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Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services Post-Adoption Link Newsletter

Retrace Developmental Stages to Help Older Children Heal

By Claudia Fletcher

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An adoptive parent and child welfare expert, Claudia is a sought after speaker. She and her husband Bart also founded Third Degree Parenting, LLC, and this year published Out of Many, One Family: How Two Adults Claimed Twelve Children through Adoption.

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Years ago, I was the social worker on two separate cases that disrupted the same year. With each set of parents I tried to explain a fundamental truth: relationship reciprocity and bonding expectations for a child during the first year of an adoptive placement must be the same as those for a newborn. To heal and thrive, older adoptees must be able to retrace, with their new family, developmental steps they missed early on.



During college I studied Erik Erikson, a Pulitzer prize-winning psychologist known for his work on identity and psychosocial development in the mid-1900s. Decades later, I noticed remarkable connections between his theories and parenting older children. The key part of Erikson's theory is that until a person completes one developmental stage, they cannot go on to the next stage.

Erikson's first four stages—applied to youth from the time of placement to the time they get ready for independence—can teach parents how to help older children heal while they still live at home.



**Special
Interest:**

**Mothers' Day
article in the
May 2009
TCJFS Post
Adoption Link
Newsletter**

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Stage One: The First 18 Months

Ego Development Outcome: **TRUST VS. MISTRUST;** Basic Strengths: **Drive and Hope**

"[E]mphasis is on the mother's positive and loving care...[using] visual contact and touch. If we pass successfully through this period of life, we...[can] trust that life is basically okay and have basic confidence in the future. ...[I]f our needs are not met, we may end up with a deep-seated feeling of worthlessness and a [general] mistrust of the world."¹

Research has shown us how important it is for children to attach. Even so, in the first year after placement, we new parents still make the mistake of dwelling on behaviors instead of attachment. Things can change if we view a newly placed children of any age as a newborn:

- Expectations. Can a newborn give back emotionally? Do chores like everyone else? Know how to have a reciprocal relationship? Of course not. Neither do older kids in a new family.
- Response. If expectation changes, so does the response. Instead of thinking a child is refusing to comply, assume she is unable to complete the task. This nurturing, teaching approach often nets better results whether a child is being oppositional or is truly incapable.
- Realizations. Until a child is attached, behavior will not change. If the child cannot bond with anyone, why would he want to please anyone? Too often adoptive parents expect compliance outside the context of a relationship. Without that relationship, however, a child has no incentive to behave better.

To help children attach, learn to gently correct behaviors without over-reacting. Picture yourself as a new husband or wife trying to please the other and be genuinely attractive and worth attaching to. Long lists of rules and consequences that require consistent behavior management should not be the focus of this first stage.

As much as possible, create good feelings for the child whenever you are around. Use lots of laughter, pop a Hershey's kiss in her mouth when she sustains eye contact, and give as much affection as she will allow. When the child misbehaves, stay calm and point out that the behavior is not appropriate while redirecting her to a new activity with you by her side. Actions and reactions like these promote bonding between parents and children.

One of the most significant pieces of this stage in understanding hurt children is Erikson's definition of hope: "enduring belief in the attainability of fervent wishes."² Recognizing that many children who enter care do not believe they can get what they want provides insight into their little hearts. With no hope and no belief in their own abilities, they are victims in a dim dark world. And, according to Erikson's theory, the only way they can develop the ego quality of hope is to attach to another person.

Stage Two: 18 Months to 3 Years after Placement

Ego Development Outcome: AUTONOMY VS. SHAME; Basic Strengths: Self-Control, Courage, and Will

Once an adopted child learns to attach, he is ready for stage two—the "terrible twos" in typical development. For a child placed at 11, this stage can coincide with puberty. Complicating matters further, we parents find it exceedingly hard to muster the emotional response we would offer a tantruming toddler when confronted with a older child having a meltdown.

During Erikson's second stage, as Arlene Harder explains, we can "build self-esteem and autonomy as we gain more control over our bodies and acquire new skills, learning right from wrong. And one of our skills during the 'Terrible Twos' is our ability to use the powerful word 'NO!' It may be pain for parents, but it develops important skills of the will.³

Parents are often so relieved when it appears the child is attaching that they begin to panic when defiance kicks up a notch. They wonder if the attachment isn't real, but according to Erikson, only when children complete the attachment stage can they enter the willful stage during which the need to question, tantrum, and act out dramatically multiplies.

Responding to an older child's tantrum as if she were a two-year-old is tricky. We can pick up a two-year-old and take her to a safe place to calm down. When a youth is 15, however, that's not an option. Remembering that her actions are as impersonal and unplanned as a toddler's can help us overlook much of it.

In the midst of a tantrum, children cannot reason. Do not try to discuss their behavior or redirect them by speaking more loudly. That only escalates the situation. If the child is safe and doesn't pose a danger to himself or others, the best choice is often to leave the room and give him time to finish the tantrum. If safety is a concern, sit down and remain silent or talk very softly. Active listening is much better than attempting to reason.

Consider a raging child who goes into the "nobody likes me" mode. Our natural instinct is to assure her of our love, but that just gives her a reason to argue. A better response is, "It sounds like you are feeling sad or feeling like you aren't loved." To de-escalate tantrums, listen actively and rephrase the child's thoughts.

Many of our children have raged over the years, all at different stages and in different ways. They have used foul language, threatened us, and damaged property. At the outset of our parenting journey we wanted to rapidly stop the meltdowns, but that just made things worse. Now, with our younger children, we respond as calmly as possible and wait it out.

Stage Three: 3 to 5 Years Post-Placement

Ego Development Outcome: INITIATIVE VS. GUILT;

Basic Strength: Purpose

Erikson links the third psychosocial crisis to the "play age," or later preschool years. During this time, the healthy developing child learns to: (1) imagine and broaden skills through active play of all sorts, including fantasy, (2) cooperate with others, and (3) lead as well as follow. [4](#)

Healthy preschoolers can explore and develop social skills fairly easily, but the same lessons are much harder for an older child. Using the example of a boy who is 10 at placement, let's go through his adolescence according to Erikson.

For 18 months after your family welcomes the child home, until he is 12, the boy is working on attachment. Then it is time for his defiance phase. Until the child is almost 14, he is oppositional, argues with everything, and has fits of aggression. Now he's entering high school, and it is time to learn the social skills his peers learned in preschool.

