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CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

www.cafsnj.org



PLANNING FOR YOUR CHILDREN DURING A PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

The Coronavirus has created many challenges for residents across New Jersey and many parents are taking steps to protect themselves and their children from the virus such as staying at home, thorough hand-washing and virtual playdates.

Another concern to think about is if parents become ill, who will care for their children. This is an uncomfortable, but necessary conversation that parents and caregivers need to have. Preparation and planning are vital elements of disaster/pandemic readiness. Taking proactive steps can help to alleviate fear and stress related to uncertainty.

There are a few things you can do before experiencing a possible quarantine or hospitalization that requires separation from your child(ren).

First, gather any documents regarding custody, health and education so that they are accessible to anyone who may need to step in and assist. Those documents include:

- Custody or Guardianship Orders related to your child(ren)
- Birth certificates
- Important health records
- Health Insurance cards/ documents
- School Records

- Living Will
- Will and/or Trust Documents
- Social Security Cards
- A list of important contacts (names, phone numbers, etc.)

Second, appoint a person that you trust to serve to care for your child(ren) in your absence. The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) suggests completing a Power of Attorney (POA) form that designates a temporary legal guardian in the event a parent or parents become ill or incapacitated.

The POA can be completed by parents of children up to the age of 18, or those caring for adults with disabilities for any reason, as this Coronavirus has amplified the importance of preparing for the unexpected. On the DCF's Power of Attorney form, parents can select areas for which the temporary guardian (the "attorney in fact") can make decisions for the child, such as educational, medical and/or financial. The Division of Children and Families suggests parents discuss plans with the temporary guardian in advance and have important documents (birth certificate, health and school records, wills) in one place. The POA can be kept in a file at home, shared with an attorney and/or presented to a medical

professional when needed. While DCF suggests the POA be notarized, it is not a requirement.

While you are reviewing this document, it's always good to create, review and/or update your other legal documents such as your will and other estate planning documents, based on your current family situation.

We encourage you to protect your families, legally. Find or speak to an attorney about how to create or update these important documents. Many attorneys should be able to do this safely through social distancing constraints. Your family and children will thank you for it.

For more information on estate planning please visit:

www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-2016/the-ultimate-guide-to-estate-planning.html

www.njspotlight.com/2020/04/when-the-coronavirus-hits-home-putting-child-care-plans-in-writing-just-in-case/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

https://www.nj.gov/dcf/news/COVID-19_POA_Guidance.pdf

This information is not intended to be, and should not be construed as, legal advice. Any questions about executing a power of attorney should be directed to an attorney.

Do You Know?



With the current COVID-19 Pandemic, please contact your local summer camp to see if they are still running

Our NJ ARCH Program is still working and serving our NJ consumers!

If you have an adoption, foster care and/or kinship related question, please do not hesitate to contract our warm line at: 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465) or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org

We are still here to help.

Need Covid-19 Information? Check out the slider on our NJ ARCH Home page that includes many NJ resources!

Anyone with general questions around COVID-19 response may e-mail the NJ Division of Children and Families at AskDCF@dcf.nj.gov

ADOPTEE'S BIRTHRIGHT ACT UPDATE

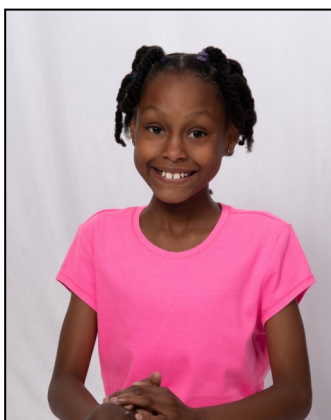
On January 1, 2017, the Adoptees Birthright Act, Public Law 2014, c. 9 was implemented by the NJ Office of Vital Statistics. As a result, adult adoptees born and/or adopted in New Jersey may request an uncertified copy of their Original Birth Certificate (OBC). As of May 7, 2020, the number of adult adoptee requests that have been completed by the NJ Office of Vital Statistics was 6,038. After receiving their OBC, many adoptees have contacted NJ



ARCH and/or the NJ Coalition for Adoption Reform & Education (NJCARE) for resource information on support groups, search specialists, mental health professionals and more.

