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NJ•ARCH Features:

- Free Lending Library
- Warm Line
- Resource Directory
- Support Group Advocacy
- Speakers Bureau
- Training Workshops



www.cafsnj.org

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH: *ENGAGE YOUTH: LISTEN AND LEARN*



National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau with the goal to increase national awareness of the need for permanent families for children and youth in the U.S. foster care system.

Each November, the Bureau focuses on outreach and awareness-raising efforts on new adoption-related themes to help support professionals working to find permanency for children and youth in foster care. This year's theme is "***Engage Youth: Listen and Learn.***" It is well known that teenagers are less likely to be adopted, often because of their age, and are more likely to age out of foster care without strong or stable family support. Securing lifelong connections for teens in foster care, both legally and emotionally, is a critical component in determining their future achievement, health, and well-being.

This year's National Adoption Month website includes resources and tips to help child welfare and legal

professionals develop and support both formal and informal opportunities for young people to help share their voice and perspective. Hearing from youth who have experienced foster care—whether they've been reunited with family, achieved permanency with an adoptive family, or entered adulthood independently, can help educate communities and shape child welfare and adoption processes and policies. Their stories can inform recruitment practices, training resources for families, and other permanency support services. The Child Welfare Information Gateway's website contains resources designed specifically for youth, including how to get involved at:

[www.childwelfare.gov/
topics/adoption/nam/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/)

The highlight of National Adoption Month is National Adoption Day, which this year took place on November 21st. On this day the country celebrates the children adopted throughout the year and particularly during the month of November.

This year due to Covid, the New Jersey, Division of Children and Families (DCF) celebrated Adoption Day events virtually.

DCF adoption day planners in all 21 NJ Counties hosted various virtual events to help celebrate those families who finalized their adoptions this year. These events included parades in front of families' homes, delivery of gift baskets and more.

Thinking about fostering and/or adopting? Contact NJ ARCH at 877-4ARCHNJ (877) 427-2465 or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org and we would be glad to share information to help you get started.

NATIONAL

ADOPTIONDAY
Celebrating a Family for Every Child

MEET OUR NJ ANGELS:



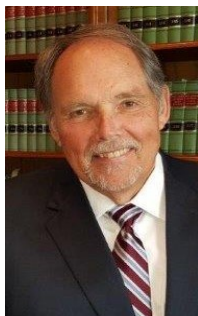
Angels in Adoption®



Aman A. D'Mello



Janet Pollio



James Miskowski, Esq.



ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS

NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED AT VIRTUAL GALA

On September 30th the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCAI's) Angels in Adoption® Program honored individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions in adoption, permanency and child welfare. As one of Washington, D.C.'s most inspiring events, this brings awareness to the millions of children around the globe living without a loving family to call their own. The Angels in Adoption program celebrates individuals, families, and organizations from around the country that support vulnerable children. Due to the pandemic, CCAI decided to celebrate their 22nd Angels in Adoption Gala virtually as they honored 96 local Angel honorees and organizations from 42 states, including four National Angels Honorees. This outstanding group included the Earl Family, parents of Magnolia, the first adopted baby to be the Gerber company spokes baby; Todd Tilghman, 2020 winner of NBC's "The Voice" who is also a pastor and father of 10 children, seven by adoption; the Caldwell family, lead designers on HGTV "Boise Boys" and also parents of seven children, five adopted from overseas. Also honored was the award winning TV show "This is US," for its adoption and foster care storylines. Since the program's inception in 1999, over 2,600 Angels have received this honor.

Here are our NJ Angels:

Aman A. D'Mello

Recommended by U.S. Representative Mikie Sherrill

Aman D'Mello is the Senior Advocate Supervisor and Court Liaison at CASA for Children of Essex County. During her 20 years as a social worker, Aman has successfully helped foster youth thrive and achieve permanency. She has delivered training

and technical assistance to cities and states on child welfare best practices in order to improve agency effectiveness and accountability. Since 2016, Aman has worked with CASA, whose mission is to promote the welfare of children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse, neglect, or abandonment by providing a safety net of support, advocacy, and mentorship. CASA's volunteers ensure that each child receives the needed services and assistance, and they help to move the child toward a safe and permanent home as quickly as possible. These volunteers come from all walks of life, but they share a fierce commitment to making a difference in children's lives. Aman coaches and mentors CASA volunteers to develop their capacity to effectively advocate for children. Additionally, Aman trains new volunteers on specialized topics such as understanding trauma, building and reinforcing children's resiliency, and ensuring culturally responsive engagement with families.

