](http://www.NATIONALADOPTIONDAY.ORG)**

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.

**NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY
NOVEMBER 19, 2011**

National Adoption Day is a national day of celebration of adoptive families and an opportunity for courts to open their doors and finalize the adoptions of children from foster care. Since 2000, more than 35,000 children have had their adoptions finalized on National Adoption Day.

On November 19, 2011, adoption advocates, policy-makers, judges and volunteers will come together and celebrate adoption in communities large and small across the nation.

In New Jersey, several of the county court houses will

finalize state and private adoptions and celebrate in becoming "forever families." The Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) works closely with the Court Advocates and attorneys to finalize these adoptions on this special day.

In New Jersey the towns celebrating include: Belvedere, Camden, Cherry Hill, Elizabeth, Freehold, Hackensack, Morristown, Mount Holly, New Brunswick, Newton, Voorhees and Newark being the largest.

While the number of children in foster care has significantly decreased over the past number of years, the rate of adoptions has remained high.

In New Jersey, on average children wait in foster care for just under three years before securing a permanent home. However, for siblings, children with special needs and adolescents, the wait can be longer.*

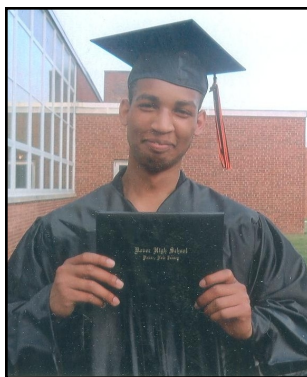
So consider opening up your heart and home to a waiting child.

For more information on National Adoption Day, go to www.nationaladoptionday.org.

You can also check out National Adoption Day on Face book.

*http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/news/photos/DCFENewsletter_Oct2011.pdf.

DYFS FEATURED CHILD: KHALIL



**Khalil
Born January 1993**

Khalil is an indoor type of guy! He can be found listening to a new found love of music; he favors R&B, but enjoys Rap, too. He is a connoisseur of movies, both old and new, and of course can be found playing video games like most young men his age. He also is extremely helpful around the house; he will happily assist with cooking, cleaning and general maintenance. Khalil's self confidence has begun to

bloom, enabling him to begin to share his wit which is both perceptive and funny. Khalil is very focused on his future. He is interested in pursuing further education upon completion of high school to become an x-ray technician. He also hopes that a family will be part of his future, realizing that he can be his best with their love and support. For more information on Khalil, call 1-800-99 ADOPT.

NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Hello Readers. Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner. The NJARCH Lending Library has some new books for professionals. I would like to tell you a little about them.

How to Screen Adoptive and Foster Parents: A Workbook for Professionals and Students by James L. Dickerson, Mardi Allen and Daniel Pollack serves as a comprehensive guide for social workers to draw on when making decisions for foster care/adoption placements. What should you know before beginning a screening interview? What are the warning signs that an applicant may be a child predator? What are the steps to conducting a thorough home study? When is psychological consultation warranted? Based on case histories, research data, and interpretive analysis, this workbook teaches specific interview skills and analytical decision-making techniques necessary to competently evaluate each unique applicant family.

Understanding Adoption: Clinical Work with Adults, Children, and Parents has been edited by Kathleen Hushion, Susan B. Sherman and Diana Siskind. According to this book, adoption is a transformational process bringing parenthood to those who long for but cannot bear children and giving stranded children a home, a family, and a place in the world. Every adoption is preceded and followed by

its story and when these stories are told in the offices of psychotherapists we begin to understand the impact of adoption in all its complexity. We learn from parents how their quest to have and raise a child has played out in real life, and what shadows might have fallen between the dream and the reality. We learn from the children the ways that being adopted has shaped their development and their sense of identity. We discover what went wrong along the way and how we can help. Clinical work with parents and children, as well as with adults who were adopted, is the focus of this book.

Playful Approaches to Serious Problems: Narrative Therapy with Children and Their Families was authored by Jennifer Freeman, David Epston and Dean Lobovits. The narrative therapy approach involves the whole family and especially children by respecting their unique language, problem-solving resources, and views of the world. When the grown-up talk becomes serious and focused on analyzing problems, it is likely to turn children off. The authors of this book ask, "What might it mean for us as helpers of families and children to be light on our toes when confronting weighty problems? Is it possible to play and to maintain a sense of humor while dealing effectively with

distressing, frightening, or perilous situations? How can we invite children and family members to bring forth their imaginative and creative resources while coming to grips with the sociocultural complexity of problems?" These questions determine the nature of the inquiry into playful approaches to serious problems.

