



# Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting  
the Children of Waukesha County  
February 2015



## Honoring Your Child's Racial and Cultural Identity By: Coalition for Children, Youth and Families

When adopting a child transracially or transculturally, certain changes within your family may seem obvious in the beginning. However, adopting a child of a different race or culture will require a shift in thinking above and beyond what you may initially think because your child's experience will differ greatly from your own.

We hope the following information may help your family adapt to becoming a transracial family or a transcultural family.

### Definitions

Here are some definitions that most people use when referring to race and culture:

**Racial identity** is the racial background with which you identify. Many people today have backgrounds from more than one culture or race, and many of these people will pick on that they feel they can relate to the best.

**Transracial or transcultural adoption** means placing a child who is of one race or ethnic group with adoptive parents of another race or ethnic group.

**Cultural Identity:** chose or adopted culture.

### Creating Positive Racial and Cultural Identity

By empowering your children to adapt to your family and your culture, you will be honoring your child's racial and cultural identity. A child who has been adopted and is a different race will have varying emotional needs.

Your children will be treated as members of your family at home, but may have a different experience in the world at large. It's these experiences that contribute largely to the development of their identity. They may deal with racism or stereotypes that you or your children have never had to deal with in the past.

This requires preparation and open family communication. Rather than expecting that your child adapts to your family, your family will need to adapt to your child and his or her racial and cultural identity. Your child's race and culture should become a part of all family members experience and be present throughout your home.

### The Impact of Transracial Identity

Adopting transracially impact the entire family. The whole family now becomes transracial—not simply the child. If all family members think about their family unit in this way, it can prevent the child who was adopted from alienated.

Relationships with extended family members and friends may be challenged or even changed when they are asked to accept and respect you as a transracial family.

At school, peers may question your children about why they look different from you or a sibling. Not only will your children need to be prepared for these occurrences, but so will the entire family.

As a family, reflect on your own beliefs, attitudes, and experiences so you can understand the messages that are being sent to your children.



- Am I committed and prepared to standing up to someone of my own race on behalf of a sibling of another race?
- When I hear an inappropriate and offensive racial joke or comment, am I comfortable to speak up and defend my child by asking the person to stop?
- How will I feel and how will I potentially react when others stare at my family when we are in public?
- How will I feel when I am asked intrusive questions about my family's racial difference by peers, extended family members, or strangers?

### What Can You Do?

Celebrate all cultures and races. Demonstrate to your family that you value differences in appearance, traditions, and cultural heritage. Showing your children that you take the time to learn about and honor different cultures will help teach them to do the same.

Additionally, it reinforces your interest in learning about the culture and traditions that your child will add to your family.

Ideas to incorporate culture and racial differences into your family include:

- Read books with your children. Visit our lending library at [www.wiadopt.org](http://www.wiadopt.org) and click on the Library tab.
- Join a parent group. For a listing of groups in Wisconsin, go to our website at [www.wiadopt.org](http://www.wiadopt.org). Click on the Post
- Adoption tab and select Helpful Lists from the menu.
- Attend cultural events or ceremonies.
- Become educated about differences that impact daily life, including eating and grooming. (We have a tip sheet on African American hair care that you may find helpful.)

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## Honoring Your Child's Racial and Cultural Identity Continued from Page 1

For more ideas, please check out our tip sheet, *Twenty Ideas for Keeping Connections to Racial and Cultural Identity*.

It's never too early to start planning and discussing ways to incorporate another race or culture into your family. Think about where you live and the people who you interact with on a daily basis — teachers, doctors, neighbors, postal carriers, dentists.

Is your child's race reflected in these people? Does the location where your family lives provide positive same race role models?

Even when moving isn't a feasible option, there are other things you can do to incorporate racial and cultural identity into your home. Items in your home can represent the race and culture of all members of your family as well as the community through artwork, books, toys, movies, greetings cards, etc.

Talk openly with all of your children about race and culture. Encourage them to participate in your racial and cultural traditions and incorporate their traditions into your family.

Acknowledge your children's differences. An adult adoptee of another race (than her white parents) said, "When I looked in the mirror, I was surprised that I wasn't white, too."

Acknowledging differences can be confusing for children who were adopted transracially. In addition to the mirror reflecting back their differences, others who interact with them outside of their home will also reflect differences.