Janet Pollio

Recommended by U.S. Senator Robert Menendez

Janet Pollio has been deeply involved in New Jersey's adoption community for the past 25 years. In late 1994, Janet and her husband decided to build their family through adoption. They joined NJ's all-volunteer Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) to seek information and support, and adopted two children domestically. Since joining CPFA, Janet has served many roles including President, Vice President, and chair of the Programming Committee. Today, Janet continues to volunteer in numerous ways, including supporting the yearly CPFA/Rutgers University's "Let's Adoption" conference, and serving on the

Board of Directors. Janet is also the editor of the CPFA newsletter. In this role she coordinates submissions from CPFA committee members and experts in the field of adoption to compile a newsletter that informs and educates pre- and post-adoptive parents on parenting topics, community resources, events, and more. While many choose to stop their volunteer involvement once their children become adults, Janet has selflessly continued to serve.

James Miskowski, Esq.

Recommended by U.S. Representative Josh Gottheimer

James Miskowski has represented birth parents, children, adoptive parents and adoption agencies for over 30 years. Through his law firm, he has helped build over 2,500 adoptive families, tried many contested, high-profile cases in New Jersey over the past three decades, and was instrumental in enacting legislation in a continued attempt to improve laws as they have evolved over the years. Furthermore, he has been asked by the New Jersey State Legislature to draft legislation to amend laws on adoption to reflect the best interest of the child. Due to his expertise and dedication to this issue, Mr. Miskowski was appointed by the New York Appellate Division as special Counsel for Children to represent their rights and interests in 2015. Mr. Miskowski began the adoption portion of his practice as a result of his experience as an adoptive parent of his three children. He is a tireless advocate for families and adoptive children in his community.

Congratulations to all our New Jersey Angels!!

WINTER ACTIVITY IDEAS

With many schools offering their classes virtually, along with the onset of the winter break and cold weather, parents have been seeking ideas on how to keep their children entertained as well as safe during the next several months.

A local NJ support group, Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) recently offered a virtual talk entitled: ***"The Pandemic Pivot: Navigating the Holidays in Uncertain Times."***

Wendy Paladini, a Licensed, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant and CPFA member offered a list of fun and creative ideas to keep families occupied during the holidays and beyond.

- Have Zoom dinners with family and friends.
- Have kids make a video for grandma and grandpa and/or loved ones. Make it funny, have kids sing, dance or act out a skit.
- Have kids make something special for family and friends.
- Have the kids choose the dessert and have them make it.
- Dress up in your finest for dinner, or put a funny twist on it like a funny hat or funniest look.
- Have the whole family involved in choosing their favorite dish for dinner.
- Send recipes to friends/family and make the dish together, via Zoom the day before a holiday/birthday or special event so everyone can enjoy the dish.
- Create new traditions like playing board games together.
- Go on a scavenger hunt, a walk, play holiday-themed charades and/or Pictionary.
- Give to your favorite charity and get the kids involved.

- Shop for a local food pantry / other charity accepting food or gifts.
- Create a vision/dream board that includes what the family/individuals will want to do when the pandemic is over.
- Discuss the future!

Parent Self Care:

Self-care is so important for your stress levels and happiness. Like the old saying goes, "if Mama ain't happy, no one is happy." This goes for dads too. Take time for yourself and try not to be hard on yourself or others. Ideas include:

- Exercise
- Meditate/pray/yoga
- Create a gratitude journal. Studies have found people who express gratitude have lower stress levels and are happier.
- Take walks, which can lower your cortisol or stress hormone levels.
- Watch a funny or romantic movie, something not stressful.
- Take up a hobby you always wanted to do and/or take up again something that you used to do.
- Visit another town for different scenery.
- Bird watch.
- Practice mindfulness.
- Check the negative statements you make to yourself and change them into positive ones.
- Call or contact loved ones and friends.
- Make goals for the future.

Activities for Children During the Winter:

Here are some activities you may want to do with your children:

- Scavenger hunts
- Journaling/Scrapbook
- Quarantine time capsule (placing items in a box, bury or hide it then find it next year/later.)
- Cook/bake
- Build a fort or obstacle course
- Movie nights (introduce old movies)
- Do crafts /play board games together
- Take walks, play outside
- Do a puzzle
- Play musical instrument(s)
- Make a model
- Make a vision board
- Sled, ice skate, ski, snowboard
- Have a snowball fight.

