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Together as Adoptive Parents Inc. is a non-profit adoption parent group composed of adoptive, foster, kinship, families, adoptees, adoption professionals and others interested in adoption.

TAPROOT is a quarterly publication of
 Together as Adoptive Parents Inc.
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 Harleysville, PA 19438-2302
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We urge you to send us any information that you feel may be of interest to our readers.

OUR MISSION

To provide a support network among parents in the greater Philadelphia area, to disseminate available services and information to members and to implement programs and activities which promote the well being of children, adoptive, foster, and kinship families.

HAVE ANY COMMENTS,
 SUGGESTIONS
 OR GRIPES?

E-MAIL US AT

TAPLINK@COMCAST.NET

OR CALL US AT

(215) 256-0669

MEMBERSHIPS

North American Council on Adoptable
 Children
 Statewide Adoption & Permanency
 Network

PA State Resource Parent Association
 United Way Donor Choice # (10860)
 Delaware Valley Adoption Council

www.taplink.org

My Say

Phyllis Stevens, Executive Director

I am very happy to say that the number of children and youth in foster care in the state of Pennsylvania has dropped by nearly 5,000. The picture below was taken at our last Walk-A-Thon September 2010. The number of children and youth in care as of today is around 14,800.



The other good news is that adoptions are up for the third year in a row. The reason that this is such good news is that many older youth now have permanent homes.

While we all agree that this is great news, we also all agree that post adoption/post permanency services are needed more than ever.

In the winter 2011 issue of *Adoptalk* (the journal of NACAC - the North American Council on Adoptable Children), Kim Stevens wrote an article called "Post-Adoption Needs Survey Offers Direction for Continued Advocacy Efforts". NACAC sent out a survey to adoptive parents all over the United States and Canada and over 1000 parents have responded back so far. The survey was designed to gather information about adoptive families' post-adoption service need and recommendations. Here are some of the findings from the survey:

- 43% said they could not find needed services
- 39% said providers don't understand adoption
- 33% said the cost is too high

- 30% said providers do not accept Medicaid
- 25% said services do not exist in their community
- 21% said that did not know how to find services
- 18% said that services were too far way

Parents were asked to rank the top four issues that NACAC should address in the future. Two of these were training and education for parents, and educational advocacy and support.

TAP has been very active in these areas for many years. In 1998 we saw the need for support across the state so we started WWW.TAPLINK.ORG to address these issues. As an adoptive mom, I knew how hard it was to find adoption competent services. This web site is dedicated to providing detailed information about community supports that are available to adoptive, foster and kinship care families.

TAP provides 4 or five adoption focused trainings every year in addition to our monthly support meetings in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties. We also hold a one day training conference every November.

Our board of directors and our members should feel really good about the services we are providing to adoptive, foster, and kinship families.

June 25th TAP's Yard Sale

from 9:00am - 2:00pm

478 Moyer Rd, Harleysville 19438

215.256-0669



How you can help:

Donate gently used children and teen clothes, small working appliances (no adult clothes please)

Volunteer a few hours on that day (7:00am until 3:00pm)

Donate hot dog buns, hamburgers and hamburger buns, cans of soda and/or water, (to be sold at yard sale)

Donate money to buy above items

Tables that we can borrow

For directions look for the Picnic info in this newsletter

Incorrigibility

*I have received many calls from parents whose children are out of control.
Below is the information that I usually send them.*

An incorrigible child is one who consistently balks at his parents' demands and/or instructions, is habitually truant from school, often runs away from home, violates curfew, and/ or abuses alcohol. Repeated threats of violence to parents or siblings, as well as destruction to the home or furnishings are also grounds for this charge. The age limit for "incorrigible child" status varies from state to state, but it generally applies to those under the age of 17.

These are not children who have broken laws and are considered juvenile delinquents, but children who are deemed uncontrollable by their parents. Parents may file a petition in juvenile court to have their child classified as "incorrigible" only after they have documented a wide variety of the above-named offenses, including detailing the date and nature of the offenses. They must also have pursued every resource available, including family counseling, substance-abuse counseling if applicable, or well-documented reasons why such counseling was not possible.