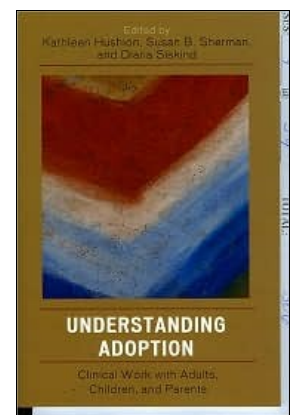
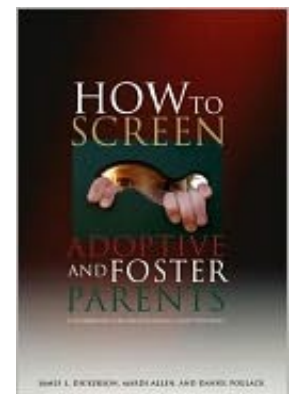
Assessment and Treatment Activities for Children, Adolescents, and Families: Practitioners Share Their Most Effective Techniques

was edited by Liana Lowenstein, MSW. As stated by Athena A. Drewes, PsyD, MA, RPT-S, "A delightful addition to the world of play therapy techniques! This well-organized volume, with over 50 contributors, offers a wide variety of activities in a quick and easy format for busy clinicians. It will surely become a well-used book for practitioners seeking creative and therapeutically-stimulating interventions for their child and teen clients. Highly recommended!"

The review of the above books was meant to capture the attention of professionals including therapists, social workers, teachers and parents. I hope that aim was accomplished. This review provided only a small sampling of professional materials that are available from the NJARCH Lending Library.

DID YOU KNOW?

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



DID YOU KNOW?

NJ ARCH OFFERS SEVERAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON ADOPTION? LOG ONTO WWW.NJARCH.ORG AND SELECT "PARENT TRAINING" TO VIEW THE LIST OF FREE WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE



INTERESTED IN STARTING YOUR OWN ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUP IN YOUR AREA? CONTACT NJ ARCH AND WE WILL TRAIN YOU TO HELP LAUNCH YOUR OWN GROUP



New Jersey is enrolling NJ Family Care/ Medicaid clients into Managed Care. This means that those receiving medical services through NJ Family Care or Medicaid will need to choose a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) to receive health care benefits. This enrollment period began October 1, 2011. There are four plans offered throughout the State: Amerigroup New Jersey, Healthfirst

New Jersey, Horizon NJ Health, and United Healthcare. Already have a primary care provider? Call your doctor to see which HMO they are currently participating in.

To view each plan and see step by step how to enroll, log onto www.njfamilycare.org/pages/plan_njkc.html or call 1-800-701-0710; have your doctor's contact

information and your documents handy when you call.

Once you enroll in an HMO, changes are allowed in 2011 up until the end of this year. You can also change your HMO during normal open enrollment periods which will be October 1st to November 15th 2012, with the effective date of the enrollment in the new HMO on January 1st 2013.

NJ ADOPTEES' ACCESS BILL UPDATE

By Pam Hasegawa

On June 23, 2011, Governor Christie conditionally vetoed S799, the *Adoptees' Birthright Bill*, which passed the NJ Senate in 2010 and the NJ Assembly on May 9, 2011. The conditional veto would require an adult adoptee requesting a copy of his or her original birth certificate (O.B.C.) to ask (and pay for) an intermediary to try to locate the named birth parent or parents to request their written permission for release of the adopted person's O.B.C. to the adoptee or other authorized requester. If the intermediary cannot locate the birth parent or parents after a one-year search, the adoptee will receive the

O.B.C. If this bill is passed in New Jersey with the agreed updates, then going forward, a relinquishing parent may give a signed statement of intention regarding the release of information to the authorized requester to the adoption facilitator (a licensed adoption agency or an attorney) at or after surrender; that will be binding on the adopted person as long as the birth parent is living.