For more information about the Act, or to download the forms, please visit our website at www.njarch.org and select "NJ Adoptees Birthright Act," visit www.nj-care.org, or go directly to the "New Records System for Birth Parents, Adult Adoptees" at www.nj.gov/health/vital/adoption. Birthparents who wish to share their contact information and/or medical history may also use this last website. Please contact NJ ARCH at 877-427-2465 or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org if you have questions.

DCP&P WAITING CHILDREN



Ja'Shea
Born 5/2009

Ja'Shea is a sweet, kind, and loving young lady. You will find her outside on most days playing with friends or practicing her soccer skills. When indoors she enjoys listening to music, dancing and playing with her mini LOL baby and Barbie dolls. She dreams of one day owning a Barbie Dream House. Ja'Shea is not shy and enjoys being on stage acting in her school's play or participating in her school's Spelling Bee. An animal lover, Ja'Shea hopes to one day have a pet in her home. Maintaining contact with her half siblings is very important to her. Future dreams are full of youthful opti-

mism as she dreams of becoming President of the United States or a fashion model. For more information on Ja'Shea, please contact Veronica Villanueva-Rosas, at 609-888-7491 or Veronica.villanueva-rosas@dcf.nj.gov.



Miracle
Born 8/2002

Playing on her tablet, listening to Arianna Grande or collecting stuffed animals are Miracle's favorite activities. She is a budding artist who enjoys drawing cartoon figures. Recently she had an opportunity to assist young children with art activities in a youth partner program. This experience provided an avenue for Miracle to display her leadership qualities. She is also a leader in her school's

ROTC program. While she is proud of her uniform, she also enjoys fashion and accessorizing with fun jewelry.

The ideal family for Miracle would be a family that is able to provide her with unconditional love and patience. For more information on Miracle, please contact Kenyatta Johnson at 609-888-7487 or Kenyatta.johnson@dcf.nj.gov.

For more information on New Jersey's waiting children, please visit: www.nj.gov/njfofsteradopt/adoption/.

For more information on New Jersey's foster, adoption and kinship programs please visit: <https://www.nj.gov/njfofsteradopt/>.



MAY IS FOSTER CARE MONTH

FOSTER CARE AS A SUPPORT TO FAMILIES, NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR PARENTS

May is National Foster Care Month, a time to acknowledge foster parents, family members, volunteers, mentors, policymakers, child welfare professionals, and other members of the community who help children and youth in foster care find permanent homes and connections.

As an initiative of the Children's Bureau, National Foster Care Month is a time to renew our commitment to ensuring a bright future for the more than 437,000 children and youth in foster care and celebrate those who make a meaningful difference in their lives. In order to truly support the families it serves, the child welfare system must engage parents, youth, kin,



community partners, legal professionals, foster parents, and others.

Child welfare professionals cannot do the work alone. These critical partners have valuable insight and must be present and involved in decision making to positively impact reunification and permanency outcomes.

The Children's Bureau, and NJ ARCH, have many resources for parents and professionals. These strategies help partner with communities, families,

courts and help support family stabilization. They also provide examples on how professionals can encourage birth parent and foster parent collaboration including how to integrate parent and youth voices into the selection of support services.

For more information on National Foster Care Month, please visit:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>.

For more information on how to become a NJ foster parent, please contact NJ ARCH at 877-427-2464/warmline@njarch.org or embrella (formally Foster and Adoptive Family Services) at 800-222-0047 or visit their website at www.embrella.org.

CLOSING THE COVID-19 CLASSROOM GAP

By newsletter contributor, Bethann Carbone of World Citizens Network Foundation

COVID-19 pandemic effectively upended the process of learning in schools. To preserve academic progress, we need to act quickly and decisively to keep kids engaged and focused as we move to open-ended remote online learning. In my work as Education Development Director with World Citizens Network, I see families who were already struggling, now experiencing extra challenges such as no access to internet, device shortages, and language

barriers, all affecting caregiver support of online learning. Even in families who have an abundance of resources, we see new kinds of obstacles to effective learning: technology distractions, communications, and lack of adult monitoring. While managing all aspects of home learning might be daunting (especially during a crisis), parents can use this unique opportunity to support and model a self-directed student approach. The most important

action parents and caretakers can take is committing to a plan of constant support and regular monitoring of active and engaged online and offline learning. Being proactive in the process will go a long way toward helping our kids thrive during this shift. With this in mind, we have provided **7 tips for families as they adjust to the new reality of home learning**. To read the article please visit:

www.njarch.org/7-tips-for-online-learning.org.