Incorrigibility Sentencing

Once a parent's petition to have their child declared "incorrigible" is accepted, the court must appoint legal representation for the child since his parents are petitioning against him. Parents may also wish to have legal representation, although it is not required. During the sentencing process, the court will determine what treatment costs, if any, the family will be able and, therefore, required to pay.

No one would choose to have an incorrigible child. However, there are some circumstances in which it is the only reasonable step that can be taken, for the protection of the family and the rehabilitation of the child. Yet before they go to court, parents must exhaust any available counseling, social service options, and legal advice.

If all else fails, it may be necessary to pursue court action to have your child declared incorrigible. The hope is that with the right and help, both you and your child will be reconciled and able to pursue a harmonious and successful relationship.

- Incorrigibility must be considered a serious matter, and parents should think before filing a petition for such.

Infractions of parental discipline such as hurting other family members or destroying property are serious. Infractions such as not making a bed, is not

If a child is determined to be "incorrigible," the judge may order any of a number of penalties. *Penalties Vary Greatly by Case! For accurate penalties, talk to the court clerk or a lawyer!*

State	Avg. Fines	Avg. Jail	Avg. Probation	Other
Pennsylvania	\$100-\$500	up to 6 months	up to 1 year	community service

OPT TO ADOPT



Taylor 12

If you would like more information about Taylor please call 724-523-2012



Kendall 9

If you would like more information about Kendall please call 610-866-8331



Joseph 11

If you would like more information about Joseph please call 412-471-8722



Summer 14 Jacob 8

If you would like more information please call 717-262-8222

REAL CHILDREN – BROKEN DREAMS

By Carol Wells

One of the biggest stumbling blocks in adoptions is the “dream” that families have when they begin. The fantasies of rescuing a child, receiving the child’s gratitude and devotion, helping a child toward success, whatever – these things often prevent families from becoming families. If you are a person who is so tenacious about your dream that you cannot bear to have reality clash with your fantasy and shatter your vision: beware. These children with their disrupted lives are struggling to survive. They run an emotional obstacle course, skirting hurts, avoiding involvement, constructing barriers against hopes and disappointment. They may not be the stuff that your dreams are made of. It is not their responsibility to make your dreams come true.

If you can approach adoption as a great adventure, challenging yourself to acquire new skills, willing to love a young person who presents himself in an unlovable way – this job is wonderful, fulfilling, and important. If you can shrug your shoulders when the child who arrives in your home is not as obedient, loving, sweet, and motionless as she appears in her pictures, and then proceed to explore and discover just who she is and what is valuable and worth cherishing about her – then you may have many exciting and rewarding experiences in store for you.

These children are needy; the enormous holes in the centers of their beings belie their often-undersized frames. They need a lot before they have enough surplus to be able to give something back. If you are a needy parent, you may need to look elsewhere for nourishment. You will do better in this job if you are happy to give without measuring the returns. For even though it often cannot be perceived for a long while, honest, heartfelt giving hits its mark.

When adoptive parents complain of shattered dreams” they often express surprise that “love was not enough.” But actually I believe that it is. Love is not enough to alter a person – but that should not be love’s goal. However, love is enough to enable us to value a person, and to inspire us to explore new ways to work things out. The problem is that love takes a long time and it is often a hard road before you get there. What is needed right at the start, before love gets a grip, is absolute, unwavering commitment – not to a dream, but to a child. The commitment to find what is likeable in a child, and to like him. The commitment to work it through, whatever “it” may be. Because we are a family. Permanently.

Smile Time

God is sitting in Heaven when a scientist says to Him, "Lord, we don't need you anymore. Science has finally figured out a way to create life out of nothing. In other words, we can now do what you did in the 'beginning'."

"Oh, is that so? Tell me..." replies God.

"Well", says the scientist, "we can take dirt and form it into the likeness of you and breathe life into it, thus creating man."

"Well, that's interesting. Show Me".

