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NJ•ARCH Features:

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



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

www.cafsnj.org

National Foster Care Month 2014

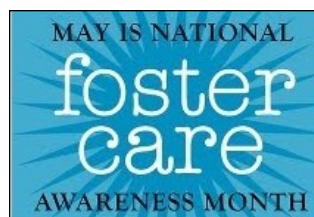
BUILDING BLOCKS TOWARD PERMANENT FAMILIES



Each May, National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity for people all across the nation to focus attention on the year-round needs of American children and youth in foster care. The campaign raises awareness about foster care and encourages more people to get involved in the lives of these children- -- whether as foster parents, volunteers, mentors, employers or in other ways. The campaign goals include:

1. Raise awareness about the magnitude of the issue and the urgent and sustaining

needs of children and older youth in foster care and their families.



2. Issue a national "Call To Action" that motivates and inspires many more Americans to help "change a lifetime" for a young person in foster care.

3. Develop a positive framework for maintaining visibility and interest in the foster care

issue to support the year-round efforts of the National Foster Care Month partner organizations and other child welfare groups.

National Foster Care Month also provides an opportunity for acknowledging the thousands of dedicated foster families and other caring individuals and organizations that already are supporting these young people. To learn more about National Foster Care Month, please log onto:

www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/

REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Some prospective parents, nonprofit adoption agencies and members of Congress are raising concerns about the sharp decline in foreign adoptions. According to the U.S. Department of State, Office of Children's Issues, State report released January 2014, foreign adoptions dropped by 62% to 8,668 in 2012 from a high of 22,991 in

2004. Of those 8668 children, 183 adoptions were finalized by New Jersey families. State Department officials attribute the decline over those years primarily to the internal policies of several countries, particularly China, Russia, and South Korea, which have sharply limited adoptions to the United States in recent years as they have worked to

encourage more in-country domestic adoptions. The number of international adoptions is expected to fall even further as a result of Russia's decision to ban all adoptions to the United States. To obtain this Annual Report log onto: http://adoption.state.gov/content/pdf/fy2013_annual_report.pdf or call our NJ ARCH Warm line.

Do You Know?

Did you adopt or foster through DCP&P?

Join Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) for "A Night with the NJFC Scholars Program."



This program will assist youth in completing their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars applications. Includes information about how financial aid works once youth are enrolled in higher education, the costs (in state vs. out of state / public vs. private) and the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF).

FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT FAFS
SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAMS
CONTACT TARA RIZZOLO
AT
1-800-222-0047 EXT. 323
OR
TRIZZOLO@FAFSONLINE.ORG

POST SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIPS

Is your high schooler applying to college or post-secondary school in the fall? Many parents want to know what kind of scholarship opportunities may be available. We have listed many of the most common scholarships below, but the best advice is to have you and your child speak to your child's guidance department about appropriate scholarships.

The first step in funding post-secondary education is completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). By completing the FAFSA, youth may be eligible to receive grants, loans and work study funds. For infor-

mation and/or to complete the FAFSA, log onto <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. The deadline is June 1 for the fall semester. If you adopted or fostered through DCP&P, Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) is offering free FAFSA training. (See side bar). For a list of these sessions, log onto their Calendar of Events at www.fafsonline.org/cgi-bin/ez-schedule/schedule.cgi?X367736.

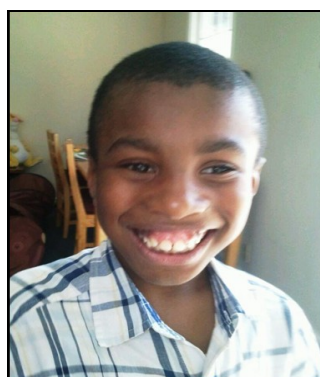
In addition, there are many Federal and New Jersey State Scholarships and Grants available. A list can be found on: www.hesaa.org/Pages/GrantsandScholarshipsDetails.aspx.

Other scholarship resources include:

- Guide to Financial Aid (FinAid) www.finaid.com
- Higher Education Student Authority www.hesaa.org
- Scholarships and More For African American Students www.blackstudents.com
- Foster Care to Success America's College Fund for Foster youth www.fc2success.org.

For a listing of other public and private scholarships, log onto: www.fafsonline.org/pdf/scholarship/post-secondary-education-funding-options.pdf or contact our NJ ARCH Warm line at 877-4ARCH (877-427-2465).

DCP&P WAITING CHILD



Eric: Born May, 2006

Eric is a curious and energetic boy. He enjoys running around in open space and playing on a trampoline. Eric loves singing games such as "Ring Around the Rosie." You can usually find Eric playing solo with his trucks, balls, or video games,

and occasionally with other children. He enjoys long car rides as it soothes and relaxes him. Eric is diagnosed with Autism and developmental delays. Eric has the ability to feed himself but he needs assistance with most hygiene needs including; bathing, brushing his teeth, and dressing. Eric is potty trained however needs prompting to meet with toileting success. Eric is non-verbal and communicates his needs by pointing to objects that he desires. He is easily frustrated by his inability to communicate resulting in throwing himself on the floor, crying, yelling, and occasionally

hitting others. Eric receives special education services including programming in a self-contained classroom and an one-on-one aide during the extended school year. When Eric is placed with an adoptive family he will need constant supervision, highly structured environment, and strong advocates ensuring all of his special needs are met. Eric will need a loving and energetic family that is willing to make a lifetime commitment to him. For more information about Eric, please call 800-99-ADOPT.