At this stage you must allow for failure, let him be imaginative, and set up ways he can test skills without being embarrassed. Scouting or martial arts classes where multi-age groups participate can offer children a place to connect with whomever they feel comfortable. Preschoolers love hanging out with "cool" older kids. Allowing older children to master interactions with much younger children can be beneficial for both.

Some of our oldest kids really enjoy spending time with the youngest ones. We supervise the interaction, and try to keep other siblings' comments to a minimum. Finding situations in which the youth can be both a leader and follower may also help during this stage.

Failure to resolve this stage, Erikson explains, causes immobilizing guilt. Children maybe be fearful, hang back from groups, rely too heavily on adults, and have a limited ability to play and imagine.

Thus it is key to guide children through stage three so they can face stage four without fear or guilt. Trying to rush them through stages because they are so much behind their peers is counterproductive.

Stage Four: 6 to 12 Years after Placement

Ego Development Outcome: **INDUSTRY VS. INFERIORITY;** Basic Strengths: Method and Competence

“During this stage...we are capable of learning, creating and accomplishing numerous new skills and knowledge, thus developing a sense of industry. This is also a very social stage of development and if we experience unresolved feelings of inadequacy and inferiority among our peers, we can have serious problems [with]...competence and self-esteem.”⁵

Years after their peers, many adopted children reach a stage where they can make future plans. Up to this point they have had a sense of inadequacy and inferiority that has eroded feelings of competence and hurt their self-esteem. Fortunately, with support of dedicated parents, youth can still work through stage four and learn to feel good about themselves.

Children who hit this stage at age five have years to test a variety of life choices. Older children who still need to discover talents and interests must try many different things in an abbreviated timeframe. It's important to give youth plenty of chances to succeed and offer a lot of encouragement. Tasks that your children do with you can increase their confidence and receptivity to new activities.

Schools and communities offer other options. Music, sports, drama, and other community ed classes enable children to explore many avenues. We allow our stage four children to try a lot of activities and ask only that they participate for one season before electing to opt out.

Final Thoughts

Parenting older adopted children requires patience, time, and realistic expectations. Keeping in mind Erikson's stages has helped me to parent my own children more effectively, and better prepare parents as they plan to adopt and work through the first few years of placement.

Each stage takes longer than we might prefer. But just as we cannot expect a healthy two-year-old to act like a 10-year-old, we cannot expect a 10-year-old child who is emotionally two to act his age. When we take a step back, slow ourselves down, celebrate small victories, and walk through this journey with our children, there can be healing for us all. END

Footnotes

1. Harder, Arlene F. , M.A., MFT. “The Developmental Stages of Eric Erikson.” www.learningplaceonline.com/stages/organize/Erikson.htm. Support4Change. n.d. Web. 5 Nov. 2009.
2. Erikson, Erik. *Insight and Responsibility*. New York: W.W. Norton. 1964. p.118.
3. Harder, 2009.
4. "Stages of Social-Emotional Development in Children and Teenagers." www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/erikson.shtml. Child Development Institute. n.d. Web. 5 Nov. 2009.
5. Harder, 2009.



Adoption and Race: Articles

Building Racial Identity: Strategies and Practical Suggestions

By Beth Hall

General Approach:

It is important to teach your children that race is a fact of birth which no one has either chosen or earned; and that being a racist is both a state of mind and a choice. It is essential to train your children to recognize racism where it exists (not an easy task, since it also means training yourself). Talk about racism and point it out when you encounter it. Minimizing racism's place in life may unfortunately allow your children to feel responsible for racist behavior they have experienced; to believe that they have somehow done something to deserve it; or perhaps to believe that you think this could be the case.

Specific Strategies:

1. Look at the laundry list of your daily errands and life experiences. Whenever possible, choose to surround yourself with people of your child's race or with other people of color.
2. When choosing professionals such as doctors, dentists, lawyers, and so on, allow race to be a factor in your choice. It is essential that, wherever possible, you counterbalance our society's generally negative stereotypes of and expectations for people of color.
3. Schools are very important places for children. Whenever possible, choose a school attended by other children of color and by multiracial families, for this diversity always offers wonderful opportunities for familiarization and identification. When choosing extracurricular classes or lessons for your children, expose them to skills that will enhance their cultural competence. If they are learning to cook, then choose classes where they can cook the foods common to their ethnic heritage. Languages, art and sports: all can be chosen with an eye to building cultural competence and personal connections within your children's racial or ethnic group of origin.
4. When going to the mall, movies or a restaurant, drive those few extra miles if it means being somewhere frequented by other families of color. Your children benefit from every opportunity to observe and join in with others of their race, rather than always being the "only one" of color in a group; similarly, such experiences help to avoid the possibility that the only people of color whom they know are other adopted children with White parents.
5. When taking vacations or sending your children to summer camps and other recreational activities, choose places and experiences where they can be exposed to people of their own race. Particularly if you live in a predominantly White area, these may offer some of the rare opportunities for your child to be with and around people of color.
6. Groom your children so they look good all the time. Because of their membership in your family, they may be watched more carefully and judged more stringently by people from their own racial group(s). To give them the armor to feel good about themselves, help them to dress and groom

themselves according to the "mainstream" styles of their own racial context rather than of yours. Many opportunities can be found; to offer just two possibilities, African American girls commonly wear long hair (avoiding short afros), oiled and combed (or brushed) daily and either worn up, braided or well-coifed; Latina girls often wear pierced ears from infancy. These physical manifestations not only become vehicles of good self-esteem but provide connecting links between them and other children of their race who are growing up in same-race homes.