TOUCHED BY KINSHIP CARE?

In New Jersey, over 57,000 or 3% of children, live with a relative with no biological parent present, and another 164,000 or 8.1% of children under 18, live in homes where the head of the household is a grandparent or other relative. If you or someone

you know is touched by Kinship Care, please check out NJ ARCH's sister site, Kinship Care Clearing House or KinKconnect. This website has a wealth of resources for those raising relative's children including handbooks, publications, agency support group

listings and more. Check out www.kinkconnect.org or call our warm line at 877-KLG-LINE (877-554-5463) to speak to a warm-line specialist or for more information. We are here to help.

DO YOU KNOW?

NJ ARCH offers Free training workshops for adoption support groups:

E-mail

dwfried@njarch.org
to discuss doing a training virtually!

- Adoption: A Life-Long Loss
 - Telling your Child Difficult History
- Trans-Racial Adoption and foster care
- Basics of Special Ed. In NJ
- 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



DID YOU KNOW?

STAYING HOME FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME MAY BE STRESSFUL FOR SOME RELATIONSHIPS.

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN AND WANT TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT POSSIBLE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CONTACT THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HOTLINE AT 800-799-7233 OR VISIT THEIR WEBSITE AT WWW.THEHOTLINE.ORG OR CALL 911 FOR LOCAL HELP.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS FREE POST ADOPTION COUNSELING SERVICES (PACS) AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT NEW JERSEY?

CONTACT NJ ARCH TO FIND A PACS PROVIDER NEAR YOU!

10 TIPS ON HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT COVID-19

If you are a parent or a caregiver and are feeling insecure about what to share, how much to say and ways to navigate COVID-19 when so much is uncertain, you're not alone. Families all over the world are with you. Here are some tips recommended in a recent article by the Public Broadcasting Network:

1- Make children feel safe. We are battling two enemies: COVID-19 and the anxiety about it. Kids are particularly susceptible to this. Watch your words and tone. Stay calm. Reassure children that this is temporary and that they and their caregivers are going to be fine.

2- Give them the facts and let them lead the discussion. Children need simple, honest answers. Avoid hushing your discussion when they walk into a room and never lie. Explain the situation as simply as possible and help them feel safe. Try to avoid language that blames race, animals or culture for the spread of the virus.

3- Give them power and responsibility. Kids do better when they have power; it's one of their emotional needs, and this is a great time to give it to them. Kids can help their neighbors and loved ones stay safe and healthy by frequently washing their hands, by wiping down their devices often and cough or sneeze into their elbows or a tissue.



4- Let them know what to expect. The hard part is we really don't know what to expect the weeks and months ahead. What we do know, for instance is that we're going to see a lot less people in our lives for a while and we need to find creative ways to pass the time at home as well as find ways to keep connected to friends and family through technology or over the phone.

5- Empathy, empathy, empathy. So much can be done when we allow our kids to express the full range of their emotions and when we receive those feelings with empathy. If their fears and frustrations are minimized or dismissed, other behaviors may appear such as fighting with siblings, throwing tantrums or being uncooperative. As caregivers we can empathize by saying, "I imagine you are worried about all the things suddenly changing...or It's so frustrating that you couldn't compete on your dance program..." You don't have to agree with the child's thoughts or feelings to acknowledge them without judgement or minimizing.

6- Keep your child's developmental stage and temperament in mind. This situation is unique, and so is your child. Keep your expectations in check.

7- Try to maintain a normal routine. It's not easy to have a routine when schools and possibly camps may be closed this summer. Try to establish a new routine. Some recommend making a calendar, perhaps with pictures to help kids envision how things will go with their schedule.