The parent may allow complete information sharing (includes the O.B.C. and un-redacted family medical history in the record), intermediary information sharing (through the confidential intermediary who contacted the

parent or through an intermediary designated by the birth parent), or medical information sharing only.

If the legislature should pass the conditional veto, it would be returned to the governor's desk for enactment.

For more information, contact the NJ Coalition For Adoption Reform and Education at www.nj-care.org.



ASK OUR EXPERT

Question: *We adopted a child several years ago and now that she is getting into the teen years, I feel that we need some extra help with some behaviors. I am really not sure if its "teen" stuff or adoption-related issues that are now coming to the surface. What services are available for families that are struggling?*

Answer: Thank you for your question. We get this type of question quite often on our NJ ARCH warmline. Our NJ ARCH website, www.njarch.org, has information and listings with many resources that may be helpful to your child(ren) and family. One such service that we strongly recommend, is Post Adoption Counseling (PACS). Funded by the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), each county in the state has a not-for-profit agency charged

with offering free post adoption counseling to families who have finalized their adoption and live in New Jersey. It does not matter whether the child was adopted from DYFS, internationally, privately or from another state. As long as there is availability in the program, the adoption is finalized and the child(ren) are under the age of 18, the family may receive free counseling.

To find out a PACS provider in your area, log onto www.njarch.org and select "Resources" and look for the "Post Adoption Counseling" listings. You may also call our warmline at 877-4ARCHNJ to speak to a warmline representative to find the PACS provider in your area.

Other resources we recommend are adoption support groups, adoption conferences and other events

related to adoption and/or foster care. We believe that if parents connect with other adoptive parents and kids connect with other adopted kids, it may help "normalize" their experience, therefore reducing the feeling of being alone or isolated.

If your child is having difficulties in school that may be academically based, we also recommend a wonderful booklet written by the *Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ)* entitled "A Basic Guide to Special Education." This booklet offers great tips on how to navigate through the educational system and to ask for appropriate services if needed. To download this booklet, log onto www.njarch.org and select "Handbooks" on the left hand side of the Home page.

Remember, help is just a phone call or a click away.

GIVING THANKS

The November 2011 Edition of *New Jersey Family Magazine* featured an article on *30 Days of Gratitude*. With the 10th year anniversary of 9-11, these unsettled economic times as well as the eventful weather as of late, this editor thought of how important it is to say "thanks" or as I tell my own

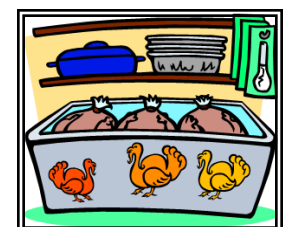
children, "What are your 'gratefuls' today?" As the article describes, "gratitude is an attitude...when we practice gratitude, we react to unexpected events with delight instead of disappointment." "Research shows that people who practice gratitude feel a greater joy and

connectedness, cope better with stress and experience less illness and depression." So have your kids make a list of their "gratefuls" and talk about them around the dinner table; not just on Thanksgiving but as much as possible. You may just see some positive results from them giving thanks.

DO YOU KNOW?



DANA WOODS FRIED
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
NJ ARCH
AND
KINKCONNECT
(KINSHIP CARE
CLEARING HOUSE)
BOTH PROGRAMS OF
CHILDREN'S AID AND
FAMILY SERVICES



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www.cafsnj.org



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

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A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

For the 11th year in a row, the Dave Thomas Foundation, will be hosting the Annual "A Home for the Holidays." This year, the broadcast will take place on Wednesday, December 21st at 8 pm. Each year, the Foundation works with CBS to offer a heart-warming hour-long television show spotlighting waiting older children. Dave Thomas, the Founder of Wendy's, as an adopted person himself, began the Foundation. Through the Foundation thousands of families have obtained information on adoption, especially older

child adoptions. For the past eight years, NJ ARCH, a Program of Children's Aid and Family Services has been the



state-wide sponsor for this event. This means those from NJ who contact the toll-free number during or after the broadcast will be given their contact information so we may follow up to see what we can do to assist in their adoption journey.

For more information on "A Home for the Holidays" or the Dave Thomas Foundation, log onto:

www.davethomasfoundation.org



*The staff of NJ ARCH
wishes everyone a happy
and safe holiday season!*