

Adoption News

A Quarterly Newsletter from

Adoptions From The Heart

Spring 2013

Find Her Footing 5K Benefitting the AFTH Birthmother Fund

Families, friends, coworkers, and locals gathered to support Adoptions From The Heart's Birthmother Fund at the first ever, Find Her Footing 5K on Sunday, April 14th, 2013. The walk/run was held at the beautiful Delaware County Community College in Media, PA.

As children ages 2-10 lined up (or tried!) across the starting line, the event kicked-off with a fun 100 meter Kid's Dash at 9:15am. Each child accepted a medal and certificate upon crossing the finish line and our race winner, Charley, 8, walked away with a big smile and four tickets to the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ.

Over 100 supporters of all ages walked and ran the "rolling" course—a great turn out for the race's first year raising over \$2,000 for the AFTH Birthmother Fund! Several adoptive parents pushed strollers the entire length of the course, we even had one adoptive mother walk with her son strapped on her back. AFTH would especially like to thank Jennifer Purfield and her associates at Kohl's for generously volunteering their time to the event. Everyone celebrated upon finishing the race with music provided by Philadelphia's country station, 92.5 XTU; bagels donated from Panera Bread; baked goods from Jacqueline's Bakery in Broomall, PA; and several awards and prizes. Top finishers were Colin Bodels, 43, Michael Sualinio, 49, and Hannah Peters, 16.



Those who collected donations for the Birthmother Fund were also entered into a raffle to win a Samsung Galaxy Tablet donated by PFIT, Inc. Team "Babysteppers" raised over \$300 for the Fund and walked away with Starbucks gift cards for everyone. Karen Luongo, of team Babysteppers, won the grand prize for raising \$235. She will be celebrating with four tickets to a show of her choice at the Susquehanna Bank Center in

Camden, NJ courtesy of Live Nation. Prizes were also given to top finishers in several age categories compliments of Modell's Sporting Goods and Bryn Mawr Running Company. Be sure to check our Facebook page for event photos, thanks to Tiannan Zhan and Xin'an Li of Bryn Mawr College's Photography Club.

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Insert:

Summer Picnic Details

OFFICE LOCATIONS

ALLENTOWN OFFICE
2212 Union Blvd
Allentown, PA 18109
610.432.2384

CENTRAL PA OFFICE
1525 Oregon Pike, Suite 402
Lancaster, PA 17601
717.399.7766

CONNECTICUT OFFICE
703 Hebron Ave., 1st floor
Glastonbury, CT 06033
860.657.2626

DELAWARE OFFICE
18-A Trolley Square
Wilmington, DE 19806
302.658.8883

NEW JERSEY OFFICE
451 Woodland Avenue
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
856.665.5655

NEW YORK
1.800-355-5500

PITTSBURGH OFFICE
1225 South Main St., Suite 207
Greensburg, PA 15601
724.853.6533

VIRGINIA OFFICE
1407 Stephanie Way, Suite H
Chesapeake, VA 23320
757.361.0008

WYNEWOOD OFFICE
30-31 Hampstead Circle
Wynnewood, PA 19096
610.642.7200

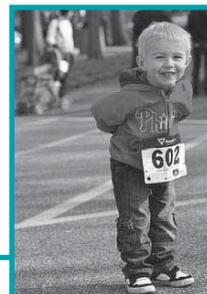
TOLL FREE NUMBER
1.800.355.5500

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.afth.org

To everyone who supported through their donations, time, and sweat, Adoptions From The Heart thanks you from the bottom of our heart. Overall it was a fabulous morning to support a worthwhile cause! The Birthmother Fund supports women who have worked with Adoptions From The Heart, both before and after pregnancy. AFTH has worked with thousands of pregnant women considering adoption. Each woman is facing unique challenges and many find themselves in need of a little additional financial support to help with housing, food, transportation etc. in order to regain their footing. Those in need are not demanding financial help but are silently trying to find a way out. A little financial relief from difficult circumstances can make a huge difference and AFTH has seen it propel women into a better place with ongoing stability. It's our hope that the Find Her Footing 5K will raise awareness and allow us to continue to help more and more women.

*Thank you to all of our 2013
Find Her Footing 5K sponsors & donors:*

92.5 XTU
Bryn Mawr College Photography Club
Bryn Mawr Running Club
Delaware County Community College
Fast Signs
Giant Food Stores
Healing With Play, LLC
Jacquette's Bakery
Jumpers Fun Center
Kohl's Cares
Modell's Sporting Goods
Original Bagel Inc.
Panera Bread
PFit Inc.
Summit Sports Training Center
Tees With A Purpose



**Join Us Again Next Year for the
2014 Find Her Footing 5K!**

Question asked of AFTH Birthparents: How Did You Know The Family You Picked Was The One

Prospective adoptive parents are often curious, especially when they are beginning to work on their profile, about the reasons pregnant women are drawn to and select the specific families they do. We posed this question to all our birthparent social media followers on Facebook and Twitter:

*How did you know that the adoptive parents you selected for your child were the “ones.”
And when did you know (seeing their profile, watching their DVD, when you met in person)?*

Lisa – “I knew the minute I saw the video. They weren’t trying to be perfect like many other videos I saw. I just knew they were the ones. 14 years later I still believe it.”