7. Expose your children early and often to the history of "their" people. Don't shy away from the negative aspects of their history, for they need to understand the whole truth. Don't just give them facts - point out why and how these facts relate to them personally. And make sure you not only teach them yourself; whenever possible, let them hear from people of their own race so they can understand the pride and importance of this shared history and experience.
8. Hold out high expectations for your children. Skill-mastery becomes one of the strongest building blocks of self-esteem. Children of color often need the protection of personal success and accomplishment to counterbalance society's lowered or negative expectations. Communicate to your children your belief that they can be excellent at things for which they have talent and strength and that they can do well in all things to which they set their minds. They need to know that, while it takes hard work and great stamina to overcome difficult odds, this struggle is their legacy and they should not allow others' diminished expectations to limit their determination to achieve.
9. Give your children the social and interpersonal skills to act "appropriately" in their cultural context as well as in yours. In order to teach this lesson, you must first explore and recognize the differences between these two. Then you need to clarify for your children the difference between acceptable behavior within the home and safety of the family and acceptable public behavior. Children of color (and perhaps particularly those raised with White parents) are always scrutinized carefully and will be susceptible to harsh judgments from outsiders. If you and your children overlook this fact, then they will have a distinct disadvantage in their interactions with the world when you're not with them. Politeness and knowledge of appropriate social mores can go a long way to opening doors and relationships for our children.
10. Strengthening our children's sense of family identity and unity is essential to helping our children manage the challenges of transracial adoption. Developing and reinforcing family rituals is an important tool for creating this sense of family membership. Such rituals can help emphasize all the similarities among a family's members, without denying the differences. Seek opportunities to create rituals that clarify family membership. These family rituals, small or large, silly or somber, can become simple parts of your family's life and can come to define being a member of your family. They can involve things like eating family meals together at certain times during each week; having special family songs, inside jokes or conversations; or developing and maintaining ceremonies or traditions for certain events or holidays (innovative or traditional). There are millions that you can create together; whatever your family's special blend, they are important and essential tools to help both our children and ourselves feel like fully entitled members of our families.

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<http://www.pactadopt.org>

info@pactadopt.org

Author Beth Hall can be Emailed at

beth@pactadopt.org

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Hall at pactadopt.org



Adoption and Race: Articles

Helping Your Child Develop A Positive Racial/Ethnic Identity By Jeanne Lin

What are the particular risks and challenges that transracial adoption presents to identity development for the child? What challenges does the adopted person's identity development present to the transracial family system? What specific kinds of issues and conflicts might arise and, importantly, what can we do to handle them? In asking these questions, I am specifically referring to families in which at least one parent is Caucasian and the adopted child is a person of color.

I should begin by saying that I am not a parent, nor am I an adopted person. I am a clinical psychologist who has long been interested in the issue of racial identity development. I had the opportunity recently to attend a workshop sponsored by Pact on transracial adoption and was particularly intrigued by the spirited discussion among workshop participants who described their experiences with race issues, race differences, and racism as parents of children of color.

One of the participants, the adoptive parent of a three-year-old African American child, shared a recent experience he had had with his son. The father, a Caucasian man, described his reaction when his son turned to him one day and said, "Daddy, when I grow up, I want to look just like you." The father was immediately alarmed. Was this a sign that his son was ashamed of his own skin color? That he wanted to be White? How should he handle this? But it then occurred to him that perhaps this was not so much a racial issue as a normal developmental one (i.e. wanting to look like one's Dad). He then wondered whether parents who adopt transracially are so alert to possible problems in racial identity development that they at times pathologize what is essentially a normal developmental process.

This father made what seemed to me to be a rather astute observation. That is, that our concern about optimal racial identity development may at times obscure our awareness of and distort our interpretation of normative developmental processes. This is an important and often overlooked point. However, is there more involved in understanding this scenario?

It does seem natural, on the one hand, for a child to wish to grow up to be "just like Dad" in every way. In fact, one could argue that for the adoptive relationship, this identification is not only natural but highly desirable, for it signals that an important attachment bond is being established between child and parent. However, what this child expressed (and what seemed to be the cause for initial concern) was his desire specifically to "look just like" his dad. This may seem at first to be a small distinction, but there are reasons to think it not so insignificant.

We might note that, in addition to developing an attachment bond, this child is also developing a powerful identification with his father. It should be pointed out that a positive identification with a same-sex role model (typically, one's parent) is optimal if not essential to developing a healthy concept of who we are.

But what does it mean for this African American child to become identified with his Caucasian father? The racial difference between them is no small matter. Even if one chooses to de-emphasize this difference, it is one to which others will frequently react. The very physical nature of race differences make it difficult to ignore.

"Race," and to a lesser extent "social class," are two highly salient dimensions on which we make distinctions between people in our culture. In fact, children demonstrate an awareness of racial differences as early as two and three years of age. Depending on their experience, children may also be aware very early in life of power differences that exist between racial groups. So what is the impact of this knowledge on a transracially-adopted child? That one particular race is more highly valued and privileged than another is a condition all people of color must grapple with. How one develops a healthy self-esteem in the face of this knowledge is a critical developmental issue for children and adolescents of color, regardless of parental history.

Thus, identification with one's parent may produce highly positive fruits for a child's self-esteem (assuming of course, a positive role model). At the same time, the reality of their race difference poses a more complex and challenging task to the child as (s)he approaches the developmental steps of integrating his or her own racial identity.

Consider for example, the Caucasian adoptive mother of a Latina adolescent who shared a particularly painful experience which had recently ensued with her daughter. Her daughter was beginning to identify with her Latina roots, spending her time exclusively with her Latina friends and participating in more cultural activities. The mother had been very supportive of her daughter's interest and encouraged her connections with Latino culture throughout her childhood. She was, then, especially hurt when her daughter began verbally castigating her mother for being White. The mother felt both hurt and confused, since she had been very supportive of her daughter and wanted to continue to be so, but understandably did not appreciate being treated as "the enemy."

Models of racial (minority) identity development describe a developmental process that begins with identification with and conformity to the values of the host culture. This may include belief in the negative stereotypes about one's own group. As one begins to identify with the experience of being part of an oppressed group (i.e. to comprehend experiences of racism and discrimination and identify with that experience), an attitudinal and conceptual shift occurs in which one begins to grasp the full import and weight of what it means to be part of an oppressed group. Anger and resentment toward members of the dominant group are common, as are polarized feelings about "us" and "them" and a rejection of things associated with the dominant group. Only later, as one begins to live within life's "gray areas," so to speak, does one begin to confront the inconsistencies of this perspective. Grappling with such inconsistencies will ideally foster the development of a more nuanced world view.

As children approach adolescence, they may become increasingly aware of the consequences of race. For example, they will have to determine how they will experience the fact that, in our society, important distinctions about people are often made on the basis of their race. That is, race matters. And what will they do with the knowledge that their race/ethnicity is one about which many negative assumptions are made? How will they understand the fact that their parent not only does not share this racial status, but that the parent belongs to a group which, as a group, oppresses members of the child's racial group? Or the fact that, as a member of that group, the parent is accorded privileges the child will not have?