### Addressing Racism

Discussing the possibility of racism before it happens can better prepare your children, as well as yourselves to assertively deal with it. Role playing with them and giving them the words to use when faced with discrimination will empower children to stand up to it rather than internalize their race/culture or that of a sibling as negative.

As will most anything, parents are great role models for how to handle these difficult and uncomfortable situations. When your children see you appropriately handling a situation with a stranger in the grocery store or with an extended family member at a reunion, it will reinforce their value and set a great example for how to handle these challenging situations when you're not around.

Adopting transracially adds another level of creating a cohesive family. However, you can successfully navigate this road by being open to both sharing your racial and cultural traditions and expanding them to include those of the new member of your family.

Along this journey, you will discover amazing things about your family. What a great opportunity for your family to embrace your cultural differences and similarities!

### Resources from the Coalition Library

- ***Transracial Adoption and Foster Care: Practical Issues for Professionals***, by Dr. Joseph Crumble
- ***In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories***, by Rita J. Simon & Rhonda M. Roorda
- ***Transracial Adoption***, by Rita Simon, Howard Alstein
- ***Transracial Adoption: Children and Parents Speak***, by Constance Pohl, Kathy Harris
- ***Inside Transracial Adoption***, by Gail Steinberg, Beth Hall
- ***Brothers and Sisters in Adoption***, by Arleta James

## Food, Culture & Adoption From Under the Umbrella

Every family has its own culture, and even if you're not a "foodie," you know that food is part of the culture of any family. As an adoptive family, you may have already incorporated foods from your child's birth family or birth culture into your own family's menu. This is a positive way to show respect for your child's heritage.

Our sense of smell is one of our strongest memory triggers, and your child may think about another place and another family as your home begins to smell like foods she's experienced in the past. You might use this as an opportunity to talk about birth families and birth cultures. Your child may have questions that aren't easy to answer. But we know that being open to talking about your child's history will help your child to make sense of the past. And being engaged in an activity, like cooking together, sometimes helps the conversation flow.



If your child belongs to a different racial or ethnic group than you, it's relatively easy to research typical foods and recipes. Keep in mind that just because a food is connected to a particular culture, it doesn't mean that it's part of your child's memory or family tradition. But it might be fun to explore those foods together even if your child hasn't experienced them before.

As we are leaving the holiday season behind and facing a new year with new resolutions, you might resolve as a family to add some new recipes, flavors, and dishes to your meal times. You can search for recipes online or check out cookbooks from your local library. Together, you and your child can find dishes that look good and have fun preparing them for the whole family.

1/5/2015 Under the Umbrella  
Newsletter from Coalition for Children, Youth and Families

### Chefs In the Making

Kids will learn the basic fundamentals of becoming a good cook while preparing a fun and delicious meal, measuring, mixing and some old fashioned "tricks of the trade."

NOTE: Each "Chef in Training" should bring a smock or apron to wear while preparing the treat for the day and containers to take treats home. All other supplies will be provided.

### Winter Comfort Foods

In the midst of winter, we need comfort foods to warm us up! We will be preparing delicious dishes such as Mac and Cheese with Popcorn Topping, Easy Cheesy Soup, Miniature Fruit Pies and more!

Class#	AGE	DATE	DAY	TIME	R/NR FEE
1500.130	7-12	2/28	Sa	1:00-3:00 pm	\$19/\$28

Waukesha Park and Rec  
WPRF: 262.524.3737 / [www.ci.waukesha.wi.us](http://www.ci.waukesha.wi.us)



## The Gift of Quilts

What is made with one's hands, is given from the heart. This is true of the Oconomowoc Quilter's Guild who recently donated 10 handmade quilts for foster children in Waukesha County. They are a modest group of women who declined to give their names, emphasizing that the quilts they create are a joint effort. Each year they select two Charity Quilt Focus Projects to present "comfort quilts" as an expression of caring and community support to individuals in our community experiencing difficult circumstances. They chose to give foster children handmade quilts to help ease their transition into foster care.

In most cases, foster children have very little – sometimes nothing – when they are placed into an unfamiliar home. A colorful and cozy quilt represents comfort and safety for children who are facing the unknown. By providing them with a quilt, the guild members ensure that kids always have something of their own, no matter where they go. By having their own personal keepsake, children will be given the message that the community cares and is thinking of them. We thank the Oconomowoc Quilter's Guild for their generous donation of these beautiful quilts and their ongoing commitment and service to our community.

