



# Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting  
the Children of Waukesha County

March 2015



## Twenty Ideas for Keeping Connections to Racial and Cultural Identity By: Coalition for Children, Youth and Families

Parenting a child of a race or culture other than your own will likely be one of the most rewarding experiences in your life, but it is also likely to be one of your biggest challenges. When you adopt a child who is of a different ethnicity or culture, it's important for your whole family to develop as a multicultural family.

Wisconsin foster and adoptive parent Mary Jane Proft and her husband Tom have adopted 13 children from different backgrounds and abilities, and she says about her kids, "They have enhanced our family. We have learned things about other cultures and adoption that we never would have if we had not adopted them."

She goes on to say, "We also have more empathy for other minorities. We have learned to advocate for our kids and learned how to teach them how to do the same."

Your family will probably want to understand the importance of celebrating not only your child's culture, but other races and cultures, as well.

Here are some helpful ways that you can help your family and child embrace ethnicity and culture.

1. Have children's books in your home that represent people of different cultures and races.
2. Learn a folk tale or song about different ethnicities or cultures and have your child illustrate it.
3. Have magazines in your home that represent different cultures.
4. Celebrate both your children's heritage and your own when decorating their rooms. (Of course, one your kids are teenagers, all bets are off as to what they'll want!)
5. Have multicultural pictures and artwork in your home. Some examples include: African masks, Hmong tapestries, Norwegian rosemaling, Native American pottery, and instruments and costumes from various cultures.
6. Learn some new words or simple phrases in your child's native language or dialect of the culture.
7. Watch TV shows and movies that represent all types of ethnicities in a positive manner.
8. Start a group—or join one that already exists—where families get together to celebrate different ethnicities. Try having a potluck with multicultural food—from pot stickers to collard greens to Irish soda bread and everything in between.
9. Include your child in helping prepare a meal that represents their ethnicity or culture as well as other cultures.
10. Attend different cultural festivals in your community. A good place to start is the Wisconsin Department of Tourism site, [travelwisconsin.com](http://travelwisconsin.com).



11. Go to specialty grocery stores to purchase some food or some spices. See if they also sell music, books, art, toys, and clothing that represent your child's ethnicity and culture.
12. Visit a local museum and see an exhibit that depicts different cultures.
13. Identify a positive mentor or advisor for your child who is of the same cultural heritage.
14. Discuss current events with your child that involve his ethnicity or culture, as well as other cultures.

15. Identify cultural resources within your community like theaters, recreational centers, and camps.

16. Take trips to places that represent and reflect your child's heritage. This could be a trip to your child's old neighborhood, a museum, or even your child's place of birth.

17. Regularly attend a religious institution frequented by your child's ethnic or cultural group.

18. Educate your child about various cultures by teaching them about people who have made a positive contribution to the world.

19. Take your child to hear a speech by a prominent community leader or a business leader who represents the same ethnicity or culture as your child.

20. Reside in a neighborhood that is rich with cultural diversity and provides the opportunity for your child to come into contact with other people who are of the same race or culture as they are.

To honor their kids, the Profts have done a lot of the suggestions on this list. "For each culture, we have a room decorated with artifacts, furniture, and flavor of that culture," says Mary Jane. "There is no doubt that everyone knows where the Asian, African American, Hispanic, and Native American rooms are!

"We made an effort to learn authentic recipes/meals from each culture and eat them regularly. On birthdays, the kids can request whatever meal they want. They usually request a meal from their culture—even if they don't like it!"

All families benefit from racial and cultural diversity. Education is an important piece for blending a multicultural family, and it doesn't happen with a few social outings, but rather is gained over years. It requires the same perseverance needed in the adoption process that brought your child to your family.

The rewards are immeasurable. As Mary Jane says, "We are better people for the experience."

## Thank You, Cari!

We wish to recognize Cari Scharbach for her commitment and hard work in organizing our Waukesha County Clothing Closet. Cari is here each week, organizing and hanging up clothes that have been generously donated to help children in need of clothing items. Cari's enthusiasm and radiant smile are a pleasure to see as she goes about her work, with her favorite tunes playing on the radio in the background. Cari derives great pleasure in helping others and has volunteered for a number of agencies, in addition to working part-time. We deeply appreciate her dedication and expertise in making the Clothing Room look inviting and well-maintained.

Thanks to Cari for making a difference for our foster children and families!

## Letter From Bette Winkler, Foster Mom

The lead article in last month's newsletter dealt with cross-cultural adoption and diversity within the foster family. I'm sure many of you read it and reacted to it since it is such a timely subject. After raising our biological children, we started fostering. And, like many of you, we've had several children with different ethnic backgrounds from ours in our home.