Melanie - “While going through profiles I just kept going back to theirs, it was like a mothers intuition or something, I just knew they were the ones.. And I am soo glad I did pick them, they are the best people ever, they have become family to me.”

Haley - “I loved their profile but I was not 100% sure. I put them to the side and then one day I got a picture book from them in the mail. The picture book sold it for me. They were perfect.”

Jeanette - “As soon as I saw their profile! I didn’t even have to read it. Their picture told me everything I wanted to know. Now, 22 years later, I have never doubted that decision. They have become a part of my family.”

Kaycee - “As soon as I saw their profile, then I saw the DVD and knew 100% it was right. When I met them I fell in love!!”

Criston - “I didn’t have a DVD available but I was looking at 2 profiles and I just knew instantly, and I have never ever once regretted my choice. I love my daughter, her adoptive family and Adoptions From The Heart!”

If you are not already following AFTH on Facebook and Twitter, join us today for lots of great discussions:

www.facebook.com/AdoptionsFromTheHeart
twitter.com/AFTH_org

Another Way to Give

In addition to making monetary donations to the agency, several families have recently made donations in the form of stock. Gifting stock to AFTH gives those making the donation a double benefit. Families receive a charitable deduction for their donation while not being required to pay tax on the appreciated value of the stock. This is just another way families can make donations to support AFTH’s mission and those families who have done so already highly recommended gifting in the form of stock.

Please Make Your Checks Payable To: **Adoptions From The Heart**
mail with form to: **30-31 Hampstead Circle, Wynnewood, PA 19096**

Also Accepting
Online Donations:
www.afth.org

How would you like your donation to be used?

Use my gift to help birth mothers in the U.S. Use my gift where it’s needed most.

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

My employer has a matching gift program. Enclosed is the form.



Adoptions From The Heart is a registered, charitable organization. In accordance with PA law, we are required to advise you that a copy of our official registration and financial information may be obtained from either the PA Department of State by calling, toll-free within PA, (800) 732-0999, or the state of NJ by calling (973) 504-6215. A copy of our official registration and financial information may be obtained from the state of NY upon written request to the Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271. A financial statement is available upon written request from the VA State of Office of Consumer Affairs, (800) 552-9963.

Hey Mom, They Don't See Your Little Girl, They See an Asian Woman



When I was a little girl, it was obvious that I was adopted, because I was most often seen and understood within the context of my White American family--whether out at a restaurant or in elementary school. People interacted with me with the understanding that I was the White couple's little Asian daughter.

But once I began to get out into the world, further away from the shelter of my White parents and eventually became an adult, there was no longer the context of my White family everywhere I went.

And even now, when seen with my parents or my brothers, as an adult, it is no longer obvious that I am adopted. I am mistaken as a girlfriend or wife when with my brothers or as a daughter-in-law when with my parents--or even completely ignored as unconnected to my parents, seen as a stranger that just happens to be standing unusually close at the checkout line or at the department store.

Where this difference becomes particularly significant is in regards to the way other people view me, and therefore their treatment of me due to the (understandable) assumptions they possess because of my outward appearance, i.e., race.

They see an Asian woman--no longer a cute little Asian girl adopted so kindly and charitably into a White American family--who is not American but rather who must have Asian parents, Asian customs, Asian language, etc.

I am not American. I am a foreigner. I am not one of us. I am one of them.

The only problem is that I am neither one of them nor one of us. I am both. But because there is no longer the context of my White American family everywhere I go, as there was when I was a little girl, others have no way of knowing or understanding that I am not who or what they assume I am.

So, they treat me according to what they assume from my appearance. I'm not playing the violin here. It is what it is--I have to accept it and deal with it. It's fine. It ain't going away. But my point is that it's part of the daily reality--the daily dissonance--of being a Korean person who was adopted into a White family.

And now that I have been in reunion with my Korean family for 4 years, this identity dissonance has only become more convoluted and confusing to manage at times.

Ultimately, I do feel more American than Korean--most days. If I'm honest with myself (as much as it might make me cringe at times)--my culture is strongly that of White America. Obviously, I am less connected to my "Koreanness" as a result of being raised by White people in a White world. Yet the very fact that the White world views me as Korean forces me to connect with my "Koreanness," and of course, being in reunion with my Korean family also somehow "makes" me more Korean.

But when it comes down to it, I'm American to Koreans, and I'm Korean to Americans. But who can blame them? I mean, honestly, when I see another Korean woman, I don't think to myself, "Hey, there's someone like me!" Rather, I feel a complete disconnect, sometimes even an aversion. And I experience the same reaction when I encounter White women. I don't feel like either one is "my people."

Cont'd on Next Page...

Tips for Maintaining Ethnic Hair the Healthy Way

Written By Sylvia Sydney
Stylist at Follicles Design Center

Although there are many textures to our hair, below are four basic steps that you can do to help maintain healthy hair.