The group also create quilts for the Quilts of Valor program for active military members and veterans who have served or are currently serving in a war zone or capacity where they have been touched by war. For more information about the guild, see their website at: [oconomowocquilters.com](http://oconomowocquilters.com).



## Clothing Closet Corner

We need the following items for the Clothing Closet:

- Gift Cards for Teens

The Clothing Closet is open to all providers.

Clothing Closet donation hours will be scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 AM to Noon or contact Susan Peck at 262-896-8574 to arrange a donation time outside of those hours.

## Volunteers Needed for Foster Parent Clothing Closet

If you are aware of anyone who has some extra time to generously donate, we are in need of assistance with sorting and hanging clothes in the clothing closet. Please contact Susan Peck at Office (262) 896-8574 or email: [speck@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:speck@waukeshacounty.gov) for more information.



## HAVE YOU HEARD?

Eve Altizer & Rebecca Hollister  
Child and Family Division  
Supervisors

There are many changes in 2015 surrounding health care and benefits, so we thought it would be a good idea to share with you some information from the Moraine Lakes Consortium:

Through health care reform (ACA/"Obamacare") millions of Americans have enrolled in private health plans or Badgercare/Medicaid. HealthCare.gov (take note it is .GOV not .com!) allows people the ability to shop and compare prices of health insurance plans and finally get the affordable, quality coverage they deserve. To help our community better understand what HealthCare.gov means and how to enroll, trained enrollment assisters and insurance agents will be at the below events. These events are designed to help you find quality coverage and avoid the penalty for not having insurance in 2015. Please see below for more details and keep an eye on the newspapers for future events!

- **Weekly THURSDAYS 5pm – 8pm** Badger High School (220 East South Street, Lake Geneva, WI 53147) Insurance Assistance Lab; park on Wells Street in room 602 from 5pm – 8pm (in Walworth County however open to ALL)
- **Weekly MONDAYS noon – 7pm** Oconomowoc Public Library (200 West South Street, Oconomowoc, WI 53066) Insurance Assistance Lab; in study rooms from noon – 7pm (in Waukesha County however open to ALL)
- **Super Saturday Checkup – Health, Wellness & Insurance Fair, Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> 10am – 2pm** at the Washington County Fair Grounds (3000 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095) – FREE, Open to Public
- **Valentine's Day Health & Insurance Fair, Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 2pm** at the Elkhorn Middle School (627 East Court Street, Elkhorn, WI 53121) – FREE, Open to Public

Please attend one or all of the events to learn your options and make informed choices. Let's get Wisconsin covered! If require an interpreter or if you have any further questions please contact event coordinators Katherine Gaulke 262-949-2971 or Jessica Osenbrügge 262-323-9069. #GetCovered

We would also like to say THANK YOU and CONGRATULATIONS to Maureen Erb, who has been an *integral* part in creating our newsletter for all of these years, as she has been promoted to a Support Staff Supervisor! Thank you for all that you have done to help with the newsletter with your attention to detail, your ability of keeping us all on track, your insight, and your creative eye in helping make the newsletter the success it is today!

Sincerely,

*Eve and Rebecca*

*Happy Valentine's Day*

# Training and Events



## Training Offered By Waukesha County

### Parent Café

Parent Café's are an educational opportunity for parents to come together and deal with the stressors, worries and challenges of parenting in a supportive environment.

**February 3, 2015; April 28, 2015; June 2, 2015; August 4, 2015; October 6, 2015; and December 1, 2015**  
**5:30 to 8:00 PM**

**Center for Excellence**, N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha  
 To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-521-0317.

### Waukesha County Foster Parent Orientation

Waukesha Department of Health and Human Services invites you to attend a foster parent orientation meeting. These meetings are open to anyone who is interested in learning about our foster care program. **If you are currently in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent, you are required to attend an orientation session prior to approval of your foster care license.**

We encourage you to complete the online foster parent pre-placement training prior to attending this information session. The training can be found online at <http://wcpwps.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training/>. Please save the certificates after you have completed each module. These are required to become licensed.

#### When:

February 10, 2015; March 10, 2015; April 14, 2015; May 12, 2015; June 9, 2015; July 14, 2015; August 11, 2015; September 8, 2015; October 13, 2015; November 10, 2015; and December 8, 2015

All orientation sessions occur from 6:00- 8:00 PM

**Where:** Human Services Center, 514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

To register for an orientation session, contact your foster care coordinator.