If it is painful to read these questions, imagine how it must feel to be an adolescent and to live with them. Anger, envy, loneliness, and confusion are all normal and expectable responses. In fact, the feelings that this knowledge evokes can be so uncomfortable that some individuals defend against feeling them by denying that racial differences matter at all. "Why do people make such a big deal about race? People are just people." "The only race I'm a member of is the human race." This reaction can occur for the parent as well as the child.

When adolescents begin to understand the impact of race differences, they may have very rigid views of one race vs. another; that is, seeing all Whites as racist, or all members of their own ethnic group as trustworthy. This acknowledgment of the negative aspects of race differences may threaten the family bonds the transracial family has worked hard to achieve. Parents as well as children may feel alienated, rejected, confused, and misunderstood. In such an event, trust, patience, and communication are sorely needed, but often in short supply.

In the latter stages, adolescents begin to grapple with experiences which do not conform to their previously constructed schema. In doing so, they ideally develop a more integrated understanding of race differences and of themselves. For example, if "we" are the victims and can only trust on another, and "they" are the oppressors, how do we make sense of the experience of being betrayed or injured by someone from one's own group? Further, how do we make sense of our relationship with our parents? How do we understand our loving feelings toward people who resemble those who hurt us?

What Parents Can Do:

- Do try to make clear your commitment to your relationship. This is especially hard in the face of rejection, but especially crucial to your child that you are able to do so. It may help to remind yourself that your child likely feels as confused and uncertain as you do.
- Do acknowledge the pain behind their anger. If you are a Caucasian parent of a child of color, you have been granted a privilege in this life that your child will never fully share, and it seems reasonable to expect that there will be a certain amount of pain for both of you as you comprehend this difference between you.
- Do acknowledge and accept the anger that may come with the pain. This does not mean that you tolerate unacceptable behavior. Acknowledging that they have a right to be angry, validating the reasons they are angry, and commiserating with them about injustices they observe and experience will go a long way toward helping them to work through their feelings and to strengthen the bond between you.

- Don't try to deny, explain away, or make excuses for what they experience as racism. "I'm sure he didn't mean it." "I don't think she would consciously do something to hurt you." These may be true statements, but they are not what your children need to hear from you. Instead of being reassuring, such statements will only convey that you can't possibly understand their experience, or worse, that you don't believe them.
- Don't get caught up in feeling guilty for your race. If your children are hurt by a racist comment or behavior, try to help them make the distinction between humane and respectful vs. abusive behavior, rather than using a racial generalization to explain why this occurred. It will be important for your child to hear you acknowledge that some White people really do abuse their power to hurt others, especially when you are Caucasian and the person who hurt them is, too.
- Do model appropriate reactions to racism. A friend who adopted a child of East Indian and Native American heritage recently took her eight-year-old daughter to see the movie "Pocahontas." Her daughter complained about the fact that the movie referred to the Indians as "savages," whispering to her mother, "Isn't that rude?" whenever they made that reference. The mother laughed half-apologetically as she told this to me ("Oh, God, she can't even enjoy Pocahontas!") and said she shouldn't be surprised at her daughter's reaction, since she and her husband "make comments like that all the time."

In fact, by this model, her mother was helping her child to externalize racist remarks rather than to internalize them. It is they who use such demeaning words who are rude, rather than she who is a "savage." This is a critical coping skill to develop for children of color to handle the onslaught of negative messages they will likely encounter in their lives. It is through the observations and modeled anger of their parents that they will be able to do this.

Of course, no one can know the perfect way to respond to insensitive remarks all the time. In fact, my most frequent response to racist insensitivity is shocked disbelief and stunned silence. It is only later that we gnash our teeth and think up clever ways to handle the situation. Giving yourself permission not to handle racial insults perfectly is to acknowledge your humanness. Don't be ashamed. It's not you or your children who need be embarrassed. Use whatever reaction you had to process the event with your children. "Wow. Can you believe he said that? My jaw just dropped open; I didn't know what to say!" Make a game out of all the things you wish you had said. Sharing and processing these experiences is an important way to externalize racism.

Don't expect yourself to have all the answers. You have spent your life understanding the world through your eyes. As you share your life with your children, you will see life through theirs. Don't be afraid to talk about your fears and concerns and share your experiences with other families. You have a very special and unique life experience, but you are not alone.

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<http://www.pactadopt.org>
info@pactadopt.org
Author Jeanne Lin can be Emailed at
drjeanlin@comcast.net

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Act Now! A Conference Opportunity on May 11, 2010!

Recognizing the Impact of Childhood Trauma: Powerful Voices, Practical Strategies

Sponsored by **NAMI Ohio** and the **National Association of Social Workers – Ohio Chapter**
with a grant from the **Ohio Department of Mental Health**

Location:

Quest Conference Center • 8405 Pulsar Place • Columbus, OH 43240 • (Near Polaris Mall off of I-71)

Conference Fee: \$35

Includes registration, course materials and lunch

Limited scholarships are available to youth, family members and advocates (see registration form).

8:30a.m. – 9:15a.m.
9:15a.m. – 9:30a.m.
9:30a.m. – 11:00a.m.

11:00a.m. – 11:15a.m.
11:15a.m. – 12:15p.m.

12:15p.m. – 1:45p.m.

1:45p.m. – 2:00p.m.
2:00p.m. – 2:45p.m.
2:45p.m. – 3:45p.m.
3:45p.m. – 4:00p.m.

