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CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

www.cafsnj.org

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH: *SMALL STEPS OPEN DOORS*



For over two decades, National Adoption Month has been promoted and celebrated every November in communities across the country. Many national, state, and local agencies, as well as foster, kinship care, and adoptive family groups will help educate their communities through programs, events, and activities that help raise awareness about the thousands of teens currently in foster care who are waiting for their own permanent, loving families.

National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau and supported through a partnership with Child Welfare Information Gateway and AdoptUSKids.*

This year's theme is "***Small Steps Open Doors***." Pursuing permanency for teens can be challenging, but small steps along the way can make all the difference. Taking the time to talk with and listen to youth can help earn their trust and help engage in their own permanency planning. It

can also create an environment where youth can be honest and ask questions. Youth are the experts of their own lives. It is best to let them partner in their permanency planning and make decisions about their lives.

Securing legal and lifelong connections for teens in foster care, is a critical component in determining their future achievement, health, and well-being.

For more information on National Adoption Awareness month and to download resources, please visit www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/.

The highlight of National Adoption Month is National Adoption Day, which this year occurs on Saturday, November 18th. This gives the country the opportunity to celebrate children adopted throughout the year and particularly during the month of November.

In 2022, celebrations will be taking place virtually as well as in-person with

numerous adoptions finalized throughout NJ from the Division of Children and Families (DCF) as well as from private adoption agencies.



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 happy to share information.

History of National Adoption Month

National Adoption Month 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.

ANGELS IN ADOPTION:

Did you know?

Since 1999, the Angels in Adoption Program® has honored over 2,800 deserving honorees from every state, and the District of Columbia!



Touched by Kinship Care?

Visit the Kinship Care Clearing House at www.kinkconnect.org



ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS 2022

The Angels in Adoptions program honors people across the United States who work tirelessly to advocate for children and youth in need of a safe and nurturing family.

This award is sponsored by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI). The CCAI is dedicated to raising awareness about the millions of children around the world in need of permanent, safe, and nurturing families and to eliminate the barriers hindering these children from realizing their basic right to a family.

CCAI also honors a select number of National Angels in Adoption® whose contributions have had a national impact.

Past recipients of this award include: Muhammad Ali, First Lady Laura Bush, Kristin Chenoweth, Scott Fujita, Deborra-lee Furness, Katherine Heigl and Josh Kelley, Patti LaBelle, Ne-Yo, Rhea Perlman, Shonda Rhimes, Korie and Willie Robertson, Al Roker, Jane Seymour, Scott and

Tracie Hamilton, Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy, Bruce Willis, Nia Vardalos, Bill Klein and Jen Arnold, Connie Britton, Rachel Crow, NBC Studios, NVIDIA, Sean Anders, "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," Hallmark Channel, PEOPLE Magazine, Magnolia Earle and family, Todd Tilghman, Miranda and Luke Caldwell, "This Is Us", Tatyana McFadden, Jenny and Dave Marrs, and Hoda Kotb.

The program also draws national and local media attention to the positive difference adoption makes in the life of a child and inspires others to consider adoption. Through the multiple special events that make up the Angels in Adoption® Program, Members of Congress also learn first-hand about adoption and foster care efforts taking place within their state and across the country.*

To view the opening remarks by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Caucus Co-Chairs, Sen. Amy Klobuchar

(D-MN), Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO), Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA) and Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL), please visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHHMnkDXdEQ

The Angels in Adoption Virtual Gala honored over 35 Angels from 29 states.

This year, NJ did not have an Angel in Adoption recipient, and we need to change that! If you know someone who is worthy of consideration for the yearly Angel in Adoption award, please submit their application in the Spring of 2023 at <https://www.ccaainstitute.org/programs/view/angels-in-adoption-engage>.

Congratulations to all the Angels in Adoption!

*www.ccaainstitute.org/congress-engage/angels/angels-in-adoption-congress



Certificate Program in Adoption

Did you know that **Rutgers University, School of Social Work, Office of Continuing Education** offers a Certificate in Adoption? This certificate program addresses many of the issues involved in the adoption process and focuses on

how professionals can skillfully help adoptive families. To receive the certificate, the participant will need to attend six (6) required webinars and three elective webinars. Most webinars offer three (3) clinical Continuing Education Hours.

For more information and/or to register, visit <https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/academics/continuing-education/certificate-programs/certificate-program-adoption>

ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE UPDATE

In January 2023, the **Adoptees Birthright Act** will celebrate six years since its implementation. This Act allows adult adoptees, born and/or adopted in New Jersey, to request an uncertified copy of their Original Birth Certificate (OBC) from the NJ Office of Vital Statistics. The response from its inception has been very positive with over 10,500 requests being completed to date.