Ways to Calm Children:

Studies have shown that movement can really help children calm down. Here are some ideas:

- Exercise
- Play or do anything that has a rhythm like dance, drums, ping-pong, ball bouncing
- Do heavy work such as carrying in groceries, carrying a laundry basket, do bear walks, crab walks, wheelbarrow, push-ups and jumping jacks. Research shows that heavy work can calm down the nervous system.
- Play music.
- Color and crafts.

For more ideas, log onto, www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/spending/t063-s001-free-or-cheap-things-to-do-with-kids-at-home/index.html.

For more information on Concerned Persons for Adoption check out their website at www.cpfan.org.

DO YOU KNOW?

NJ ARCH OFFERS FREE TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUPS!

E-MAIL

DWFRIED@NJARCH.ORG

TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN DO A VIRTUAL TRAINING FOR YOUR GROUP!

-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

- THE ADOPTED CHILD'S JOURNEY: QUESTIONS ALONG THE WAY

Have a question about adoption, foster care or kinship care?

We are here to help you.

Contact our warm line at:

**877-4ARCHNJ
(877-427-2465)**

or e-mail us at

warmline@njarch.org

DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 1,500 Books
and Videos in our
NJ ARCH / KinConnect
Library.
Contact NJ ARCH or log onto our

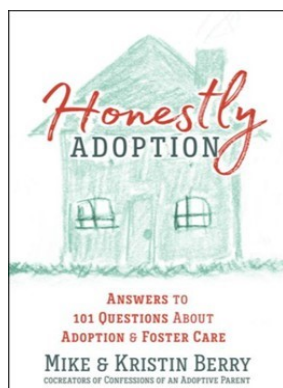
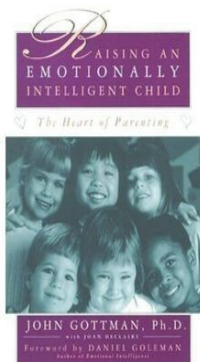


website to see our list!

www.njarch.org/library

1-877-427-2465

We can send you the books for
free with an envelope to send it
back to us for free!



NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner!

I recently saw a meme on social media that stated, "Being a parent is like jumping out a plane with a bunch of people who don't know how to open their own chutes. So, you fly around doing it for them . . . Then you hit the ground, but you don't die. You get up and cook dinner" (author unknown). The challenges of parenting are never-ending and through it all, we, as parents, are forced to carry on with the experience and knowledge we may not have while providing the love and nurturing that is required. Adoption and trauma add additional layers to the challenges. This month we review some parenting books to help you on your flight.

Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child: The Heart of Parenting

by John Gottman, Ph.D., dives deep into the concept of emotional intelligence and the benefits of emotional coaching parenting. Dr. Gottman's extensive research explains traditional parenting styles and then demonstrates the contrasting and more positive outcomes of the emotional coaching style. Readers are able to assess their current parenting style, learn the five steps to emotion coaching, and begin their par-

enting transformation. Emotional intelligence is often a better indicator of success than IQ. By teaching children to understand and regulate their own emotions, they are better able to navigate the world and have increased self-confidence, better overall physical health, score higher academically, are better equipped to navigate social relationships, and are less prone to acts of violence, and are overall more resilient. Parents and children form stronger bonds of connection. Dr. Gottman writes, "the ultimate goal of raising children should not be simply to have an obedient and complaint child. Most parents hope for much more for their children. They want their children to be moral and responsible people who contribute to society, who have the strength to make their own choices in life, who enjoy the accomplishments of their own talents, who enjoy life and the pleasure it can offer, who have good relationships with friends and successful marriages, and who themselves become good parents." Research proves that emotional coaching leads to all this and more.

Honestly Adoption: Answers to 101 Questions About Adoption & Foster Care by Mike and Kristen Berry, explores some very real and raw issues related to parenting children who come

from hard places. The authors have raised eight adopted children and have cared for over 23 other children through foster care. They answer questions with honesty and hope, as they look to provide other adoptive and foster parents with support and the knowledge that they are not alone on their parenting journey. The authors write, "Adoptive families are unique, special, beautiful, and amazing. Adoptive families are also formed because of loss. Because of that initial loss, adoptive families also have a toughness that sets them apart . . . we chose to remove the filter that adoptive families often feel inclined to place over themselves. We desire to share the raw reality of what adoptive families encounter . . . when we honor the hard parts of this journey, we can also celebrate the deep beauty that lies in the perseverance of our children because they are what this is all about."