ADOPTEE'S BIRTHRIGHT BILL UPDATE

By Kimberly Paglino, NJ CARE

The New Jersey Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education (NJ CARE) and numerous supporters in the adoption community and beyond commend the New Jersey Legislature for passing the Birthright Bill, S873/A1259, in both the Assembly and the Senate on February 27, 2014.

This bill allows adult adoptees, 18 years and older, and certain specific others, to receive a copy of their original birth certificate upon request. Adoptive parents of minor children will also have the right to access a copy of their child's original birth certificate. The bill allows birth parents to express their preference regarding contact from the adopted person. If the birthparents refuse contact, they will be asked to provide updated medical history.

The Adoptee's Birthright Bill has a history of bi-partisan support in the New Jersey

Legislature. It was passed in the Senate in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011 and in the Assembly in 1991, 1994, and 2011.



Governor Christie had prior conditionally vetoed similar legislation that passed in both Houses in 2011. The Governor's conditional veto essentially replaced the 2010-11 Birthright Bill that was passed by the Senate and Assembly, with a measure which would have required adult adopted persons to pay a confidential intermediary simply to gain access to their birth certificate. Currently New Hamp-

shire, Maine, Oregon, Rhode Island and Alabama have passed similar legislation without negative consequences. Alaska and Kansas have never sealed the original birth certificates of adopted persons. Efforts to allow adult adoptees access to their original birth certificate are gaining speed throughout the nation, with strides being made in New York, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, among other states.

The passage of the Adoptee's Birthright Bill would enhance the lives and well being of countless adoptees and those who are connected to them. NJ CARE and our supporters have hope that the Governor will sign this bill into law. If you wish to participate in NJ CARE's efforts, or for information about how to write the Governor in support of S873, please visit www.nj-care.org or contact

njcare.staff@gmail.com.

IT'S TIME TO PLAN FOR SUMMER

This is the time of year to start planning your child's summer. If you are considering summer camp for the first time or just think its time for your child to have a new experience, consider checking out the Summer Camp listing on our or NJ ARCH website. We have recently updated our list

of heritage, adoption and other specialty camps in the New Jersey area. Log onto www.njarch.org and select "Resources" on the left side. Select the Alpha listing and choose "Camps." Don't see a camp that is a match for your child? Check out "My Summer Camps" at:

www.mysummercamps.com. Type in your zip code and the distance you are willing to travel from your home; a list of camps should appear. Another website which lists many NJ camps is from the NJ Kids Guide at www.kidsguidenj.com/camps/camps.html#top. *Happy Camping!*

DO YOU KNOW?

NJ ARCH OFFERS FREE
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

BASED ON THE 20 THINGS YOUR
ADOPTED CHILD WISH THEIR
ADOPTED PARENTS KNEW

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO
SCHEDULE A WORKSHOP,
PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL
DWFRIED@NJARCH.ORG

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you finalize an adoption in 2013 or before?

You may qualify for the Adoption Tax Credit!

To download the appropriate "Qualified Adoption Expenses" Form (IRS Form 8839) for the year that your child's adoption was finalized, log onto:

www.nacac.org/taxcredit/forms.html
or contact taxcredit@nacac.org



Looking for some on-line courses on adoption, parenting and other related topics? Want to learn more about the international Hague requirements? Consider taking an on-line class at *Adoption Learning Partners (ALP)*.

ALP offers many meaningful, timely, interactive e-learning classes for adoptive parents, professionals, adopted individuals and families. Their e-learning courses are designed to increase each person's understanding of

the joys and challenges of adoption. Included on their website are various articles and papers that are downloadable. They also offer a community forum to interact with others who are on this journey..

Some of the on-line courses are free of charge but payment is required if you need a certificate of completion. Some of their course offerings include:

- Adoption Tax Credit
- Adopting the Older Child

- Adopted: The Identity Project
- Becoming your Child's Best Advocate.
- China: Overview of the Adoption Process
- Five Course Hague Package for overseas adoptions
- Conspicuous Families
- We're Home: Now What?
- Open Adoption 101
- Life books and many more.

To view their many courses log onto:

www.adoptionlearningpartners.org.

ADOPTION TAX CREDIT

On January 2, 2013, the federal adoption tax credit became a permanent figure in the U.S. tax code. While the credit is permanent, the amount of credit and income qualifications change each year. Below is a list of the most critical adoption tax facts that you need to know in preparing your return for 2013:

- The adoption tax credit is to be used for qualified adoption expenses incurred to adopt an eligible child.

- Qualified adoption expenses are defined in section 23(d)(1) of the tax code but generally include all expenses directly

related to the legal adoption of an eligible child.