Agenda:

Registration and Continental Breakfast

Welcome & Introductions

Understanding and Supporting Children After Trauma

Presenter: Robin Gurwitsch, Ph.D., National Center for School Crisis & Bereavement in Cincinnati

Break

Understanding Trauma and Juvenile Delinquency

Presenter: Monique Marrow, Ph.D., National Toledo Children's Hospital Cullen Center

Lunch & Presentation

Creative Resilience: Using Creativity for Recovery from Trauma

Presenter: Vicki Boatright, LPCC

Break

Powerful Voices: Personal Stories of Surviving Trauma

Practical Strategies: Panel Q&A (with all presenters)

Evaluations, CEU Certificates & Farewell



Dr. Robin Gurwitsch, a Clinical Psychologist, is a Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. There, Dr. Gurwitsch is the Program Coordinator for the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement. Dr. Gurwitsch specializes in work with children, particularly those considered at-risk. She has devoted much time to understanding the impact of trauma and disaster on children and ways to increase resilience, including stressors related to military deployment. She has served on state and national committees and task forces focusing on trauma, disaster, terrorism, and resilience. Dr. Gurwitsch has published numerous scientific articles and book chapters and developed materials on these issues; she has co-authored an intervention manual for use with young children after disasters/trauma and programs for the American Red Cross, including *Coping with Deployment: Psychological First Aid for Military Families* and *Coping in Today's World: Psychological First Aid and Resilience for Families, Friends, and Neighbors*. Dr. Gurwitsch and colleagues have developed a Psychological First Aid series for helping children after disaster, *Listen, Protect, and Connect*. In late 2009, Dr. Gurwitsch and colleagues received funding from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to examine the use of an evidenced-based intervention for young children and their families following deployment as part of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. She provides training and consultation services to agencies, schools, and organizations, including federal organizations, across the country and internationally. Dr. Gurwitsch currently serves as Chair of the APA Presidential Task Force on the Psychological Needs of US Military Service Members and Their Families and is a member of the APA Disaster Response Network. Dr. Gurwitsch is a member of the National Commission on Children and Disasters, Subcommittee on Human Services Recovery. She serves as a Subject Matter Expert in the area of at-risk populations for the Disaster Mental Health Subcommittee of the National Bio-Defense Science Board and for the Pediatric Preparedness and Response in Public Health Emergencies and Disasters for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (DHHS/ASPR).



Monique Marrow, Ph.D. is a child clinical psychologist and Project Director for the Toledo Children's Hospital Cullen Center. The center is funded by SAMHSA through the National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network to provide trauma assessment and treatment for children, adolescents and families. The Center is staffed by a team of social workers, clinical counselors, an art therapist and a coordinator for research and consumer advocacy. Each clinician is specifically trained and supervised to provide evidence or research based trauma treatment including TF-CBT, Child Parent Psychotherapy, and FICT. Immediately prior to her serving in this capacity Dr. Marrow served as the Deputy Director of Treatment and Rehabilitation Services for the Ohio Department of Youth Services where she was responsible for the Bureau of Behavioral Health Services, Medical Services and Education. She became interested in the area of traumatic stress after serving many years as a psychology supervisor working with severely traumatized youth who had been committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services who did not seem to be responsive to more traditional treatment methods. Dr. Marrow is the proud mother of two daughters and a son ranging in age from 7 – 19 and the proud wife of Vincent Marrow who continually supports her in the work that she has done over the years.

CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE & CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

General Certificates of Attendance and CEU Certificates will be available at the registration desk at the close of the conference upon submission of a completed evaluation. CEU certificates cannot be mailed and partial CEUs are not available. The session has been approved for Social Work CEUs, Counselor CEUs are pending.

Questions? Please contact NAMI Ohio at (800) 686-2646, (614) 224-2700 or suzanner@amiohio.org

Please copy this form as needed

Recognizing the Impact of Childhood Trauma: Powerful Voices, Practical Strategies
May 11, 2010 • Quest Center • Columbus, Ohio

Name: _____

Specialty/Profession: _____

Credentials (Degree): _____

Organization/Program: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

County: _____ Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Dietary Needs (vegetarian, allergy, kosher, diabetic, etc.) or special accommodations needed:

Please check *all* that apply:

- ☐ I wish to request a youth scholarship
- ☐ I wish to request a consumer scholarship
- ☐ I wish to request a family member scholarship
- ☐ I am an advocate with the PAC program and wish to request a scholarship
- ☐ Purchase Order Number: _____

I am requesting Continuing Education Credits Requested for:

☐ Social Work ☐ Counselor (pending)

Conference Registration - \$35 per person

Total Payment Enclosed for \$ _____ (make checks payable to: *NAMI Ohio*)

Please charge \$ _____ to my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please mail or fax completed registration information to:

NAMI Ohio
747 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43205
Fax: (614) 224-5400

Parenting in a Time of Change:

June 25 & 26, 2010

**Ohio Family Care Association
Training Event & Annual Conference**

Finding a Harbor in the Storm

**Fort Rapids
Indoor Waterpark Resort
4560 Hilton Corporate Drive
Columbus, OH 43232
614-868-1380**

Workshop Schedule

Friday, June 25, 2010

8:00- 9:00 Registration & Coffee
 9:00-10:30 Eric Fenner
 10:45 - 12:15 Workshop Session I
 12:15-12:45 Lunch provided
 12:45-2:15 Tracy Robinson
 2:30 - 5:00 Workshop Session II
 3:45 Break time

5:00 - 6:00 OFCA Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 26, 2010

8:30- 9:00 Registration & Coffee
 9:00-10:30 SAVE Media Presentation
 10:45- 12:15 New Directions
 12:15-12:45 Lunch provided
 12:45-2:15 Paula Kyle
 2:30 - 5:00 Workshop Session III
 3:45 Break time



Conference Facility

Participants are responsible for their own room arrangements

Fort Rapids
 Indoor Waterpark Resort
 4560 Hilton Corporate Drive
 Columbus, OH 43232

614-868-1380

Overnight Room reservation [Deadline: June 4, 2010]

Rate: \$89 + tax

WaterPark Tickets: \$10 per person for the conference. Purchase on arrival.

Identify yourself as an OFCA conference participant when making reservations.

OFCA does not have programming for children so if you want to make this a fun family event: bring a sitter for the kids -- or take turns supervising youngsters - one adult on Friday and one adult on Saturday. If you have not been here before check the hotel out at:

<http://www.fortrapids.com>

Children must be supervised in the water park at all times. OFCA is unable to assume responsibility for the care or safety of any children you bring to the hotel.