So the scientist bends down to the earth and starts to mold the soil.

"Oh no, no, no..." interrupts God,
"Get your own dirt."



Its Vacation Time



School is out, the weather is pleasant, it's time to take a family vacation to the mountains to the beach to Disneyland or to visit friends and relatives. Vacations are fun and bring families closer, right? Wrong! Families with foster or recently adopted children need to understand family vacations are stressful times. Before you make vacation plans here are some facts you should keep in mind.

Children whose lives have been disrupted by placement in foster care and/or eventual adoption are naturally suspicious of change. They function best in a consistent and predictable environment. Changes in routine, (even if the routine is only slightly relaxed) causes these children to feel anxious and threatened. They immediately begin testing the limits to see where they fit into **this** routine. Many children regress to old behavior problems in a vacation setting. Behaviors like whining, lying, stealing, lack of compliance, and bed-wetting may re-occur.

Control issues often surface when children argue, complain and refuse to obey even simple requests. Often it seems like they are out to ruin your well-deserved vacation. The truth is children who joined your family through adoption and foster care have no reason to trust you to make enjoyable choices for them. Birth children know from experience their parents will include activities which are fun for kids, will make sure meals appear and parents will keep children safe in a new environment. Adoptive and foster children don't have this history with you. Their basic need for safety may be threatened.

A third problem is that vacations often involve a physical closeness which your child may not be able to handle. The confines of the family car, the same motel, guest room, tent or camping trailer may create anxiety in a child who is struggling with issues around closeness. When kids feel uneasy about a situation, they work like crazy to get out of it. The result can be family conflict.

The long anticipated visit to Grandma's, Uncle Bill's or family friends may be fraught with problems. Parents are naturally anxious to show off their new son or daughter may unconsciously pressure the child to be on their very best behavior. There is nothing wrong with this scenario except many children are unable to handle these pressures and react in negative ways by withdrawing or acting out. Many children feel unsafe with strangers' even relatives. Children who have been sexually abused by family members, in the past, may be especially uneasy. Does all this mean you must forego your summer vacation plans? Of course not! Here are some suggestions to help make your summer outings more enjoyable.

1. Prepare the child ahead of time. Tell him or her exactly where you are going, what you plan to do, where you will eat and sleep, and who, if anyone you will visit. If you have taken that trip or a similar trip before, talk about it. If you have photos of other vacations, show them to your child.
2. Because of past experiences, your child may equate change with "something bad." Emphasize to your child that he or she will not be left behind at home or "dumped" at your destination. Be sure your child understands you will all leave together and return together. Recognize the child's fear of abandonment and encourage the child to talk about these fears and to ask questions.
3. Maintain consistency. The rules for acceptable behavior, as well as times for meals, and bedtimes, should be maintained if at all possible. Remember, children whose lives have been disrupted do best on a schedule.
4. Watch your child's diet. Too many sugary snacks or greasy foods can result in upset stomachs or "sugar highs." Many families carry a small cooler filled with mild or juice in small cartons, raw vegetables, fruit, meat, cheeses, and bread for healthy lunches and snacks in the car. It is also handy to have

- food “on board” in case lunchtime arrives when you are 50 miles from a restaurant.
5. Avoid situations, which may prove to be over stimulating. It may be best to postpone the trip to Disneyland or to a large family reunion until the child has been with you several months to one year. Keep vacations simple and as low stress as possible. Avoid long tiring periods of driving. Structure your time so everyone gets plenty of rest.
 6. Warn friends and relatives ahead of time the visit may be difficult for your child and enlist their cooperation. You might say, “Jack has been hurt in ways you can’t see and he doesn’t handle new situations very well. I hope you will understand if I maintain the same schedule and rules as we have at home. He feels safer when I do that.”
 7. Reward yourself. If you are tired and frustrated after months of coping with the demands of a new child in your family, use respite and spend some time alone with your spouse or with a friend. A weekend with another adult away from parenting and work responsibilities is certain to “recharge your batteries” more than a two-week cross county car trip with the whole family.