### Waukesha County Foundation Training

All licensed Level 2 foster homes need to complete this required training within their first two years of licensing. It is highly recommended that you complete this training as soon as possible to help you in preparing for a placement.

**Waukesha Series 1:** Bob Alioto and Kristi Wood  
**Series Dates:** Saturdays, 2/28/15 - 4/25/15  
**Session ID:** Waukesha Series 1

All of Waukesha Series 1 trainings will be held on at Aurora Medical Center, Draper Hall, 36500 Aurora Drive, Summit, WI 53066. Here are the dates of the trainings:

- ◆ Module 1, Partners in Permanency  
2/28/15, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- ◆ Module 2, Cultural Dynamics in Placement  
2/28/15, 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
- ◆ Module 3, Maintaining Family Connectedness  
3/14/15, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

- ◆ Module 5, Impact of Trauma on Child Development  
3/14/15, 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
- ◆ Module 4a, Dynamics of Abuse & Neglect Part 1  
3/28/15, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- ◆ Module 4b, Dynamics of Abuse & Neglect Part 2  
3/28/15, 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
- ◆ Module 6, Attachment  
4/11/15, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- ◆ Module 7, Separation & Placement  
4/11/15, 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
- ◆ Module 8, Guidance & Positive Discipline  
4/25/15, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- ◆ Module 9, Effects of Fostering on Your Family  
4/25/15, 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM

For register for trainings, go to Foster Parents Log In Instructions at: <http://wcpwps.wisc.edu/pdsonline/fosterparents.aspx>

If you are unable to attend the spring series, we will be offering the fall series from September through November at Waukesha County Human Services Center.

**Waukesha Series 2:** Bob Alioto and Peg Cadd  
**Series Dates:** 9/15/15 - 11/17/15  
**Session ID:** Waukesha Series 2

### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Training

**When:** Wednesday, March 11, 2015

**Where:** Waukesha County Health and Human Services Building  
 514 Riverview Ave.  
 Waukesha, WI 53188

**Time:** 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

### Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

**Third Tuesday of each month.**

**February 17, 2015**

**6:00 PM to 7:00 PM**

**Parents Place**, 1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI 262- 549-5575

Free childcare available. Please call Parents Place to reserve your spot.

Waukesha County Relative Resource Families  
 Please RSVP to Janis (262-548-7267) or Libby (262-548-7277)

## Training

**Parents Place Programs**

**262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org**

- **Adult Anger**  
Mondays, February 2 - 16 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Effective Discipline for the Challenging Child**  
Mondays, February 9 - March 2 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- **Love and Logic®**  
Tuesdays, February 10 - March 3 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM

## Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County  
 Health & Human Services  
 262-548-7212

Eve Altizer, Supervisor  
 262-548-7272

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor  
 262-548-7271

Kathy Mullooly, Supervisor  
 262-896-6832

Janis Ramos, Foster Care Coord.  
 262-548-7267

Susan Peck, Foster Care Coord.  
 262-896-8574

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing  
 262-548-7277

## Social Workers:

Jennifer Adler..... 262-548-7265

Jessica Cirillo..... 262-548-7639

Tracy Clark..... 262-548-7270

Megan Fishler..... 262-896-8570

Laura Jahnke..... 262-548-7359

Becca Kuester..... 262-896-6857

Jessica Larsen..... 262-548-7346

Melissa Lipovsek..... 262-548-7348

Maria Maurer..... 262-548-7345

Chelsey Nisbet..... 262-896-6896

Stacy Pawlak..... 262-548-7262

Michael Reed..... 262-548-7347

Elizabeth Russo..... 262-548-7349

Kim Sampson..... 262-548-7273

Linda Senger..... 262-548-7698

## Kinship Workers:

Linda Finn..... 262-548-7254

Jessica Morris..... 262-548-7256

Children's Mental Health Outreach  
 262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911

Family Emergency: 211

## Foster Parent Mentor

Jen Mersfelder..... 262-542-2926

David Mersfelder..... 262-542-2926

If an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect has been made against you, please call:

FASPP

Norma Schoenberg  
 920-922-9627

## December 2014 Placements

Level 2 Placements:  
 44 Children

Juvenile Corrections:  
 1 Children

Group Homes:  
 0 Children

Residential Care Facilities:  
 11 Children

Level 1 Placements:  
 46 Children

Level 2 Foster Homes:  
 99 Homes

Level 1 Foster Homes:  
 50 Homes

Total Children in OHC:  
 105 Children