Step 1:

It is safe to shampoo your hair once a week or every two weeks. A great sulfate free shampoo will do. At Follicles Design Center, we use L'Anza Healing Haircare, and E'tae Carmelux products which I really recommend for children.

Step 2:

A moisturizing conditioner from one of the above mentioned lines are great. These are used to moisturizer, detangle, and soften the hair for manageability.

Step 3:

This step before any styling or blow-drying. Use a great leave in conditioner, and heat protector. Then add an oil such as Pure Olive Oil, or E'tae hair oil.

Step 4:

For style tips you may visit CurlyNikki.com to see many kinky curly,wavy hairstyles. You may also refer to her book called "better than good hair" by Nikki Walton; you can learn many different styling techniques and an array of different products and tips for natural Haircare maintenance.



Find Sylvia and her fellow stylists at:

Follicles Design Center
8229 Germantown Ave

www.follicleshairsalon.net
and LIKE them on Facebook

Hey Mom Cont'd...

It all feels so messy.

I don't even know how to put into words most of the time or how to explain it to others.

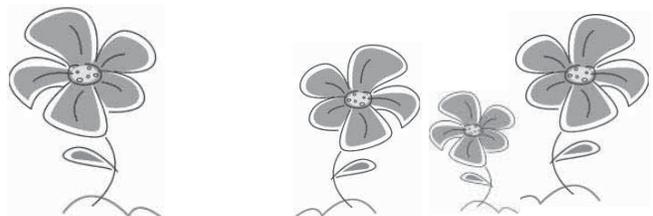
Ultimately, I experience the racial and ethnic dissonance created by my "adoptedness" every single day of my life. But it's such a silent, isolated struggle, because no one can see my "adoptedness." And there's the added paradox of not really wanting others to know that I am adopted, and yet wanting everyone to know it.

This is just one of the many ways that I am reminded daily of the fact that I am adopted--and of all the loss and division and pain that comes along with being adopted transracially. And now, that I have a son and a little girl due this summer, the pervasive repercussions and dissonance of being adopted only become all the more salient, poignant, undeniable.

When I was a little girl, it was easy to be naive to the way the American world viewed me. It was easy to be oblivious to the loss, the grief, the harsh realities of how being adopted affected my life.

But now that I am an adult, I cannot escape it--not for a moment.

This article by Mila was originally published at the collective blog, [Lost Daughters at www.thelostdaughters.com](http://www.thelostdaughters.com) Lost Daughters is an independent collaborative writing project founded in 2009. It is edited and authored by adult women who were adopted as children. Our name was chosen in the spirit of BJ Lifton's concept of one's Self becoming "lost" and "found" throughout the experience of being adopted. Our mission is to bring readers the perspectives and narratives of adopted women, and to highlight their strength, resiliency, and wisdom. We aim to critically discuss the positives and negatives of the institution of adoption from a place of empowerment and peace.



Tees With a Purpose Helps Adoption Supporters to Pay It Forward, Literally, to Hopeful Adoptive Parents



Over the past 9 years, Linda Scotto, founder of Tees with a Purpose, and her husband have grown their family

through adoption. As an adoptive mother of two (so far) and currently working on bringing home their third child, she knows how precious the adoption milestones are: such as the first time you see a picture of your baby, the day you receive “the call,” the first time you hold him in your arms, etc.

As Linda was delivering the t-shirts for the AFTH Find Her Footing 5K, she walked into the wicker room at our Wynnewood Office and began tearing up. It was that exact room where she and her husband were first handed the picture of their daughter who was adopted through the AFTH China Program. It is with that same passion and love for adoption that Linda exudes on her mission to help others on their own adoption journeys.

“My passion is adoption and helping families bring their children home!”

Linda appreciates the blood, sweat, and tears that prospective adoptive parents go through when pursuing adoption. She also understands the financial challenges of expanding a family through adoption and Tees with a Purpose will gladly partner with families who are fund-raising in order to help them reach their goals.

Tees With A Purpose was born out of a desire to help people doing “good works” gain support, send a message or raise money. As their company says: “where’s your heart, what’s your message.” Linda wants to help individuals reach their fund-raising goals, no matter what the cause, while providing a quality product to their supporters. She has been in the silk screening and embroidery business for over 25 years and has served the needs of individuals, businesses, and organizations alike. Tees with

a Purpose provides quality products and superior customer service.

And so whether your goal is geared towards adoption, fund raising for a specific event, or any other good work, Linda’s heart’s desire is to partner with you to help you get your message out in a cost effective way. Visit www.teeswithapurpose.com for more information.

Now collecting pictures for the
2014 Calendar Starring AFTH Children

★ **Make your child** ★
a STAR!

Submit Your Photos!

?

Label Photos: child's name, age, country, parents name & address.

- Send horizontal pictures (*it helps with design!*)
- Send pictures with clean faces and endearing expressions!
- Send seasonal pictures and photos representing holidays!
- Use your digital camera’s highest pixel for clarity!
- Send multiple pictures, variety is good!
- Send photos of **only** the children (*make them the stars*)

NOTE: if you have to send multiple emails due to file size, number the emails so we know we got them all!