- Cynthia Lapidus, BSW, CSW



Our NJ ARCH Free
Lending Library!

A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The 22nd Annual ***"A Home for the Holidays,"*** is an entertainment special celebrating the joys of adoption. This special will air on **Sunday, December 20th from 9:30-10:30 pm EST on CBS.**

This heartwarming special is presented in association with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and the Children's Action Network.

Hosted by CBS's Gayle King, uplifting stories of adoption from foster care will help raise awareness of children needing forever families. The inspirational stories of these American families will be enhanced with performances by Josh Groban, Miranda Lambert, Meghan Trainor, Leslie Odom, Jr. and Andrea Bocelli.

Dave Thomas, an adult adoptee, and founder of Wendy's restaurants, began the foundation and through this work, thousands of families have obtained information on adoption, especially older child adoptions through the foundation.

For more information, log onto www.davethomasfoundation.org.

DC&PP WAITING CHILDREN



Kayla
Born November 2007

With beautiful brown eyes and a warm smile, Kayla lights up a room. Her fun and happy personality makes it easy for her to get along well with other children. Fun times are riding her bike, playing basketball, and playing board games. Reading is her favorite subject and she can spend hours in a library. Kayla has seen all the Harry Potter movies and can't be stumped on trivia questions. One of Kayla's goal is to find her adoptive family. She is hopeful for a loving and kind family where she will be the youngest child. Kayla dreams of

cooking and making coffee for her new family! For more information please contact Andrea Mitreuter, 609-888-7495 or Andrea.Mitreuter@dcf.nj.gov.



Steven
Born June 2005

Steven is a social teen who loves the country and its openness. He would love to work on a farm. He loves all animals and would love to have a pet of his own if not a small hobby farm! He hopes he can continue riding horses and honing his cowboy skills in his forever home. He likes listening to country and rap

music. His favorite artists are Florida Georgia Line, Luke Bryan, and Blake Shelton. Another love for Steven is sports. He is a baseball and football fan who can be found cheering on the NY Yankees and NY Giants whenever they're on. A great outing would include a day at one of these events for special bonding time with Steven. He also enjoys playing catch with a baseball and chatting. For quiet and rest Steven enjoys his time playing video games and completing arts and crafts. Steven loves his family and any adoptive home would need to be open to maintaining this contact. Steven is open to adoption and is looking forward to finding his forever family. Love, guidance, and support are needed for Steven to flourish in his forever home.

For more information please contact Lisa Scott, 609-888-7358 or Lisa.Scott@dcf.nj.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?



For those who adopted internationally:

Even if you have a certificate of citizenship for your child, their status may not be listed correctly with social security.

To check, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213

For more info:
www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm

This also may be a good time to review your child/adult adoptee's paperwork including:

- Final Adoption Decree
- Birth Certificate
- Current Passport
- Naturalization / Citizenship papers
- Social Security Card with the updated Citizenship status (if obtained prior to obtaining citizenship).

NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

76 SOUTH ORANGE AVENUE
SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079

VISIT US AT WWW.NJARCH.ORG

EDITOR:
DANA WOODS FRIED
201.740.7129

WARMLINE
877.4.ARCHNJ
OR
877.427.2465

FAX
973.378.9575

EMAIL

WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG
LALINEACALUROSA@NJARCH.ORG
WWW.NJARCH.ORG



www.cafsnj.org



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

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CONFERENCES AND MORE

Looking for a conference, support group or other adoption-related events? Here are some upcoming conferences:

2021 "Strengthening Your Family" Webinar Series.

Offered by Adoption Support and Education (CASE); for a full list visit:

<https://adoptionssupport.org/syfwwebinars/>

January 26, 2021- PACT:

Webinar: How Educators Can Create Adoption Inclusive Classrooms: Working with Pre- and Post-Adoptive/Foster Parents of Color: Insights for Professionals:

www.pactadopt.org/events/event_detail.asp?event=677.

March 12– 13, 2021: 38th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption" VIRTUAL Conference. Sponsored by Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) and Rutgers University, cpfani.org.

Be sure to check out our list of conferences, trainings, webinars, support group meetings, adoption agency information sessions and more on our "Events" section of our NJ ARCH website.

Interested in virtual or e-learning opportunities? Visit our website www.njarch.org and select the "Virtual Support" tab.

If you have an adoption, foster care and/or kinship-related question, contact our warm line at: 877-4ARCHNJ (877-427-2465) or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org.

We are here to help you!

The staff at NJ ARCH wishes you and your family a happy and safe holiday season!