Treat yourself well, maintain realistic expectations, keep vacation plans simple and enjoy your summer.

Reprinted from *Growing Together Newsletter*



Upcoming Events

The 19th annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference
July 20 – 22, 2011

"Assuring a Legacy"

Lancaster Host Resort & Conference Center
Lancaster, PA

For information contact Beth Duzey at (888) 793 2512

NACAC 37th Annual Conference Healing Across Systems

Denver, Colorado
August 4–6, 2011

Pre-Conference Session August 3

For more information phone: 651-644-3036

fax: 651-644-9848

e-mail: info@nacac.org

Fetal Alcohol Training

September 17th

Time and location TBA

Together as Adoptive Parents

Walk-A-Thon

Saturday September 24th

Registration 9:00am, Walk 9:30am

A friendly walk around Lorimer Park

TAP INTO THE LIFE OF A CHILD

~May is National Foster Care Month~

Join Together as Adoptive Parents, Inc. (TAP) in a fundraiser/foster parent recruitment drive

Where: Boscov's Plymouth Meeting Mall(2nd floor)

When: Saturday, May 21, 2011

Time: 11:00am-3:00pm

Bring your cameras for a picture with the Chick-fil-A Cow



Spin the Chick-fil-A Wheel to win great prizes!

Enjoy a Chick-fil-A sandwich, hotdog, or pretzel!

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Stop by to receive free information on how to become a foster or adoptive parent or a mentor!

For more information contact:

Phyllis Stevens (215)256-0669

Marquette King (443)616-9067

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR LAUGHTER AND BONDING IS NOWHERE

Did you read the above title as "the opportunity for laughter and bonding is **no where**?" Or did you read the above title as "the opportunity for laughter and bonding is **now here**?" As in life, we all see the exact same thing but we can, nonetheless, see something completely opposite and different. You can look at any situation, particularly those situations where your child does something that leads to an embarrassing moment, as a moment creating shared laughter that leads to a bonding experience. Or you can look at the exact same situation and choose to make it whatever the opposite of a bonding experience might be. Whether every experience with your child turns into "a laughter and bonding is now here" opportunity or "a laughter and bonding is no where" opportunity is completely up to you. We, of course, suggest you choose the positive over the negative and make as many of these moments "laughter and bonding is now here" opportunities as possible.

DEVELOP A "JOY JOURNAL"

We actually never have to tell a joke if we can simply recall the funny things that have happened in our lives.

Taking the time to help your child develop his or her own "joy journal" is another wonderful bonding experience. Kids love to be able to tell things to people that will make them laugh. If they have a joy journal full of funny stories, especially stories that have occurred since their placement as a teen or pre-teen with you or another adoptive family that you know, it will continuously remind them of the good times they shared since moving in with you or their new family. This is bound to help cement the parent/child relationship and bond.

Pat O Brian

What Do the Federal Regulations Say Concerning Damage to Foster Parent's Property

Question: There appears to be no agreement between insurers on the meaning of "liability insurance". Is the interpretation to include coverage of damages to the home or property of the foster parents as well as coverage for harm done by the child to another party, or accidental harm done by the foster parents to the child?

Answer: The terminology may be misleading, because foster parents are interested in more than "liability insurance". The correct interpretation includes coverage of damages to the home or property of the foster parents, as well as liability for harm done by the child to another party. In addition, protection against suit for possible malpractice or situations such as alienation of affection are often realistic concerns of persons who care for the children of others.

Several States have responded to these concerns by providing coverage for foster parents under a "pooled" liability program which provides in effect a self-insurance for departments of State government. Other States have legislated or otherwise defined foster parents as employees or as persons acting on behalf of the State, thus providing protection to those persons for claims made against them as agents of the State. Some States have purchased insurance coverage for foster parents, although the policies available often do not cover all of the risks incurred.

• **Source/Date:** ACYF-CB-PIQ-82-04 (1/29/82)

Legal and Related References: Social Security Act - section 423 (a)

TAP Picnic

Saturday June 11th

See inside for details