Deadline July 1, 2013

Email to: KristyG@afth.org
(Kristy will respond with confirmation of receipt)

Mail to: Marketing Team Calendar Search
Adoptions From The Heart
30-31 Hampstead Circle, Wynnewood, PA 19096



Adoptions From The Heart®

hosts its

25th Annual Picnic

RAIN or SHINE!

Sunday, June 2, 2013
11am-2pm

Fort Washington Park (Flourtown Picnic Area)

Those using GPS systems:

State parks do not have street addresses, so use
44 W. Mill Rd., Flourtown, PA 19031

It is the address of the home across the street from the park.

We encourage all our Open Adoption families to invite their child's birth parents.

Send a letter of invitation with your full name and the birth parent's name to your local AFTH office.



Be sure to send your letter soon so your child's birth parents do not miss out on this great event. AFTH will not invite your child's birth parent without your consent.

Thank You for choosing Adoptions From The Heart!

Join the AFTH staff and families, both domestic and international, as we celebrate building beautiful families. Bring your family, a blanket, and a picnic lunch. AFTH will provide some drinks, snacks, and entertainment.

Raffles,
Arts & Crafts,
Live Music, Snacks
Face Painting, and Ice
Cream for each child!

Free Family Portraits!



Information To Know Before You Go:

MAKE SURE YOU DESIGNATE A SPECIFIC AREA TO MEET

BALLOONS ARE A GREAT WAY TO HELP CONNECT WITH OTHERS

- Mark all valuables with your name and keep away from trash areas.
- Please supervise your children at all times.
- To cut down on the number of cars, we encourage carpooling.

DO NOT PARK ON GRASS UNLESS DIRECTED BY A PARK RANGER!

Connecticut's Annual Adoption Picnic

Come spend an afternoon with old friends and new friends!



Quassy Amusement Park
Sunday, June 30th
11:00am - 4:00pm
Food served from noon until 3pm

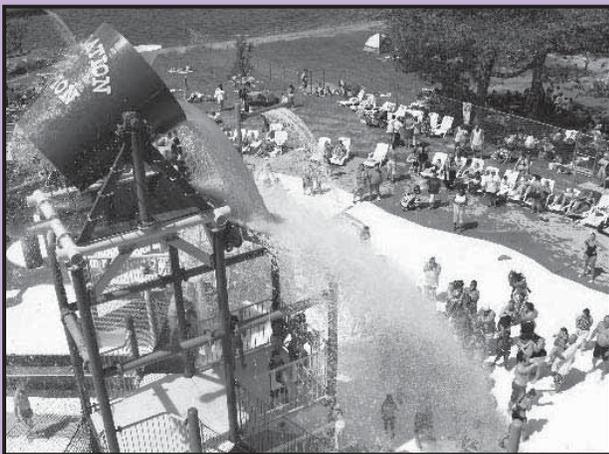
We have a private pavilion with Water Park access and UNLIMITED BUFFET with burgers (and veggie burgers), hotdogs, salads and all the trimmings. Volleyball, horseshoes & bocce also available and free parking too.

Advanced Reservations REQUIRED!

PRICE NOW INCLUDES - all day ride, beach and waterpark passes!

Adults \$31

**Children (ages 3-12) \$28.50
& Children Under 2 are Free**



Please mail your check payable to AFTH:
Adoptions From The Heart
703 Hebron Avenue, 1st floor
Glastonbury, CT 06033

*include names of all attendees, # of adult & children
for reservation, and your address & phone number*

Please contact us if you have questions:

**BrendaS@afth.org
or call (860) 657-2626**

Deadline for Reservations: JUNE 24TH!



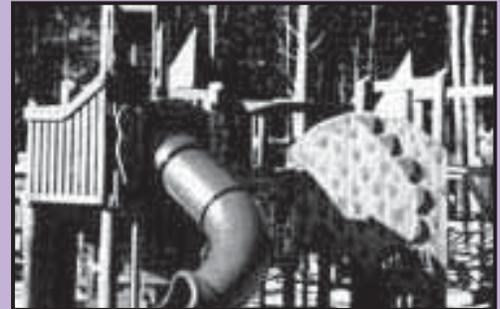
Adoptions From The Heart®

2013 Virginia Annual Picnic

**Chesapeake City Park
"Fun Forest"**

**Saturday, June 8th
2:30 - 5:30 pm**

Rain or Shine



"Fun Forest" is the ultimate playground with an imagination center & family adventure area.

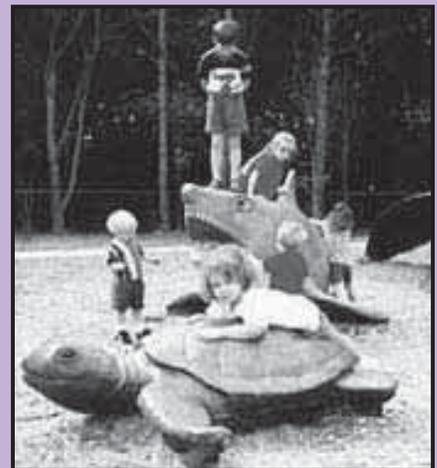
**Get ready to enjoy our
annual adoption celebration!**

- ♥ Bring a picnic lunch.
- ♥ Grills are available for families to use.
- ♥ AFTH will provide paper products, drinks, and ice.