Directions to Fort Rapids

- * **I-70 to Hamilton Road South.**
- * **Cross over Hamilton Road at end of exit ramp (appearing to merge onto I-70 East).**
- * **Turn right on Truro Station Drive.**
- * **Turn left on Hilton Corporate Drive. Fort Rapids Indoor Waterpark Resort on left.**

Conference Highlights

Opening Sessions:

Friday: Eric Fenner



Eric began his career at Franklin County Children Services (FCCS) as a case aide in the Intake Department while in college. He was promoted through the ranks of child welfare caseworker before leaving the agency after

11 years to work for the Franklin County Department of Human Services. Eric served as the Deputy Director at Human Services before moving to the Domestic Relations and Juvenile Branch of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas. After serving time as the Associate State Director of the Ohio Youth Advocate Program, Eric rejoined FCCS in 2001 serving in various roles until he was selected as the FCCS Executive Director in December of 2006,

Saturday: SAVE's Media Violence Education Project with Tracy Thornton

SAVE was founded by Ms. Les Wright and a collaborative group of community leaders desiring to create an organization to focus on the issue of violence in central Ohio. SAVE's first program targeted parents, it taught them how to develop their children's critical thinking skills regarding the media. In 1997, SAVE began a program to honor youth peacemakers through the SAVE Awards Youth Peacemakers Training Program. The Media Violence Education Project, launched in 1999, provides workshops for youth to develop their media literacy skills. In 2000, the SAVE Students Network school based intervention program was launched.



Luncheon Key Note Speakers:

Friday: Tracy Robinson, Ohio Commission on Fatherhood

The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (OCF) was established in 1999 and codified in the Ohio Revised Code. Its vision is to enable every child to succeed. Its mission statement is "Enhancing the well being of Ohio's children by inspiring and supporting diverse groups and communities to improve the quality of fatherhood." The OCF funds fatherhood related programs and explores the creation of initiatives to:

- a. Build the parenting skills of fathers
- b. Provide employment related services to low income, non-custodial fathers
- c. Prevent premature fatherhood
- d. Provide services to fathers who are inmates in or have just been released from imprisonment in a state correctional or in any other detention facility, so that they are able to maintain or reestablish their relationships with their families;
- e. Reconcile fathers with their families; and
- f. Increase public awareness of the critical role that fathers play.



Saturday: Paula Kyle

The book "On the Edge of Unthinkable" is Paula's memoir of being turned over to the state along with 2 of her 5 sisters. Put in separate foster homes, Paula bounced from home to home, becoming increasingly troubled with each move. When she finally landed at the Ulrey's home, she found a home where she was regarded as an equal member of the family. Paula points to a combination of the commitment and the countless small ways the foster parents expressed love as well as the support which helped her eventually stabilize her life and start maturing in a positive direction - something which took a long time. Paula will share her story of separation of siblings and ways their involvement in the system affected her life.



Friday, June 25, 2010

8:00- 9:00 Registration & Coffee

**9:00-10:30 Eric Fenner, Director
Franklin County Children Services**

**"Where we are now —
Where we are Heading"**

Eric Fenner will share the progress made with Alternative Care Response, community based care and family reunification intervention, the struggles to change agency culture, proposed CHIPS legislation, and a variety of new initiatives in child welfare.

10:45-12:15 Workshop Session I

- 1. Evidence-Based Recovery Practices for Resource Parents Working with Abused and Neglected Children . Part 1.** [also sign up for workshop #5] *Kris Buffington, Chair, Juvenile Justice Committee of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

Resource family caregivers can play a very important role in helping children and adolescents recover from their traumatic experiences. The presenter will highlight The National Child Traumatic Stress Network curriculum for foster parents providing. See this curriculum in action and the resources it brings.

- 2. Building Resiliency.** *Terre Garner, Executive Director, Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health*

Resiliency is an innate capacity that when facilitated and nurtured empowers children, youth, and families to successfully meet life's challenges with a sense of self-determination, mastery, and hope. We all share the responsibility to ensure the success of our children, regardless of ability or disability. Terre will discuss how we accomplish this in the context of mental health and child welfare interactions.

- 3. Resource Parent Ethics.** *Ed Miner, Licensing and Training Specialist with Youth Advocate Services.*

As a Resource Parent do you operate from a code of ethics that sets out your values and is a guide to what you do? Is this different from the Rights and Responsibilities you have as a licensed resource parent? Are you trained to recognize moral problems or do you feel overpowered by a highly regulated bureaucracy? Discuss these issues and look at some practical applications of the decisions you make in your roles within the system of care.

- 4. Other People's Children.** *Fran Fraizer, Community activist, national facilitator & trainer.* According to Lisa Delpit, author of the book, "Other People's Children" it is the combination of power and otherness that all adults must come to understand as we seek more culturally competent approaches for taking care of our children. This interactive workshop will seek to explore the implications of these two terms; encourage participants to discover their biases; discuss structural racism and together experience the five elements of becoming culturally competent.

12:15 Lunch provided for Registrants

12:45 - 2:15 Tracy Robinson, Ohio Fatherhood Commission

Mr. Robinson will provide an overview of the Ohio Commission on fatherhood purpose and mission. He will present on the benefits of fathers in their children's lives and the fatherhood commitment.

2:30 - 5:00 Workshop Session II

- 5. Evidence-Based Recovery Practices for Resource Parents Working with Abused and Neglected Children . Part 2.** *Kris Buffington, Chair, Juvenile Justice Committee of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network*
[For participants that have taken workshop session 1]

- 6. Your Day in Court. GALs** *Christina Rosebrough, Attorney, OCWTP, Ohio Supreme Court Judicial College, develops curriculum for GALs and resource parents on legal issues.*

This lively and informative workshop will help resource parents identify the roles and responsibilities of the legal team and the important impact the new Guardian ad Litem Rule 48 and Public Access Rules 45-47 have on foster, adoptive and kinship families and children in their care. Participants will gain working knowledge of their rights and responsibilities in the courtroom and to court procedures pursuant to Ohio law.

- 7. Family Strengths: The Key to Youth Success at Home and School.** *Stephen M. Gavazzi, Ph.D.* Professor Human Development and Family Science Co-Director, Center for Family Research at OSU. The nature of child welfare placement creates a problem-focused emphasis that can be very difficult to leave behind, long after child

reunification, relative guardianship or even an adoption event has occurred. The use of a solution-focused approach encourages family members and those working on behalf of child permanency to focus on the real strengths of the family while also addressing parental neglect or abuse difficulties and concerns. This workshop provides methods and strategies for adopting a strength-based approach for families. Methods apply to parents—biological, foster or relative and to each of their children.