If you are an adult adoptee, an adoptive parent or a sibling of an adopted person and are looking for more



information, please contact the 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," 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.

Want more information? Contact NJ ARCH at 877-427-2465 or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org.

EXPANDED CHILD TAX CREDIT

Families have until **November 15, 2022** to claim the 2021 Expanded Child Tax Credit, through the simplified filing portal, GetCTC.org. This portal makes it easy for families to claim this money online on their own. While families can continue to claim the CTC after November 15th, they'll need to file full tax returns to do so. While the CTC has existed for over two decades, it was significantly expanded in 2021 and has helped families with the cost of raising children.

According to the GetCTC.org website, families may receive up to \$3,600 per child under the age of six (6) and \$3,000 per child ages 6-17. The credit is smaller for single parents earning over \$75,000 and married couples earning over \$150,000. If you earn less than \$240,000 as a parent or \$440,000 as a married couple, you can still receive a portion of the CTC.

In addition, families should be eligible for the full CTC payments even if they earn very little or no money and even if they do not usually file taxes. Children should qualify if they have lived with you for at least half of the year of 2021 (six months and a day, does not need to be consecutive), they were under 18 at the end of 2021, and not born in 2022. Children must have a Social Security Number (SSN), while parents can have an Individual Taxpayer ID number (ITIN) or a Social Security number, along with other qualifications. See the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) website at the end of this article.*

If you received any monthly Advanced Child Tax Credit payments in 2021, you will need to file a 2021 tax return to receive the second

half of your money. The rest of your Child Tax Credit will be issued in one payment.

If you have not received any Child Tax Credit payments yet, you can file the simplified taxes now to get the whole credit. The portal makes it relatively easy for families to claim this money online on their own. While families can continue to claim the CTC after November 15th, they'll need to file full tax returns to do so.

For more information on how to apply, visit: [https://www.getctc.org/en/\(GetCTC.org\)](https://www.getctc.org/en/(GetCTC.org))

For a list of FAQ's, please visit: www.getyourrefund.org/en/faq/child-tax-credit/do-i-qualify-for-the-child-tax-credit-ctc

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

- WHO AM I? THE COMPLEXITY OF TEEN IDENTITY AND ADOPTION

Have Questions about the Extended Child Tax Credit?

Contact Coalition on Human Needs at: adafonseca@chn.org

YouTube Overview: <https://youtu.be/KAXiL3VNjQo>

Helpful IRS link: <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/advance-child-tax-credit-payments-in-2021>

DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 1,500
Books and Videos in our
NJ ARCH / KinKonnnect
Library.



To view our list of
books visit
www.njarch.org/library
or
Contact NJ ARCH at
877-ARCHNJ
(877-427-2465)

NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner!

National Adoption Month is a great time to add new books to your child's library! Here are a few of our new favorites!

The ABCs of Adoption: Kid Conversations about Adoption

by Raquel McCloud and illustrated by Taylan McCloud is an exceptional new book for your adoption library. The ABCs of Adoption is written from personal experience by an adoptee, birth mom, and adoptive mom. The book is illustrated by the adoptee's 12-year-old daughter. This book tackles the complex fact that every adoption and every adoptees' experience is unique and different in the simplest of ways, with beautiful drawings. With a page for every letter of the alphabet, the author touches on important definitions related to adoption, foster care, and kinship care. The author's words allow the young reader to hear and understand the terminology, but in a way, that validates differences. For example, for the letter "P," the author talks about the significance of photos by writing, "Photos are a special way to save memories. Some adoptees have photos of their birth-family and some don't." Another example is with the letter "Q" for questions. The author inscribes, "Adoptees may have lots

of questions about their story and that is normal. Sometimes your daddy or mama will have the answers and sometimes they won't, but you should always feel safe to ask about your story." This book is all-inclusive as it mentions international adoption, open adoption, foster care adoption, newborn adoption, and kinship adoption. The author concludes with the letter "Z" for "Zigs and Zags": "Zigs and Zags are when something doesn't follow a straight line. Adoption is like that. There isn't just one kind of adoption story, one emotion, or one experience."

Another great new book for children is Adoption is Both by Elena S. Hall and illustrated by Lar Norris. Adoption is Both acknowledges that there is more than one way to think about adoption and that all feelings are valid. This simple and rhythmically narrated story begins with "Adoption is happy and adoption is sad. It can make my heart hurt or make it feel glad." A simple character colored sometimes in pink and sometimes in blue shares their perspective on adoption. The little character embraces their feelings and sings of pride in both the good and the bad; changing colors to match their emotion. Concluding with the proclamation that "Adoption is both – pink and blue! Pink and Blue! Both are true." This book lends well to conversations

with young children about their own adoption story.