Check out the...

- Shaky Bridge • Dolphin Tunnel
- Whisper Dishes • Plant Walk
- Underground Telephone
- Fossil Dig-a-dinosaur and MUCH MORE!!

- Fun & Activities for Kids of All Ages!
- Playgrounds



Families who adopted through the **Open Adoption Program** are encouraged to invite birth parents to the annual picnic. If interested, please send a letter of invitation for your child's birth parents to the Chesapeake AFTH office and be sure to include your full name and birth parents' names. We will forward the letter to your child's birth parents. Please send letter as soon as possible to allow time for birth parents to respond. **No birth parents will be invited by the agency without your consent.**

RSVP by Wednesday, June 5th: (757)361-0008 or NicoleF@afth.org

Adoption...a beautiful way to build a family.

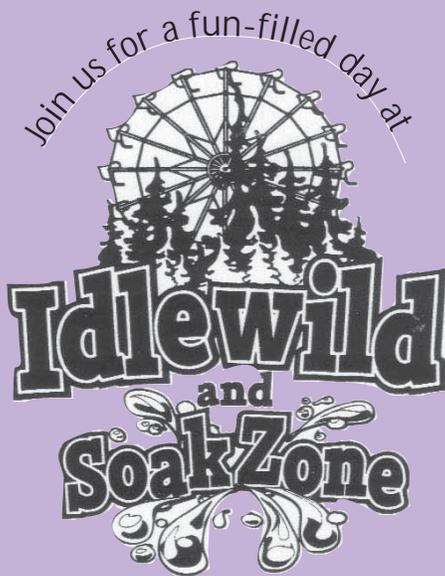


Adoptions From The Heart®

13th Annual Pittsburgh Office Picnic



Friday, August 2, 2013



Exciting rides! Seven Themed Areas!
Roller coasters and water slides!
WAVE POOL and Kiddie Pool!

BRAND NEW - lazy river!

Bring your own lunch or choose from
several eateries at the park.

Located on Route 30 in Ligonier, PA

Park opens at 10:30 am

Join us at Pavilion C2 & C3 at 1pm

Directions on website

(724) 238-3666

www.idlewild.com

Cost is \$19.50 per person. Children 2 and under are free.

Tickets will be sent directly to you before the picnic.

If you have questions or need directions ...

Call Katie at (724) 853-6533 or email KatieH@afth.org.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

of tickets _____ # of people attending _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to:
Debbie Cohen

Send this form and payment to:
Adoptions From The Heart
1225 South Main St. Suite 207
Greensburg, PA 15601

Deadline to order: July 19th

Recent Legislation



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION (NCFA) - The NCFA

is in support of the Foreign Adopted Children Equity Act (FACE) which is a proposed piece of legislature which would correct the loophole in the Child Citizenship Act of 2000. The legislation would make it so that all children adopted internationally by American citizens would automatically become naturalized as they arrive in the U.S. FACE would also provide a streamlined process for adult adoptees to obtain citizenship.

UTAH - SB155 would allow “post-adoption contact agreements between prospective adoptive parents and birth parents or other birth relatives of a prospective adoptive child” in the custody of the Division of Child and Family Services. **SB31** would provide a refundable adoption tax credit of \$1,000 for families adopting a child (since Jan. 1, 2013) who is over 5 years of age, “has a physical, emotional, or mental disability,” or is a member of a sibling group placed together. **HB214** did not pass however it would have permitted second-parent adoption. **SB282** requires the biological mother or child to have resided in the state for at least 30 consecutive days for an unmarried father to have notice that Utah law applies to him. **SB183** requires the Office of Licensing to implement ethical rules prohibiting an adoption agency or an employee from misrepresenting facts or information.

OHIO - SB23/ HB61, would allow adults who were adopted from 1964 to 1996 access to their original birth certificates and birthparents to file contact preference forms and updated medical histories. The Judiciary Committee unanimously approved HB61 and the full House is likely to vote on the bill after its return in April; after that, the Senate will consider it. The Catholic Conference of Ohio, Ohio Right to Life, NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio, Ohio Birthparent Group and many birthmothers supported and/or testified for the bill.

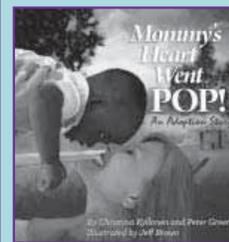
PUERTO RICO - On Feb. 20, Puerto Rico’s Supreme Court narrowly upheld a law that bars gay couples from adopting children.

