

Families Across Michigan

“What We Have to Unlearn As Older Child Adoptive Parents”

By: Susan M. Ward
www.adoption.com

Older child adoptive parenting means learning. Learning about adoption options. Learning about parenting. Learning about grief and loss.

But, sometimes, we have to unlearn things.

If we love our child they will attach to us. We may have had biological children where the attachment and bonding was smooth and became solid. We may have been told by our adoption agency, "All they need is a good home and lots of love." All older adopted children have some degree of attachment issues. It's our responsibility as parents to create an environment that will help our children attach to us. And, if our children do not attach in spite of our knowledge and efforts about the attachment and bonding process, we need to find experienced, trained attachment therapists to assist.

Regular parenting techniques i.e. rewards, charts, stickers, will motivate them. Our kids may not have the internal self-regulation and self-esteem required for them to be positively motivated. They may have come from orphanages or foster homes where this type of reward system wasn't used. Cont. on pg. 3

Inside this issue:

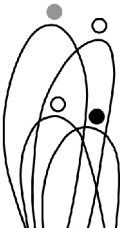
- Calendar of Events 2
- Register for 2011 Heart Gallery 3
- Kinship Adoption Festival 3
- Child Highlight 4

Sheila Boardman, Editor

Published quarterly by The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange

PO Box 980789
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
800-589-MARE
mare@judsoncenter.org

MARE is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Human Services.



Upcoming MARE Recruitment Events

Wednesday, July 21st—5:30pm: Match Party in Macomb County

Tuesday, July 27th—5:30pm: Match Party in Grand Rapids, MI

Saturday, August 14th—11:00am: Match Party in Hersey, MI

Wednesday, September 8th—5:00pm: Match Party in Allegan County

Note: You must have an Approved Adoptive Family Assessment to participate in a match party

Get to know children whom are waiting to be adopted, in a comfortable and welcoming environment!

MARE has been collaborating with other agencies and holding match parties for many years. We have planned activities and organized materials to assist social workers select, prepare and support children who attend the parties. The parties are staffed by MARE coordinators and supervisors. *Limited space available. Contact MARE Recruitment Specialist, Sheila Boardman, 734.528.1692 ext 23257, if you would like to attend or learn more about future Match Events.*



© Mary Stack



© Jesica Christenson



© Romahn Blaquart



© Romahn Blaquart



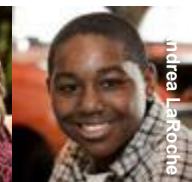
© Kenyon Kopp



© Candace Young



© Kari Douma



nareea LaRoche

Note: This is not the full list of events for Summer 2010. To view the entire calendar, please visit www.mare.org.

OTTAWA

Foster Care Orientation & Older Child Adoption Option – (6:00 PM – 9:00 PM) July 12, July 22, September 13, October 4, November 1
For more information please contact Jame Maatman at 616.796.9163 or jmaatman@bethany.org.

Location: Bethany Christian Services - Holland

PRIDE Dates – (9:00 AM – 3:30 PM) July 24 & 31. The first Saturdays of the months are sessions 1,2, 3. The second Saturday of the months are sessions 4 and 6. For more information please contact Jamie Maatman at 616.796.9163 or jmaatman@bethany.org.

Location: Bethany Christian Services - Holland

Kinship Support Group— (6:00 PM—8:00PM) Second Tuesday of every month. Kinship Care Support Group meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday. There is no cost. Childcare and a meal are provided at each meeting. For more information, contact Lindsey Iverson at 616.396.0623

Location: The Lodge, Calvary Christian Reformed Church, 410 Beeline Rd., Holland

INGHAM

Adoption Orientation for all Types of Adoption – (6:00 PM – 7:30 PM): Every 3rd Tuesday of the Month

Open to the public. Contact Kathy Yates at yatesk@stvcc.org or 517.323.4734 x1619. **Location:** St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, MI

KENT

Foster Care Orientation - (6:00 PM – 9:00 PM) July 27; July 31. All Bethany foster parents need to attend **one** orientation meeting and required trainings. Please contact the Jennifer Reister at 616.224.7481 or email jreister@bethany.org. Dinner is provided! Registration Required.