Yet another necessary addition to your library of children's books is What is Adoption? by Jeanette Yoffe and illustrated by Devika Joglekar. In this book, Jeanette Yoffe explains the realities of adoption in terminology that young children will understand. She begins by explaining, "Sometimes families just can't live together, so it is necessary to find another family who will love and take care of the children." This includes very real scenarios that answer "why" questions. The book explains the role of social workers, foster families, and judges in the adoption process and why things take so long. The next section explains the very real feelings a child will have in their new family including grief, guilt, and numbness. The author writes, "Big feelings will come and big feelings will go, like a great big wave so just go with the flow, don't push them away, make them your friend, so you can understand your grief and go play again." What is Adoption? concludes with wonderful statistics on adoption and a list of famous adoptees to allow the young reader to not feel alone.

- Cynthia Lapidus, BSW,
CSW



DC&PP WAITING CHILDREN



Mikhail
Born June 2012

Mikhail is a sweet and affectionate boy whose loving demeanor endears all those around him. Mikhail cleans up the classroom at school, puts away groceries at home and is overall super helpful and kind. Mikhail enjoys outdoor activities such as baseball and frisbee. He loves being outdoors. When warm, he can be found swimming and even when it is cold outside, that doesn't stop him! Bring on the sleigh riding and hot cocoa! Mikhail's all-time favorite movie is "Lego Batman" and he likes to watch "Paw Patrol." Mikhail has been described as a "gentleman" who holds doors for ladies, says "please" and "thank you" and ensures everybody around him is doing well.

Mikhail would do best in a home with either a heterosexual couple, a single female household, or a same sex female couple. He does well with children close to his age. Any family open to adopting Mikhail should be willing to maintain structure and understand that Mikhail will be a lifelong commitment. Mikhail has no issue with pets.



Giana
Born April 2008

Giana is a reader! Books provide a wonderful source of enjoyment for her. She can get lost in the stories authors weave following the twists and turns. Some of her favorite books involve stories about cats. While she loves the feel of a book, she also enjoys spending time with all the wonderful things technology offers. She has an IPAD where she enjoys accessing and playing games. Her favorite companion is her robot dog, Chip. Giana is an animal lover and envisions a future where she can work with animals and own/care for a cat. Giana is a creative soul who loves arts, crafts and music classes at school. Giana would do best in a two-parent home where she can be the youngest; a family who is committed to supporting her through adulthood.



For more information on Mikhail, Giana or Sean, please call 1-800-99-ADOPT.



Sean
Born May 2007

Sean is a friendly young man with good manners who's grateful for people in his life. He is soft spoken when first meeting and will go with the flow. Sean describes himself as patient and focused, especially when working on his drawings, computer animation projects, and game programming tasks. He reports that Art is his best subject in school as he loves to draw. His dream is to be a successful YouTuber and to attend a school specializing in animation and visual effects in hopes of working at either PIXAR or Dream Works. Sean does well with redirection and when kept on a structured schedule of daily routines, he can balance out completing chores, his computer/art interests and family time. Sean does well with youth his age and younger youth siblings in the home setting. Sean states he is open to most family dynamics and open to sharing a bedroom with siblings. Sean would like to live in a home with pets such as a dog. An important connection for Sean to maintain is contact with his little sisters on a regular basis.

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
Administration
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

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www.cafsnj.org



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

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CONFERENCES AND MORE

Looking for an on-line support group, training or podcast? Check out our "Virtual Support" section on our NJ ARCH website. There you will find numerous resources without leaving your home!

Looking for an adoption – related event or conference? Check out some of these resources!

November 20, 2022: Adoptive Parents Committee (APC), 42nd Annual (Virtual) Conference. Visit: www.adoptiveparents.org/annual-conference

Spence Chapin Services for Families and Children offers many events for pre- and post-adoptive families. For more info, visit: <https://spence-chapin.org/events-calendar/>

Holt International offers many services and adoption information sessions. For more info, visit: www.holtinternational.org/pas/coaching-and-education/

Wide Horizons for Children offers many adoption information sessions and post adoption services. For more info visit: <https://whfc.org/adoption/>

Save the Date!

March 11, 2023: 40th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption" (virtual) conference. Sponsored by Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) and Rutgers University, www.cpfanjer.org

April 26 – 28, 2023: Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) National Conference, Washington DC. www.cwla.org/cwla2023/

June 28– 30, 2023: National Council on Adoption Conference, St. Louis, MO. <https://adoptioncouncil.org/ncfa-conference/>

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