Book Reviews



That's My Brother, That's My Sister by Ratna Jalihatgi

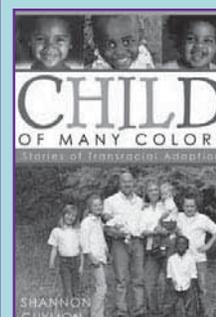
- This book is a great way to introduce the topic of adoption to children. A family of butterflies adopts a young bee and the story shows how the brother and sister butterfly fully embrace their new sibling and are always there to love, protect and help him. The bee tells why the butterflies are his siblings even though they are different. Family is family. Amazon.com price \$8.50



Mommy's Heart Went POP! An Adoption Story by Christina Kyllonen & Peter Greer

- This is a beautifully illustrated children’s book that brings the beauty of international adoption to the entire family through a simple story of love for a child. The book tells the story of a Caucasian family with two children that is waiting to adopt a child from Africa. The story touches on how the parents tell their children that the family is going to expand, how they get the house ready for the newest member of the family, and how they are often thinking about the child who is “growing in Mommy’s heart but not in her belly.” In each illustration there is a hidden heart that you and your children can have fun trying to find as you go through each unique page of the book. Amazon.com price \$18.99

Child of Many Colors: Stories of Transracial Adoption by Shannon Guymon



- The need for good parenting, unconditional love, and the joy of belonging to a family are universal. This is a compilation of inspiring stories from real-life transracial families. Experience the laughter, tears, and all the hugs and kisses that come with belonging to a forever family, no matter what the family looks like. Amazon.com price \$9.99

Amazon.com gives AFTH a small donation from each book purchased through the below link:
astore.amazon.com/lovebuilfam0e-20

AFTH Program Updates



DOMESTIC PROGRAMS - AFTH continues to grow and connect with new agencies and hospitals. Our staff has been busy attending many different adoption conferences over the last few months which has help create even more awareness of AFTH in the community. Some of the conferences you may have seen us at over the past few months were the 31st Annual New Jersey Adoption Conference, “Let’s Talk Adoption Conference (CPFA) in New Jersey, JCCA/Ametz 19th Annual Adoption & The Family in New York, and 19th Original GLBT Expo in New York. Our social workers have also been presenting personalized trainings to hospital social workers on counseling women who are considering adoption in the hospital. This has been a great way for our agency to help educate hospital employees about adoption and make a connection with new hospitals.

We are seeing more and more traffic on the waiting family profile section of our website. If you do not yet have your profile on our website and would like to, contact your social worker to get started.

AFTH has transitioned into a new process for the family videos. As families have their videos filmed, they will now be formatted to be available on YouTube instead of the videographers burning DVDs for each office. Social workers are now able to show the YouTube videos to expecting parents on the agency iPads. Families may elect to have their videos searchable on YouTube so that potential birth parents would be able to view their video. *(Note all comments have been disabled for family videos)*. This is a new great resource for adoptive families to expand their reach and opportunity to be seen by those considering making an adoption plan.

AFTH has also been hosting education series workshops over the last few months. These classes have been well attended and have been a great success. The workshop topics have included: infant and child care, understanding the affects of drugs and alcohol during pregnancy, birthparent updates - a guide to adoptive parents, and talking to your child about adoption. We still have two upcoming workshops in Bethlehem and Lancaster, Pa which focus on helping families deal with their profile key selections, specifically talking about Hepatitis B & C and HIV along with the affects

of drug and alcohol exposure in pregnancy. Those interested in registering for either of these upcoming workshops should visit the online calendar of events at www.afth.org. As always, please send your social worker any suggestions for topics you would like to see included in future education series as we love to hear directly from our clients so we can tailor our workshops to their needs.

AFTH 2012 picnics will soon be here. We encourage all AFTH families to attend to celebrate adoption and connect with other families. Information on all the summer picnics can be found in the newsletter insert.

AFTH is now accepting photos for the 2013 AFTH Building Beautiful Families Calendar (*see page 6 for details*). This is always a wonderful opportunity for your children to be stars...we can’t wait to see all of your new pictures. Make sure you don’t miss the July 1st deadline!

The agency continues to hold free information meetings and monthly webinars for those interested in learning more about our programs. The webinars are geared to families living outside of the local office service area who are interested in adopting through AFTH’s Out of Area Domestic Adoption Program. Our Domestic Program is open to singles and couples living anywhere in the U.S. For more details and to register for an upcoming meeting or webinar, visit our online calendar of events at www.afth.org.

CHINA - As of this writing, our former families whose Log In Date was October 20, 2006, are still waiting for a match. In March 2013, the CCCWA completed referrals for families with LID’s up to October 19, 2006.

I saw a graph that shows some waiting families with LID’s in the latter part of 2007 will not receive a match until 2017 – is it possible there will be any waiting families left by then?

We have only two former families, out of a much larger original group, who have maintained their place in the October 2006 LID clients. We congratulate them on their tenacity.



HEARTBEATS - New legislation in India has limited those who may apply to the AFTH *Surrogacy in India Program*. The Indian government has passed legislation making surrogacy births for same-sex couples, singles and heterosexual couples married less than two years illegal. This is truly a shame for those affected by the new law. The clinic we work with is rallying with other Indian fertility clinics to try and reverse this but it will take time.

To learn more about the *Surrogacy in India Program*, please join us for one of our free online webinars hosted every other month. Visit the online calendar of events to register for an upcoming webinar or contact Roberta Evantash at (610) 642-7200 or RobertaE@afth.org for additional information about the program.

