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NJ•ARCH Features:

- Free Lending Library
- Warm Line
- Resource Directory
- Training Workshops



www.cafsnj.org

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH INFORMATION

NOVEMBER IS
**NATIONAL
ADOPTION MONTH**

childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth

CHILDREN & FAMILIES Children's Bureau Child Welfare Information Gateway

Here at NJ ARCH, we recognize National Adoption Month each November. It's a time to celebrate families formed through adoption and a time to bring awareness to the thousands of children and teens still waiting for permanent homes.

The roots of National Adoption Month can be traced back nearly 50 years ago. In 1976, the governor of Massachusetts first proclaimed National Adoption Week to call attention to the urgent need for more adoptive families for children in foster care. By 1995, President Clinton extended the week into the whole month of November.

National Adoption Day is a special highlight of National Adoption Month. This meaningful day brings families, judges, and communities together as thousands of adoptions are finalized in courtrooms simultaneously. This year National Adoption Day is on Saturday, November 22, 2025.

During this month, we encourage you to:

- Share your adoption story with loved ones or professionals
- Support agencies or programs that help individuals who have been touched by adoption
- Mentor a teen aging out of foster care
- Ask your local library to highlight adoption positive books
- Raise awareness about the children waiting to be adopted

National Adoption Month brings celebration and joy to many families across the country. It can also be a reminder of grief and loss for adoptees and birth parents. We recognize that

it can be a difficult time too, whether it's parents and families who are struggling through the adoption process, teens aging out of foster care, or children who are still waiting.

For more information on National Adoption Awareness month and to download resources, please visit:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth/> and <https://adoptuskids.org/>.

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.

Every teenager in foster care has a story to tell.

Make Every Conversation Matter.

QUICK TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUTH:

- Be honest and real about what is happening.
- Focus on strengths, but share honest feedback.
- Be trauma informed and recognize when trauma is a barrier.
- Ask meaningful questions and listen with empathy.
- Share tasks and set goals together.

Children's Bureau

Child Welfare Information Gateway

Real Help For Parents When They Need it Most



Parents Inc. of New Jersey provides:

SUPPORT GROUPS:

Free weekly parent-led, professionally facilitated mutual support meetings create a safe environment for parents to support and learn from one another.

THE FAMILY HELPLINE (1-800-THE-KIDS):

24-hour Listening & Text Line providing information, referral, and crisis intervention.

Visit:

parentsincfnj.org

Help, Hope & Support Is Just a Text Away

♥ Live Support 24/7/365

✉ Text or call

➦ Referrals

📖 Information & Resources

1-800-THE-KIDS



POST-ADOPTION CONTACT AGREEMENTS

New Jersey is considering new legislation that could bring meaningful changes to adoption by making Post-Adoption Contact Agreements (PACAs) legally enforceable. These agreements are made between adoptive parents and birth parents to outline what type of communication, if any, will continue after an adoption is finalized. While PACAs are already used in New Jersey, they currently cannot be enforced in court, which means either party can withdraw from the agreement at any time. The proposed bill would change that by allowing courts to approve and uphold contact agreements when they are voluntary and in the best interests of the child.

PACAs vary widely depending on the needs of the child and the comfort level of the families involved. They may include occasional updates, letters, emails, phone calls, photo exchanges, or planned visits. Under the proposed legislation, families who choose to create a PACA could have it approved by a judge at the time of adoption, giving clarity and stability. New Jersey would not be alone in making this change. Twenty-five states already

recognize and enforce PACAs, reflecting a growing understanding of the role that openness can play in adoptions. Research shows that when it is safe and appropriate, maintaining connection with birth family can help children better understand their personal history and identity.

For adoptive parents, enforceable agreements can bring peace of mind. Rather than creating uncertainty, clearly defined expectations around contact can prevent misunderstandings and set healthy boundaries. These agreements do not give birth parents any parental rights or decision-making authority after the adoption. Instead, they create a mutually agreed-upon plan for communication that supports the child's emotional well-being.

For children, having a safe and predictable way to connect to their biological roots can help answer important questions. It can also provide access to important medical information or family history.

For birth parents, knowing that they will receive updates or maintain some form of contact can ease

their grief and help them feel respected in the adoption process. PACAs provide reassurance that promises made at the time of adoption will be honored.