- The maximum credit amount for 2013 is \$12,970.

- The credit is nonrefundable.

- The credit is subject to an income limitation. If your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) is between \$194,580 and \$234,580 your credit will be reduced. If your MAGI exceeds \$234,580 you are not eligible to receive the credit.

- The tax credit is reduced by the amount of any employer-provided adoption assistance.

- When you claim, the credit is dependent on when your expenses are paid, if the adoption is foreign or domestic, and whether or not the adoption has been finalized.

- If you adopt a child identified as "special needs," you may be eligible for the maximum credit amount even if you paid no qualifying adoption expenses. In addition, the adoption credit "carry forward" is 5 years.

To claim the credit, complete **Form 8839** and attach it to your tax return. For details, log onto: www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html or taxcredit@nacac.org.

NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Hello Readers! Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner.

The inclement weather that we have been having lately has afforded me some extra time to curl up and do some exploratory reading. I have two grandchildren who are becoming very conscious of their privacy. This suggested to me that I bone up on the topic of "PRIVACY" as it relates to young people.

What are you doing in There? Balancing Your Need to Know with Your Adolescent's Need to Grow by Charlene C. Giannetti and Margaret Sagarese shows parents how to keep informed without stifling their child's fledgling independence.

The authors talk about six privacy zones which include: bedroom, friends, romance, school, body and the Internet.

Within each zone, they point out the most common cover-ups, why too much knowledge can be a bad thing, and how to establish and work within positive limits that allow both parties the freedom to breathe. Parents are taught how to build a relationship based on trust so they can stay involved and still allow their child to become a mature, self-assured, independent individual.

I Can't Believe You Went Through My Stuff! How to Give your Teens the Privacy They Crave and the Guidance They Need by Peter Sheras, Ph.D., includes solid, practical advice on:

- How you can learn more about your teenager's life without invading his privacy or losing her trust
- How to start a conversation when your teen won't talk
- What to do about lying, whether it's infrequent or often
- How to discuss family rules and establish consequences that really work
- How to tell if your teen needs professional help and where to find it.

It is hoped by the author that his book will give you the key to keeping your teenager safe while building a trusting, warm, and communicative relationship.

Becoming a Wise Parent for Your Grown Child: How to Give Love and Support without Meddling by Betty Frain, Ph.D., and Eileen M. Clegg reminds us that, grown or not, they're still your kids. This provides parents a step-by-step approach to handling the many problems that can arise with their adult children concerning:

- How to relate to a grown child who has chosen a lifestyle radically different from your own
- How to establish boundaries and remain close
- How to give feedback, not unwanted advice
- When to speak up and when to shut up about the way your son or daughter is treating his or her own children.

The message imparted to me in this book was for parents to keep some distance and to put their adult children's problems in perspective. Many of the points made in the above book selections are based upon a mutually respectful give and take attitude between parent and child. Even so, the obvious is not always so obvious when you are dealing with your own child. I learned from my reading how important boundaries are even with your adult, often, married children.

In reviewing these books, I particularly enjoyed the tongue-in-cheek humor employed by the authors in their suggestions for maintaining the upper hand as a parent while still recognizing that children need privacy. Is there an implication here for parents to pick their battles and to not sweat the small stuff?

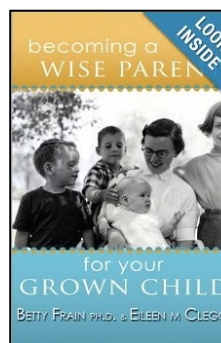
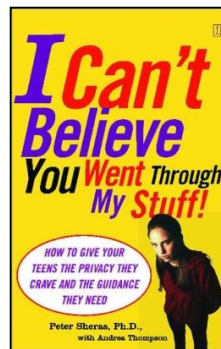
DID YOU KNOW?

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

Like to borrow a book? Log onto our Lending Library and order on-line.

Cannot find the right one?

Contact us at warmline@njarch.org or call 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465)



NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

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

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Looking for a conference or an activity that focuses on adoption? The following are conferences that you may want to consider attending:

- April 5: Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) Mini Conference for adults and kids ages 7-12. West Orange NJ. Log onto www.cpfanjanj.org for information and to register.

- April 12: New Jersey Special Needs Adoption Café- Burlington County Library, 5 Pioneer Blvd, Westhampton, NJ. For information contact Crystal Allen at callen@adopt.org.

- May 6-8: Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) 2014 National Advocacy Summit "Federal Policy at a Crossroads." Washington, DC. <http://www.cwla.org/>.

- May 9-10: NYSCCC 25th Annual Foster Care and Adoption Conference. Albany NY. <http://nysccc.org/conference/>.

May 29-30: 8th Biannual Adoption Initiative Conference- St. Johns University in Collaboration with Montclair State University: St. Johns University, Queens, NY <http://adoptioninitiative.org/wordpress/>.

- July 24-26: North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), 40th Annual Conference, Kansas City, MO www.nacac.org/conference/conference.html.

- October 25: 33rd Annual Concerned Persons for Adoption "Lets Talk Adoption" Conference, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ. www.cpfanjanj.org.