Families continue to show interest in the *Heartbeats Embryo Placement Assistance Program*, with several having recently participated in agency-sponsored webinars. The program remains an excellent option for families in which a woman is able to carry an embryo

donated by another family. Wait times for matching between recipient and donor families are approximately 1-2 months.

The webinar about the *Embryo Placement Assistance Program* is a great way to learn about the program and to ask any questions you may have regarding the process. Webinars are held every other month and can be registered for on our online calendar of events.

The next Embryo Education Series will be offered in May and June. These webinars address talking with children about embryo placement, potential contact with genetic relatives, and many other related topics.

Please visit AFTH's online calendar at www.afth.org to register for the webinars. Any questions about AFTH's embryo placement services can be directed to Sam Wojnilower at SamW@afth.org or 610-642-7200.



AFTH Support Groups

CENTRAL PA

Small, informal gathering for birthparents to come together, get to know each other by sharing their stories.

Call (717) 399-7766 or email AmandaK@afth.org for details.

Support group for recently placed and waiting families are also being held. Contact for more details.

Email AmandaK@afth.org for upcoming dates.

WYNNEWOOD

Adoptive parent support groups bring AFTH families together in support during the "wait." RSVP by June 10th

Tuesday, June 11 from 6:30-8:00pm

Email AshleyK@afth.org or Call 610-642-7200 to Register.

Cherry Hill

One-on-one Support - Social workers available to meet with NJ waiting families to provide support, review profiles and discuss any concerns families may have. Must register by Wednesday before the below dates for time slots between 6:30-8:30pm.

Tuesday, May 21st and Tuesday, June 18th

Call (856) 665-5655 or email TheresaG@afth.org

Birthmother support groups help connect women who have or are making an adoption plan for their child. Contact for details.

Call 856-665-5655 or Email TheresaG@afth.org

DELAWARE

Birthparent support groups are designed for birth parents to come together in support to share their adoption story with others. Topic will include support for upcoming Mother's Day, openness with the adoptive family, and building a relationship with your older birth child. RSVP by May 1st.

Monday, May 6th from 4:00-6:00pm

Call 302-658-8883 or Email DanielleG@afth.org

Support groups bring AFTH waiting families together in support.

Call 302-658-8883 or Email DanielleG@afth.org for Details.

VIRGINIA

Adoptive parent support groups bring AFTH waiting families together. Contact for details.

Call (757) 361-0008 or email NicoleF@afth.org

CONNECTICUT

Waiting family support groups will be offered throughout the year for families to come together and share their experiences. Contact office for details.

Call (860) 657-2626 or Email PennyR@afth.org.

ALLENTOWN

Waiting family support groups are held for adoptive parents to come and connect.

Call (610) 432-2384 for information.



International Adoption News

The United States Department of State issued its 2012 Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption. In what feels like an unending downward spiral, 2012 marked the eighth consecutive year in which the number of orphans adopted from abroad to the United States was lower than the corresponding figure from the preceding year. The total number of U.S. immigrant visas issued to adopted children in 2012 was 8,668, down from 9,320 in 2011. To provide broader perspective, as recently as 2004 this annual figure stood at 22,990, translating to a 63% decrease over the past several years.

Nearly half of “incoming” adoption cases in 2012 were from either China or Ethiopia. Beyond those two nations, the largest numbers of intercountry adoptions by Americans were from (in order) Russia, South Korea, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Nigeria, Colombia, Taiwan, Ghana, India, Haiti, Bulgaria, and the Philippines. Of note is that one of every three such adoptions was from Africa, a continent from which only five percent of adoptions were occurring a decade ago.

As has been the case in recent years, the ongoing decline in intercountry adoptions to the U.S. (and to other countries around the world) is disconnected from the growing need for permanent family care of millions of orphans worldwide. According to UNICEF, an organization often critical of the practice of intercountry adoption, the number of orphans globally increased by 12% between 2008 and 2011, to the staggering total of more than 150 million. While intercountry adoption has benefited only a minute portion of these children since its inception in the 1950’s, in the face of such statistics it seems a gross failure in international child welfare policy that the number of such adoptions continues to be suppressed by forces unrelated to the needs of those most vulnerable. As sobering example, per UNICEF the ratio of dual-parent orphans in sub-Saharan Africa alone to the total annual number of intercountry adoptions by U.S. citizens is approximately 1000:1. And, at the same time, in 2010 the number of orphaned African children who died before the age of five was more than 30 times the number of all intercountry adoptions by American parents in that year.

In light of the recent ban by Russia on the adoption of Russian orphans by U.S. citizens, along with ongoing closures, suspensions, and moratoria on adoptions from numerous other countries, predictions are for the number of intercountry adoptions to the U.S. to decrease yet again in 2013. Although intercountry adoption will never be the primary solution of first resort for the world’s orphans, continued advocacy, however, is as essential as ever toward adoption remaining available along the continuum of care for children unable to receive familial protection within their native countries.