This legislation does not require families to enter into a PACA. Families who prefer a closed adoption would not be affected. The bill simply gives families who choose openness a way to ensure their agreement is respected over time with legal protections. It ensures that any contact arrangement can be adjusted if needed to protect the child's best interests. If passed, this law would align New Jersey with best practices already in place across much of the country. It offers a balanced approach that supports openness and cooperation in adoption, while still preserving the full legal rights of adoptive parents. Ultimately, enforceable PACAs can help build stable, trusting relationships between adoptive and birth families that put the child first.

For more information:

<https://adoptioncouncil.org/publications/post-adoption-contact-agreements-what-they-are-what-they-include-and-how-they-help/>

ADOPTION TAX CREDIT UPDATES

Great News on Changes to the Adoption Tax Credit!

There's exciting news for adoptive families! Congress has approved a new policy making the federal Adoption Tax Credit partially refundable, which means more families can benefit, even if their tax bill is small.

Starting with the 2025 tax year, eligible families can receive up to \$5,000 as a refundable credit, helping cover important adoption expenses like court costs, attorney and agency fees, as well as post-adoption needs such as medical care and support services.

The total maximum Adoption

Tax Credit for 2025 is \$17,280 per child in qualified expenses.

Learn more through the **National Council for Adoption** and see how this change could help your family!

<https://adoptioncouncil.org/article/adoption-tax-credit-questions/>

THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE INFORMATION

Opening your home to a child in need is one of the most powerful gifts you can give. The presence of a caring adult can mean the difference between surviving and truly thriving for youth who have experienced trauma or significant challenges. That's the heart of therapeutic foster care.

What Is Therapeutic Foster Care?

Therapeutic foster care (also known as treatment homes) provides youth with the chance to live in a family setting while receiving extra care and guidance. Unlike traditional foster care, treatment homes are designed to provide a higher level of support for youth with emotional, behavioral, or developmental needs. Therapeutic foster parents receive specialized training so they can provide structure and compassion that youth need to grow.

By stepping into this role, you can:

- Offer children a safe and

consistent home environment.

- Help youth heal, grow, and discover their potential.
- Receive counseling, medical coverage, medication monitoring, and case management for the child along with 24/7 guidance from a professional team.
- Connect with other foster parents who share the same commitment.

People from all backgrounds can be therapeutic foster parents. They can be single or married, working or retired, homeowners or renters, but what matters most is a caring heart and willingness to learn. As a therapeutic foster parent, you help youth in your care with activities, responsibilities (homework, getting ready for school, healthy eating, etc.), take them to their appointments, and celebrate all of their successes. You'll work closely

with caseworkers, therapists, and support staff who will walk with you every step of the way. Together, you'll create an environment where children can feel safe, valued, and hopeful again.

Every child deserves a safe and nurturing place they can call home. By becoming a therapeutic foster parent, you're not only offering that home, you are giving a child the chance to believe in their future, a chance to heal, and build healthy relationships. It's a role that takes heart, but the rewards are immeasurable and the impact will last a lifetime.

For more information and to learn more about becoming a therapeutic foster parent, call Sylvia Bernard at 201-740-7049 or email:

sbernard@cafnsj.org.

NAVIGATING THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season can be a joyful yet emotionally complex time for adoptive and foster families. Holidays can be overwhelming for anyone, but particularly children that have experienced trauma. Children may experience mixed feelings about family gatherings, traditions, or memories connected to their birth families.

During the holiday season, it's common to see more tantrums, sadness, and anxiety. Changes in routine and diet,

overstimulation, large gatherings, distracted caregivers, the excitement and eventual letdown of the holidays, and memories of birth family can all stir up big emotions for children. Understanding these emotional reactions as expressions of stress, grief, or sadness helps parents respond with empathy and connection.

Parents can help by keeping routines predictable, validating children's feelings, blending traditions or creat-

ing new rituals. Acknowledging both the joy and the challenges of the season helps children feel seen and supported. Simple gestures like talking openly about feelings, setting realistic expectations, and creating space for quiet moments can make the holidays more meaningful for everyone.

<https://blog.adoptuskids.org/providing-comfort-and-joy-during-a-season-of-emotional-ambivalence/>

SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION

Foster the Family provides immediate, practical support and ongoing, holistic care to families welcoming vulnerable children through foster, adoption, and kinship care.