8. **Early Childhood Mental Health: What Resource Families Need To Know.** *Marla Himmeger, Ohio Department of Mental Health*
The foundations of self-awareness, attachment, independence and self-control start in a child's earliest years. This workshop will cover what is "nature" and the emerging science of the brain of infants and toddlers as well as examine the impact of "nurture" and how resource family caregiving can produce more resilient young children despite their exposure to child abuse or neglect.

5:00 - 6:00 OFCA Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 26, 2010

8:30-9:00 Registration & Coffee

9:00-10:30 Media Violence Education Program. *SAVE, Tracy Thornton*

This program is designed to develop critical thinking skills about the media and media violence in adults who care about the well being of the children in their lives.

10:45 - 12:15 OFCA Board

New Directions for Resource Families

Marynell Townsend, Dot Erickson & OFCA Board

This interactive workshop will give you more information on the changes coming within the resource family community to support families to become stronger and better able to provide children with safe and happy childhoods.

12:15 Lunch provided for Registrants

12:45 - 2:15 Paula Kyle, former foster child & author of "On the Edge of Unthinkable"

Speaking from her time in foster care, Paula shares her insights about what heals and how

foster parents along with case workers can change a family members lives long after the time in care.

2:30 - 5:00 Workshop Session III

10. **Working with Your Child from Arrest to Release: Who services the Unruly/Delinquent Child.** *Angela Schoepflin, NAMI/ Parent Advocacy Connection, Education Coordinator*
This workshop will look at the juvenile justice system and how it is different from the adult justice system. Learn about what happens to kids who get caught up in the detention center or the Ohio Department of Youth Services. What to expect, what to do, what not to do, court, public defenders, and so forth. A set of reference worksheets will be available.
11. **Adoption Subsidies.** *Maureen Heffernan, Independent Adoption Specialist.*
Adoption Subsidy programs can sound like a big batch of Alphabet Soup. This session will include an overview of each subsidy program available in Ohio, including eligibility, and the specific funding or services that each one provides along with how to advocate for your child's needs.
12. **Using Circles of Support with Primary Families.** *Karen Ezirim, Primary Parent and Georgetta Lake, LSW, Independent Trainer*
A circle of support is a group of people who meet together on a regular basis to help somebody accomplish their personal goals in life. Circles are about seeing people as individuals who feel they need support in order to take more control over their own lives. A circle, properly facilitated, is empowering to all of the individuals involved and does not reinforce dependence. Discuss how to use this technique to work more effectively in the role of resource parent.
13. **Allegations of Maltreatment:** *Pat McCollum & Dot Erickson, LSW, OFCA Board members and Independent Trainers.*
Allegations of maltreatment are difficult for resource families to accept as part of their lives. The change of view from being a part of the solution to being a part of the problem is a crushing blow. Whether you serve as an adoptive, foster or kinship family allegations enter your life. This workshop helps families understand the whys, hows, and preventative methods needed to survive such allegations.

OFCA Registration

Each Participant must fill in a separate registration form.

Participant Name _____
 Licensing Agency _____
 Licensing Agency Contact _____
 Address _____
 City _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 E-mail address _____

To request Agency Billing - Please have agency training coordinator submit your registration.

To request a scholarship - Please check here:

Scholarship request for

☐ Friday and/or ☐ Saturday

Special Needs Request: _____



A small number of scholarships are available for individuals who are adoptive or kinship parents not affiliated with any agency or parents fostering with public agencies. Scholarships are awarded only from completed applications on a first come-first awarded basis. No scholarships are awarded through phone contacts. Thanks go to the **Ohio Child Welfare Training Program, National Center for Adoption Law, Wendy Dave Thomas Foundation and Children's Defense Fund** for funds for these scholarships.

Workshop Selections

List the number of the workshops you select on the lines below.

Friday

Section I: (#1, #2, #3, #4) _____

Section II: (#5, #6, #7, #8) _____

Saturday

Section Am #9 _____ 9 _____

Section IV: (#10, #11, #12, #13) _____

Conference Registration Deadline June 10, 2010

Individuals registering direct without agency payment must prepay and send check payable to:

OFCA

Registration Cost: \$75 for one day or \$140 for both days

Food for children is not included in conference registration fees

Questions: office@OFCAonline.org
or 614-222-2712

Private Agency Foster Parent Registration is best handled through your agency training department. Please contact them for specific information on registration. Training Coordinators—email to: office@ofcaonline.org

Agencies Note: We will bill you following the conference if registrations are handled by your training staff. A **NO SHOW** fee of \$25 will apply unless cancellations are received in advance.

7 foster parent training hours are available for each day - 14 hours total for the conference. CPE credit for social workers applied for.

Mail to:

OFCA Conference
823 ½ E. Long St.
Columbus, OH 43203

Email Registration Preferred:
Send Complete Registration Information along with workshop choices to

office@OFCAonline.org

Sorry, NO fax number is available

Resources for Families

Tools to help Adoptive Families



Robbie's Trail through Adoption

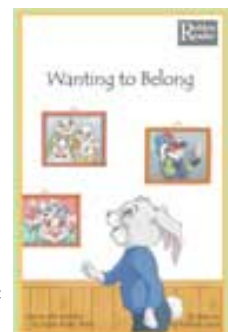


Robbie Rabbit learns his foster parents want to adopt him and that he won't see his birthmother anymore. Robbie's caseworker, therapist and foster parents help him deal with these emotions as he prepares for his final visit with birthmom. This story comes with a 24-page downloadable PDF adult guide for \$14.99 plus s/h. Or, we can ship the story to you along with a hard-copy guide for \$19.99 plus s/h; adult guide may ship separately. Story features full-color illustrations and includes several pages of children's activities at back of book. Adult guide is 24 pages, 8.5" x 11". (Adult guide not shown in photo at left.) Discounts available on quantities of 25 or more.

Wanting to Belong

A Robbie Reader. In this story, Robbie Rabbit feels a bit left out while at his foster home. Feeling like he doesn't belong, he breaks something and attracts the immediate attention of his foster parents. His smart foster parents realize that Robbie is seeking attention, considers why that might be, and then takes steps to help him feel more included.

16 pages (includes two pages of children's activities in back of book). Full-color illustrations. Book size: 8.5" x 5.5". Price: \$5.99 plus shipping/handling. Discounts available



"What is Adoption?" brochure



Designed for children, this brochure explains adoption and how the process generally works. It also addresses commonly asked questions and explains the role of people such as caseworkers, therapists, guardians ad litem and CASA volunteers. Features full-color illustrations. Sold only in increments of 25.