8- Model the behavior you want to see. Children look to us for guidance and support, especially in difficult times. "Model a positive confidence about the topic and stay grounded" states the article expert. This goes for issues like hygiene and social isolation as well.

9- Consider adjusting the screen time limits. With so many of us working from home and unable to count on childcare, just getting by is a good thing. Don't beat yourself up, but be smart about it. If you loosen all the limits around these games and programs, it will be much harder to manage after things calm down. Come up with ideas of other activities that children can do that do not involve screen time.

10- Take care of yourself. These are anxiety-producing times and we, as parents, are dealing with a lot. Turn off the news; too much discouraging news can be bad for our and our kids' health. Pamper yourself with baths, hikes, naps, meditation, cooking, anything that makes you feel more centered.

For more details visit: www.pbs.org/newshour/health/10-tips-for-talking-about-covid-19-with-your-kids.

FREE POST ADOPTION COUNSELING

Did you know that there are free Post Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) available to families who reside in New Jersey and have an adopted child under the age of 21? While many adoptive children and families adjust well, there

are challenges and experiences unique to the adoption experience that some adoptive families face. PACS clinicians specialize in clinical concerns of adoption such as grief and loss, identity issues, curiosity about origins, feelings of differences and more. Services

include family and/or individual therapy. There is no fee for the service. Call or e-mail NJ ARCH to find a provider near you. Visit www.njarch.org, e-mail at warmline@njarch.org or call (877) 4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465).

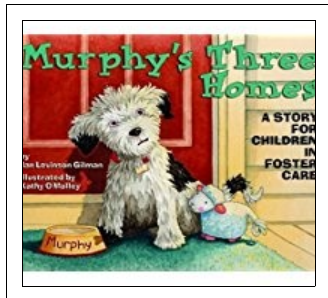
NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Welcome to our library corner!

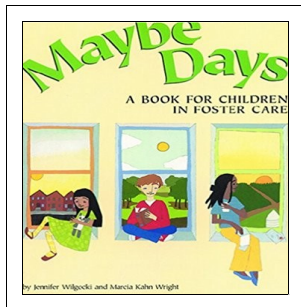
Our library is filled with books, videos, and articles for children, teens, parents, and professionals. Did you know you can borrow books for free? We will mail them to you along with an already-stamped return envelope. So many books are waiting for you!

Note: Unfortunately with the current situation, we cannot physically send you books until we return to our offices, but we hope the books detailed below offer you great ideas of books to borrow at a later time or perhaps purchase somewhere online for your family.

Therefore, as we honor foster care this month, let's turn our attention to books that touch on that topic.

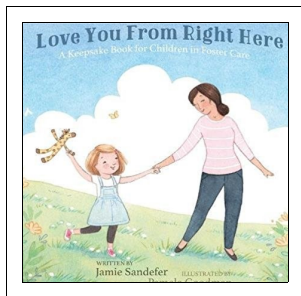


Murphy's Three Homes by Jan Levinson Gilman, chronicles the life of Murphy, a sweet Tibetan Terrier puppy. Removed from his birth mother and placed in two foster homes and a shelter, Murphy shares his feelings of guilt, grief, loss, shame, anger, loneliness, and distrust. His behaviors are misunderstood and he soon thinks of himself as the "bad luck dog." His third family shows him love even after running away. He begins to feel hope and concludes, "I wished that all dogs who believe they are bad luck dogs would discover that it isn't their fault...that they too can become good luck dogs."



Maybe Days: A Book for Children in Foster Care

by Jennifer Wilgocki and Marcia Kahn Wright, talks about all the different reasons kids are in foster homes, emphasizing that none of the reasons are the child's fault. The book goes on to discuss the fears and worries children have while in foster care and the different types of foster families. Foster care can last a long time or sometimes just a short time. Many different grown-ups help a child during their time in foster care, including foster parents, social workers, therapists, lawyers and the judge. This book explains each person's role in a child-friendly manner. The book validates how hard it is to hear so many "maybes" from these adults. Through all the maybes, the child's job is to be a kid and to "not let the waiting and maybes get in the way of the things they like."