Foster the Family can help with Placement Packages, Support Groups, Kid's Day Out, Family Event, and more. For more information visit their website at:

www.fosterthefamily.org

The following are NJ-based support groups:

CARE (faith based)

2nd Sunday 7:30pm
1892 Greentree Road,
Cherry Hill

Leader: Erin Rodriguez &
Jesse Boykin

jesse@fosterthefamily.org

FTF Marlton

4th Wednesday 7:-00pm
111 W. Greentree Road,
Marlton

Leader: Jesse Boykin

jesse@fosterthefamily.org

FTF Vineland

3rd Friday 7:30pm
1987 S. Lincoln Ave, Vine-
land

Leader:

Heather Zimmerman

Captivatedsoul0@gmail.com

FTF Central Jersey

4th Sunday 4pm
232 Main Street, Matawan

Leader: Micah Wiginton

micah@fosterthefamily.org



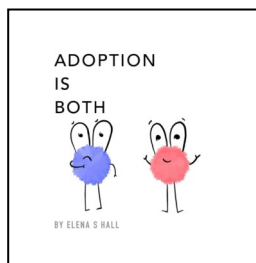
NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

NJ ARCH hosted its first ever *Virtual Family Storytime!*

NJ ARCH is proud to have celebrated National Adoption Month in a special way this year. For three cozy evenings in November authors of children's books read their heartfelt stories about adoption and belonging. Each night included a Q&A session and a fun activity for everyone. Thank you to everyone who joined us during this special event! We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.



On November 4, author and adoptee Elena S. Hall read her book **Adoption is Both**, which is a thoughtful and emotionally resonant story that recognizes that there many ways to think about adoption and that all feelings are valid. A small, endearing character who changes color- sometimes pink and sometimes 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.



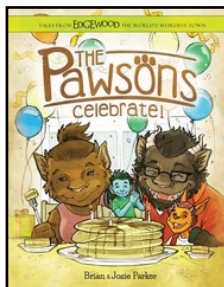
This book reminds young readers that it's okay to feel more than one thing at once and opens the door for

meaningful dialogue and emotional understanding.

Elena brings both personal and professional insight to her work. Her other books include **Through Adopted Eyes**, **Through Adopted Hearts**, and **My Adoptee Voice**. You can follow her on Instagram @ThroughAdoptedEyes.



On November 11, Brian and Josie Parker read their book **The Pawsons Celebrate**. It is about a lovable, furry family of monsters who have just moved to the town of Edgewood. In this follow-up to **The Pawsons Move In**, we get a chance to see them celebrate all of their favorite holidays, with one very special day coming up on their calendar. It's their son Maury's Gotcha' Day - the celebration of his official adoption! The authors have infused this story with their unique experiences as "creative weirdos," foster parents, and members of a diverse community, to tell a one-of-a-kind story.

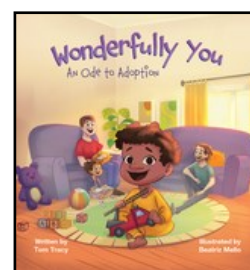


The Parkers have written many books including **The Epic of Nicholas the Mak-**

er series. Through their work, the Parkers use storytelling as a medium for change, and encourage open minds, empathy, and aspiration to greater heights. Learn more at believeinwonder.weebly.com.



On November 18, author Tom Tracy read his book **Wonderfully You: An Ode to Adoption**, which is a love note to children who have been adopted. This heartfelt story showcases family creation through the experience of transracial adoption. The reader is invited to experience the adoption journey through melodic rhyming narrative, which is complemented by beautiful, hand-drawn illustrations. It is a perfect read for kids, grandkids, classrooms, those touched by adoption, and individuals looking for books that portray diverse families.



Some of Tom's other books include **Jazmyne's Big Emotions**, **Some Families**, **All Families**, and **Scoochie & Skiddles** series. Discover more about Tom and his books at www.tomtracybooks.com

DCP&P WAITING CHILDREN



Logan
Born May 2009

Logan is known to be very extroverted, friendly, affectionate and you will feel very warm and welcomed being around him. He will greet you with a big smile, a high five and, if you're cool with it, a loving hug! Some of Logan's favorite places to visit are youth-friendly aquariums, museums and trampoline parks (prepare yourself for a possible jumping competition!) One of Logan's comfort activities to do inside the home is playing with his toy truck or car collections, rolling them or crashing them together on the floor. What really makes him feel loved is when someone special is on the floor sharing that play activity with him. He also likes race cars and the HULK. Logan looks forward to his regularly scheduled visits with his brother, and they both enjoy being outside, running around, or playing in a park. Logan would do well in a home with or without other children and pets. He would do very well in a family that could ensure continued contact with his brother, who can also be affectionate, patient and attentive to his needs. He will require a family who is willing to commit to his lifelong care, and who can assist him in being successful throughout his adulthood.