Location: All trainings held at the conference center at Bethany Christian Services at 901 Eastern Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49501

PRIDE- (6:30 PM—9:30 PM) July 22. Connecting with PRIDE and teamwork toward permanence. FREE. Registration Required: Contact Mary Lou Bomgaars at 616.451.2021 or mbomgaars@dablodgett.org. Location: D.A. Blodgett - St. John's, Grand Rapids, MI

MUSKEGON

Muskegon Adoptive/Foster Parent Group—(5:00 PM - 7:00 PM) Monthly on the second Monday. Support group is from 5-6 p.m. and training is from 6-7 p.m. For further information or to RSVP for events, please call Mary Doctor at 231.726.1200 ext. 216, Toll Free at 1-877-277-9378, or email at mdoctor@ccwestmi.org. Location: DHS on Baker Street, Muskegon, MI

OAKLAND

Foster Care Orientation: (9:00 AM – 12:00 PM): August 4 & (6:00 PM – 9:00 PM): April 21, June 16, July 21, Open to the public. Registration Required. Contact person for questions/registration is Karen Lawson, 248.593.2171 or klawson@orchards.org.

Location: Orchards Children's Services Location: Southfield Office, 30215 Southfield Rd., Suite 100, Southfield, MI, 48076

Adoption Orientation: (10:00 AM – 11:30 AM) & (6:30 PM – 8:00PM): July 13, August 10, September 14. Open to the public. Registration Required. Contact person for questions/registration is Karen Lawson, 248.593.2171 or klawson@orchards.org.

Location: Orchards Children's Services Location: Southfield Office, 30215 Southfield Rd., Suite 100, Southfield, MI, 48076

WASHTENAW

Parenting On Your Own—(10:30 AM—11:30 AM) Every Thursday until September 30th

A session for single parents. Cost: FREE, Call 734.484.2989 or 734.222.3943 for more information

Location: Hope Center, 518 Harriett St., Ypsilanti, MI, 48197

WAYNE

PRIDE Pre-Service Training – (10:00 AM – 4:00 PM): July 17 & July 24, July 28 & August 21. This is a two session series. Contact: 313.961.4777.

Location: 511 E. Larned, Detroit, MI 48226

PRIDE Training—(9:00 AM—5:00 PM): July 17. PRIDE sessions 3,4 & 6 will be covered. Contact: Dina Novelli at 313.862.1000 x 120 or dnovelli@evergreenserv.org. Location: Evergreen Children's Services, Detroit, MI

Join Us for an Information Session on Older Child Adoption

Wednesday, August 25th—Cheboygan—6:00pm

Thursday, August 26th—Traverse City—6:00pm

Thursday, September 30th—Marquette—6:00pm

The informational session will give attendees an overview of the adoption process and an opportunity to ask questions about adopting through Michigan's foster care. Adoptive parents can be single, married, homeowners or renters and can come from any racial, ethnic or religious background. Light refreshments will be provided. To register, call MARE at 800-589-6273 or email Sheila_boardman@judsoncenter.org.

Register Now for the 2011 MI Heart Gallery

We are looking for parents who have adopted older children from foster care to participate in the 2011 Michigan Heart Gallery. Families will have their portrait taken by a professional photographer and will be featured in the traveling exhibit.

The purpose of the Heart Gallery is to promote 'special needs' adoption throughout Michigan.

To learn more or to register, call 1.800.589.MARE or email mare@judsoncenter.org



"What We Have to Unlearn as Older Child Adoptive Parents" (cont.)

Or, our kids may suffer from various biological or psychological issues i.e. ADHD, bipolar, PTSD, or attachment disorder that makes it impossible to work for rewards until they've undergone therapy, therapeutic parenting, or other interventions to teach them the requisite internal tools that will help them be motivated to do well.