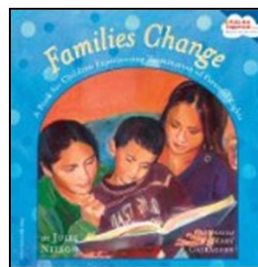


Love You From Right Here: A Keepsake Book for Children in Foster Care

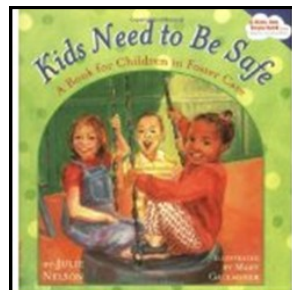
by Jamie Sandefer, beautifully depicts how a foster mom loves and respects her foster child. She allows her to feel sad, worried, scared, mad, glad, nervous, brave, and happy.

With each emotion, she emphasizes that she will be "right here" for the child and allows them the space or closeness they need at that time. The book ends with her foster daughter leaving and the foster mom saying, "and if you are over there... I'll still love you from right here," reminding the child that she is always loved, no matter where she is.

Here are some other children's books focusing on foster care:



Families Change: A Book for Children Experiencing Termination of Parental Rights by Julie Nelson



Kids Need to be Safe: A Book for Children in Foster Care by Julie Nelson

Please feel free to contact us to ask for recommendations on various books focusing on children. parents and/or professionals.

Stay safe all!

-Cynthia A. Lapidus BSW, CSW

DID YOU KNOW?



WE HAVE OVER 1,500 BOOKS AND VIDEOS IN OUR FREE NJ ARCH. LENDING LIBRARY.

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR BOOK SELECTIONS AT

WWW.NJARCH.ORG

AND SELECT "LENDING LIBRARY" THEN SEARCH YOUR TOPIC(S).

UNFORTUNATELY DURING THIS TIME, WE CANNOT SEND OUT BOOKS BUT HOPE TO IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE AT 877-ARCHNJ (877-427-2465)

OR WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG



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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

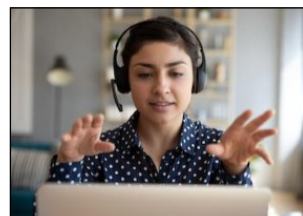
Looking for a conference or training in the next few months? Many of the below are being offered virtually, and listed on our NJ ARCH EVENTS page. Please check them out so you can join in!

June 23-25: National Council for Adoption (NCFA). Will be held virtually. For more info. visit www.ncfaconference.org/.

August 26-29: 46th Annual North American Conference on Adoptable Children (NACAC). Will be held virtually. For more information www.nacac.org/get-training/conference/.

The following are webinars offered by "PACT, an adoption alliance":

June 3: Schools and Adoption webinar, 2:00–3:20 EST. For more information visit: www.pactadopt.org/events/event_detail.asp?event=501.



June 24: Newborns, Money, Competition and Desperation; Promoting Ethics in Adoption webinar, 2 pm –4 pm EST. For more info. visit: www.pactadopt.org/events/event_detail.asp?event=503.

July 15: Integrating the Shadow: Inner work for Adult Adoptees webinar, 2:00 pm - 3:30 EST. For more info. visit www.pactadopt.org/events/event_detail.asp?event=504.

Sept 9: Working with Pre-and Post Adoptive/Foster Parents of Color; Insights for Professionals webinar, 2 pm - 4 pm EST. For more info. visit: www.pactadopt.org/events/event_detail.asp?event=505.

Interested in on-line learning? Check out these options:

Adoption Learning Partners:
www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/.

The Center for Adoption Support and Education (CASE):
<https://adoptionssupport.org/>.

Child Welfare League of America <https://www.cwla.org/conferences-events/e-learning/>.

Nurtured Heart Approach Training, Children's Success Foundation: <https://childrenssuccessfoundation.com/nha-training/>.

Have an event you would like us to post on our website? Log on to www.njarch.org. Under "Events", select the "List your Event on NJ ARCH" box on the right and submit for a free listing on NJ ARCH!