For more information, email Jacqueline DeMarco at jacqueline.demarco@dcf.nj.gov



Angelita
Born February 2013

Meet Angelita: A very loving, talented, and quite creative child with such a BIG personality! Her creativity shines in all her arts and crafts, dancing routines (up for a good "dance off"?), as well as challenging herself to learn new skills and experiences. Angelita loves singing along to her favorite tunes whether it's songs from the Disney catalog or some of her favorite artists like Selena, Beyonce, and Taylor Swift. Angelita is never one to shy away from doing karaoke! Currently, Angelita is in dance classes and recently started softball. She is motivated to continue learning and is a strong advocate for herself. Angelita's current favorite subjects in school are Math and Art. Angelita has a lot of love to give and would be a great addition in any family that is open to providing a forever home with lots of love, guidance, and opportunities. Angelita is open to pets in a home and has an affinity for cats!

For more information, email Lisa Scott at lisa.scott@dcf.state.nj.gov



Keriana
Born June 2009

Keriana is a very friendly and affectionate young lady. Easy going and happy-go-lucky, you can usually find her laughing and smiling. At school, Keriana is an active member of the step team and has recently joined the drama club. She is a fan of the Packers but does not have a specific athlete that she admires. Keriana wanted to share that she likes playing video games, especially FNAF. Walking her dog, fixing her bike and swimming at a nearby beach are a few other interests that Keriana enjoys. Keriana calls herself "Burrito" and she is very helpful around the house. A fun fact about Keriana is that she likes pineapple on her pizza. Keriana has a strong bond with her sister and would like to maintain contact with her post adoption.

For more information, email Kenyatta Johnson at kenyatta.johnson@dcf.nj.gov

Or call
1-800-99-ADOPT



NEW JERSEY **SUPPORT** **GROUP** **HIGHLIGHT**

Concerned Persons For Adoption (CPFA)

A non-profit organization in the State of New Jersey dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a family. CPFA is not an adoption agency, but a volunteer organization working to support those who wish to adopt, and to provide educational and networking resources to those who have adopted.

**CONCERNED
PERSONS
FOR
ADOPTION**
CPFANJ.ORG

**Membership of \$25/yr
includes:**

**Family Events
Conferences
Book Club
Let's Talk
Newsletters
And much more!**

A great opportunity to
connect with other
families and individuals!

www.cpfanjanj.org

NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

76 SOUTH ORANGE AVENUE
SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079

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www.cafsnj.org



AWARDED THROUGH
THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
IN WASHINGTON, DC IN 2005

NJ ARCH

The one-stop

resource

for those

touched

by adoption.

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While New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ-ARCH) or Children's Aid and Family Services makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither NJ-ARCH nor Children's Aid and Family Services guarantee the completeness, efficacy or timeliness of such information. In addition, reference herein to any specific product, process, service, organization, or viewpoint does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by NJ-ARCH or Children's Aid and Family Services.

Congratulations to this Year's Angels in Adoption!



Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded in 2001 to eliminate the barriers that prevent children from being part of a safe, nurturing, and permanent family. CCAI has served as a trusted, principal source of the information, expertise, and resources

needed by members of Congress' Adoption Caucus, the [Congressional Coalition on Adoption](#) (CCA), on permanency issues both in the United States and around the world.

Since its inception in 1999, the Angels in Adoption® Leadership Program has upheld a tradition of celebrating the extraordinary efforts of individuals, couples, families, and organizations who work tirelessly to advocate for children, youth, and families. Throughout the 26 years, over 3,100 An-

gels have received this special honor. CCAI also awards a select number of National Angels in Adoption® honorees. As the name implies, these are individuals whose contributions in the fields of adoption or foster care have an impact on a national scale.

For information and to read about this year's angels, visit:

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

CONFERENCES AND MORE

[Save the Date!](#)

April 20-22, 2026 Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) National Conference, Washington DC.
<https://www.cwla.org/cwla-2026-conference/>

June 24-26, 2026: National Council on Adoption Conference, Arlington, VA.
<https://adoptioncouncil.org/ncfa-conference/>

The **Adoption-Sensitive Clinical Care (ASCC)** project is now offering training through the newly updated

Understanding Infant Adoption 7 (UIA 7) curriculum.

Released in 2025, the updated UIA 7 provides current adoption information and guidance for healthcare professionals, with flexible formats designed to meet the needs of hospital-based staff.

ASCC training can be accessed for **free**. Participants can choose to receive CMEs or Social Work CE's for course completion.

For more information, visit:
<https://hbasct.org/>

Check out the NJ ARCH website for more resources and events at www.njarch.org Reach out anytime to our warm line: 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, healthy, and safe holiday season!