In country-specific news:

Haiti: The Haitian government’s central adoption authority, l’Institut du Bien-Etre Social et de Recherches (IBESR), issued approval to 56 adoption service providers worldwide to provide intercountry adoption services in Haiti. This figure included 19 U.S. agencies. Simultaneously, and despite the approximately 50,000 orphans in its care living in institutional settings, IBESR established caps on its annual number of “outgoing” intercountry adoptions, with quotas set globally at 810, and to the U.S. at 240. Not only are these limitations not in the best interest of children but, by underutilizing the resources of non-governmental organizations that provide a range of child welfare services in Haiti, they may also compromise NGO’s abilities to sustain and grow humanitarian programs in the country.

Russia: On January 22, 2013, the Russian Supreme Court issued a letter to Russian city and regional courts stating that, for adoption cases in which court decisions involving U.S. citizen parents were made before January 1, 2013 (including those that entered into force after January 1, 2013 following the standard 30 day “waiting period”), the children in question should be transferred to the custody of their adoptive parents. Consequently, some American families that had court hearings in Russia by the end of 2012 have been able to bring their adopted Russian children home to the U.S., and it is hoped that the other such families will be able to do so in the coming weeks. However, in spite of ongoing diplomacy and advocacy, a process does not presently exist for U.S. families that had not yet attended court in Russia to complete their adoptions, including cases in which a child had been referred to a prospective adoptive family, and even those in which

International Adoption News Cont'd

in-person meetings between child and prospective parents had occurred. Our hearts go out to all who are so sadly and cruelly impacted.

In the aftermath of Russia's recent ban on adoptions by U.S. families, there remain continuing efforts to inform both the private and public sectors in Russia of the preponderance of wonderful outcomes for the roughly 60,000 Russian orphans adopted by American families over the past two decades. In support, American families that have completed their adoption of children from Russia are urged to fulfill their post-adoption obligations, including submission of periodic reports and photographs to the Russian Ministry of Education. These reports provide evidence of the true positive and loving story of intercountry adoption.

South Korea: In a case that has made news in two countries, it was ruled on March 5, 2013 in Cook County (Illinois) Circuit Court that an infant brought to the U.S. in June of 2012 for adoption by an Illinois couple should be returned to Korea. In the case in question, the baby was "privately" placed with the American family in Korea, meaning that the process occurred without the involvement of a licensed adoption agency, which is the normal process for adoptions there. Further, the U.S. Embassy in South Korea did not issue an immigrant visa for the child when the family brought her to the U.S., reportedly due to its not having received sufficient supporting documentation. In December, the Director of Child Welfare of the Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare came to testify in U.S. federal court on Korea's request for the baby to be returned to Korea. While all parties agree that the child's Korean birthmother is in favor of the baby's adoption, Korean law states that the child should at first have been eligible only for adoption within Korea, prior to being considered eligible for intercountry adoption. Upon the baby's return to Korea, she is to be placed for adoption with an already identified Korean family.

[Adoptions From The Heart](#) provides [Home Study](#), [Education](#), [Post-Adoption/Placement](#), and other assistance in support of intercountry adoptions. Please contact [Sam Wojnilower](#) at 610-642-7200 or SamW@afth.org with any questions about the agency's intercountry adoption services.



Congratulations to Families Who Have Recently Adopted!

Sons

Joseph & Shawn
 Anthony & Jill
 Laurie
 Tara
 David & Johanna
 Eugene & Kristen
 Gandolfo & Denise
 Neil & Stephanie
 Rex & Daria
 Christopher & Antonia
 Margaret & Malissa
 Laurie
 Leslie
 Michael & Angela
 Troy & Krystal
 Margaret & Dina
 Rodman & Anne
 Robert & Sibyl
 Jeffrey & Lara
 Joseph & Dale

Daughters

Dwayne & Tracey
 Troy & Krystal
 Randall & Margaret
 Kimberly
 Andrew & Holly
 Robert & Jennifer
 Justin & Wenonah
 Ryan & Lynn
 Ryan & Kate
 Michael & Wayne
 Bill & Kathryn
 Lydia





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AFTH 2013 CONFERENCE

*Adoption In A Changing World:
Tools for Professionals & Families*

Thursday, May 9, 2013

*from 9am-4pm (*Bonus Session 4:30-6pm)
at Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT*

Join us for a unique adoption conference full of exciting workshops and presenters. Adoption continues to be influenced by our changing world. The workshops are designed to give attendees a broad spectrum of topics ranging from openness in Adoption and Special Needs Adoption to Attachment and Legal Issues in adoption as well as several panels to help attendees see adoption from various perspectives. We will be welcoming several well respected adoption and family service professionals including keynote speaker, **Adam Pertman**, of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.



For Details & To Register: www.afth.org

Find AFTH On...
Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest,
Google+ and WordPress

Got E-mail?

The listserve is a way for families to stay in the loop of agency updates related to the domestic program. Waiting families can subscribe by sending a message with the word "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line to:

DOMESTIC LISTSERVE -

AFTHDomesticUpdates-subscribe@yahoo.com

To connect, support, and share with other AFTH families in the domestic program, join the yahoo group created for discussion and support. To join, send an email with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line to the below address:

DOMESTIC DISCUSSION GROUP

AFTHopenadoption-subscribe@yahoo.com