A stern voice or time out will change their poor behaviors. Some older adopted children arrive into their forever homes with limited understanding of cause and effect. Their world is so self-focused that external nudges are not enough to get them to change their behaviors. Often, our kids need long-term Love and Logic type parenting where they eventually learn that their own choices result in varying consequences. Some consequences they will like, some they don't, but they're in charge of their actions.

The techniques our parents used with us can be modified and used with our own kids. Some of the parenting actions and phrases that are ingrained in us from our own parents work well. Others, often the negative parts of our own parents, get in the way of effectively parenting our children. Whether it's an expectation of perfection, a favoring of one sibling over another, a habit of yelling, or a continuous tone of sarcasm, we need to change. We need to identify these bad parenting habits and work to eliminate them.

Public schools are good places for learning. If our children are compliant, and smart in the ways that public schools expect children to be smart, our child will do well. If, however, our child learns differently, suffers from a psychological disorder, or has other issues that don't fit the "mold," our child will suffer. Schools are required to provide an appropriate education for our children, but they're strapped financially and don't have the services your child needs. If your child doesn't fit the school "mold," you'll spend lots of time learning and advocating for your child.

Older child adoption is a never-ending educational and enlightening experience. Both what we have to learn, and what we have to unlearn.

Older Children Need Families, too!

Want to Learn More About Adoption and Foster Care?

Attend the 21st Annual

Kinship Adoption Festival

Saturday, September 25th, 2010

11:00am to 3:00pm

Wayne County Community College Northwest Campus

8200 West Outer Drive, Detroit, MI 48219

This Event is FREE

Talk with adoption workers, attend workshops, participate in children's activities, and meet some of Detroit area's waiting children.



MARE
MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE
EXCHANGE

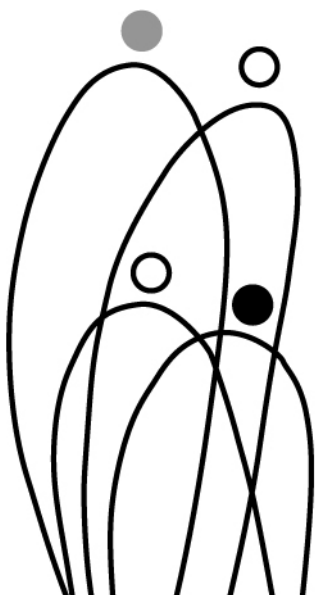
Judson Center
PO Box 980789
Ypsilanti, MI

Phone: 734-528-1692
Fax: 734-528-1695
E-mail: mare@judsoncenter.org

Visit us on the web:

www.mare.org

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is an information and referral service for prospective adoptive parents interested in adopting children with "special needs," and for adoption workers looking for homes for these children.



Miranda & Stephanie

Miranda, age 14, and Stephanie, age 13, are talkative and friendly sisters who share an interest in horses and watching "Saddle Club" on television. Miranda likes dancing, coloring, and playing baseball. She can also be affectionate and interacts well with adults. She is very helpful and supportive of peers and adults. Stephanie is a very giving person and enjoys reading and singing. She also likes to play sports such as volleyball, baseball, and soccer.

Miranda is working very hard to improve how she copes with her emotions. She can have



difficulty expressing herself when there is upheaval in plans. Miranda is working on maintaining a positive attitude when things don't go her way. She is currently seeing a mentor whom she has a positive relationship with. Stephanie is working hard on being able to control her emotions and expressing them in an appropriate manner. She is also working on more effective communication

when she is upset or frustrated.

Miranda and Stephanie need a family who can provide a highly structured environment with consistent supervision and limits. A patient and loving family who can be accepting of their current level of functioning while encouraging them to reach their full potential would be best.

To inquire about Miranda, C06187, or Stephanie, C06188, contact MARE at (800) 589-6273 or visit www.mare.org.