For further information, check out Robbie the Rabbit's Website at:

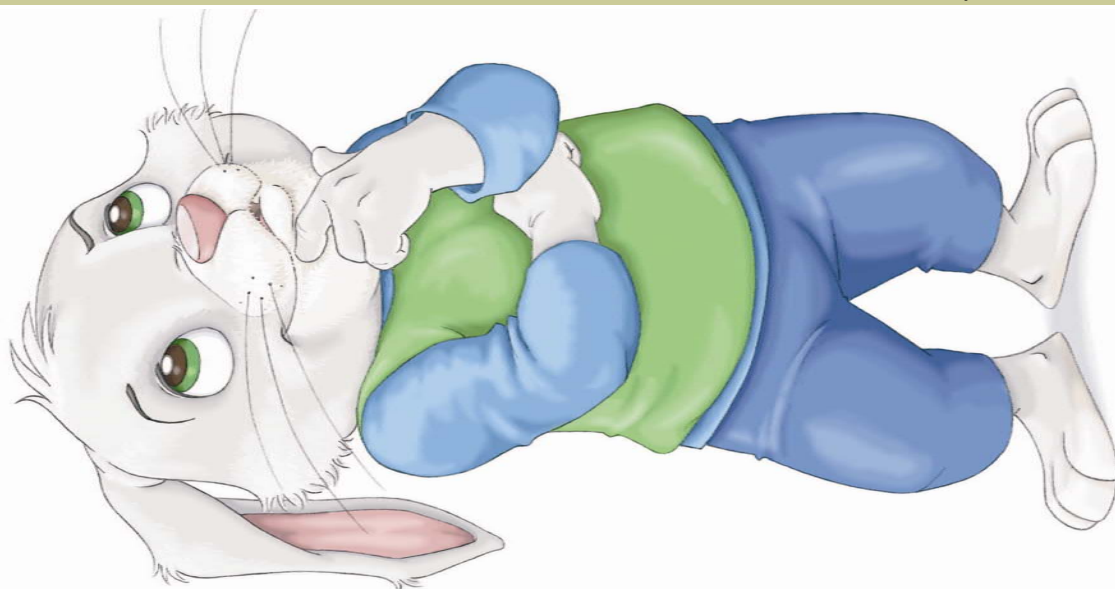
<http://www.robbietherabbie.com>

Good question.



Let's ask Robbie!

What is Adoption?



Talking with a child about adoption?

You may be interested in ROBBIE'S TRAIL THROUGH ADOPTION, part of the Robbie Rabbit™ series — an educational, dialogue-opening series for kids in out-of-home care.



ROBBIE'S TRAIL
THROUGH
ADOPTION is a

compelling story with related activities conveniently located in the back of the book. The adult guide is a requisite companion piece with instructions, talking points, tips and answers (when applicable).

To learn more about these publications, go to www.robbietherabbit.com.

About the Robbie Rabbit™ series

The Robbie Rabbit™ stories and their supplemental materials are designed specifically for adoptive parents, foster parents and/or case-workers who want to:

- Help a foster child and/or an adoption-eligible child adjust better to tough changes in life
- Promote communication between the child and the important people in his life
- Gain insight into a child's feelings and interpretation of the world around him

www.robbietherabbit.com

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0608

An interview with...

What is adoption?

Adoption is something that happens when you can't live with your birthparents anymore. Instead, you become "eligible for adoption." This means that you are waiting for a new family.

It might take a long time before the family that's right for you comes along. But it can be worth the long wait. Once a family says they want to adopt you, they must talk with some Very Important People and explain why they would be good parents.

You'll meet with the family several times — and maybe live with them for a while — to see if you like spending time with them. Finally, you'll go to a place called "court" with your new family. A judge will ask some questions and then say that you're adopted.

When you're adopted, that means you are part of your new family forever. They'll always be there for you, just like you'll always be in their lives.



Why am I going to be adopted?

Sometimes, when people have children, they aren't able to take care of them very well or give them a safe home. When this happens, you must move to another home — a safe one — where you will be safe and can get the love and attention that you deserve.

Will I see my birthparents again?

It depends on what the court decides. A lot of Very Important People *really* care about you. They want you to be a safe and happy kid. Sometimes, that means you won't see your birthparents after you're adopted.

That's what happened to me — I can't see my birthmom anymore. But I know she loves me and thinks my new parents (the Thompsons) will take good care of me.

Will I like being adopted?

Well, I can't answer that for you. But I can tell you that I *really* love my new parents a lot.

Some things aren't the same as when I lived with my mom. But some things are a lot better.

My new mom is really nice. At first, she didn't know what I liked to eat, but I told her. Now she makes my favorites all the time. We do fun things as a family, and someone always tucks me in at night.

My parents don't look the same as me, but that's OK. Sometimes parents look different than their kids. What's important is whether they give you a safe home and a lot of love and attention.

Even though I miss my birthmom sometimes, I'm glad I was adopted. I'm happy that I don't have to be in foster care anymore. The best part is that my new mom and dad love me a lot. And I love them, too!

...Robbie Rabbit™

www.robbietherabbit.com

Very Important People



My **caseworker**, Sammy, visits me a lot. She makes sure I'm doing OK at school and home. She explains things to me — like how my birthmom is doing and where I'm going to live. She even takes me to doctor visits sometimes!

This is my **therapist**, Mrs.

Donley. (Some people might call her a counselor.) She helps me figure out what I'm feeling and why I feel the way I do.

Sometimes we play games. We talk a lot. She understands me and listens to what I'm saying.



My **guardian ad litem**, Tonya, is an attorney for kids like me. She makes sure the judge knows I'm safe. She suggests things to the judge that she thinks will help me. For example, she might tell the judge that I need more time with my therapist or that the Thompsons should adopt me.

I don't have a CASA volunteer, but my friend Tommy does. A

CASA is a court-appointed special advocate. CASAs are like guardians ad litem (but they aren't attorneys). Tommy's CASA spends time getting to know him so she can tell the judge what she thinks is best for Tommy.



The **judge** works in a courtroom. My judge listened carefully to my Very Important People before deciding what would happen with my family.