Diversity and the respect for all people and their cultures has always been extremely important for us. Our six biological children were raised in Muskego where almost everyone at the kids' schools look exactly as they did. So in order to prepare our kids for the real world they'd be living and working in, we had to consciously put them in situations and have experiences they would need in the real world in their future. We did things like attend church at the Greater Galilee Baptist Church in the central city, participate in Cinco de Mayo activities, etc.

From personal experience, we know how rewarding it is as foster parents when kids appreciate the effort made on their behalf in this area. We had two brothers from Burma in our home, and we spent a great deal of effort to have them feel they were still a part of that community. We made regular visits to the Buddhist temple (along with the wonderful monthly pot luck meals) and became very involved with the very active Burmese refugee group. The boys, for sure, felt that their culture was valued. Additionally, it was also an education for us, especially when we tried different dishes (both preparing them and eating them.) Later, we also had a foster daughter placed with us who was Jewish - but she didn't know that until we attended a Kristallnacht memorial at the Jewish Holocaust museum. There, she learned one is considered Jewish if your mother is Jewish. She had an "ah-hah" moment when she found that out!

We attended the Indian Summer festival and pow wows with our Native American kids and the Asian Moon Festival with our Korean daughter. But we also have these and many more ethnic experiences with all our foster kids. There is a wealth of multicultural activities in the greater Waukesha area and throughout southeastern Wisconsin that are family-oriented and wonderful. We even found a great one in Cedarburg of all places! We feel that in order for kids to become adults able to deal with and feel comfortable with diversity, they need to be exposed to it early and often. Both my husband and I grew up in pretty bigoted households, so we are also aware that our extended families are a source of possible inappropriate behavior in the presence of people with a different cultural background. We liked the article's suggestion that parents talk with kids about racism and prepare them to deal with it by responding appropriately. It's a hard thing to do in the moment if proper thought hasn't been given to it, and that is the moment when emotions are also rising.

The second article on food and smells was also very interesting. We've known all along that smell is such an important memory trigger. And food smells are crucial in this area since ethnic foods so often use spices that are not the usual in most kitchens. This smell idea was brought home to me very recently when my daughter-in-law brought over some extra bedding. Her daughter (my grand-daughter) was over and noticed the smell (they use a different laundry detergent from the one I use.) When I told her it was time to leave for school, she asked if she had time to go smell the bed one more time.... There have been times when the personal objects our new placements brought into our house were in need of a good laundering, but we always left at least one item unwashed so the smell from the birth home could stay with the child. It is so very important to try to take to heart the idea of smells in the kitchen also when we continue to encourage the foster child's culture and background since foods and eating are so universally important.

## NAMI Basics Education Program

NAMI Basics is an educational program for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illnesses. It covers the fundamentals of caring for yourself, for your family and for your child.

### What You Should Expect

- ★ Meets for six sessions, 2.5 hours each, free of cost.
- ★ Designed for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness.
- ★ Taught by a team of trained teachers who are family caregivers of individuals who developed symptoms of mental illness as children.
- ★ Provides critical information and strategies related to caregiving.
- ★ Incorporates presentations, discussion and interactive exercises.

### Why You Should Attend

#### A toolkit of information

- ★ Up-to-date information on a range of mental illnesses and their impact on the brain.
- ★ Current research on treatments including evidence-based therapies, medications and side effects.
- ★ Preparation for interactions with the mental health care system, school system and juvenile justice system.

#### Training in preparedness and emotional resiliency

- ★ Skills related to managing crises, solving problems and communicating effectively.
- ★ Strategies for self-care and for navigating the challenges presented by mental illness for each family member.
- ★ Empowerment as an effective advocate for your child.
- ★ Confidence and stamina for life-long understanding and support.

#### A community

Perhaps most importantly, as a participant you can gain comfort in knowing you are not alone. Recovery is a journey and there is hope for all families and individuals dealing with a brain disorder. The in-person group experience of NAMI Basics provides the opportunity for mutual support and positive impact. You can experience compassion and reinforcement from people who relate to your experiences. Through your participation, you have the opportunity to help others grow.

**When:** Start Date: Saturday morning, April 18, 2015  
End Date: Saturday morning, May 30th, 2015  
(with weekend of Memorial Day off)

**Where:** NAMI Waukesha (downtown office)  
217 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 300  
Waukesha, WI 53186

**Time:** 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

**Instructors:** Robyn Hardt-Schultz and Christi Bowden

To register for this class please contact Barbara Ducey at  
262-409-2743 or [barb@namiwaukesha.org](mailto:barb@namiwaukesha.org)



## 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.



**Saturday, April 18, 2015, 9 a.m. – Noon**

**Waukesha North High School**

2222 Michigan Avenue

Waukesha, WI 53188

ProHealth Care, the Waukesha Hispanic Collaborative Network and the Waukesha Education Foundation join to present:



## ProHealth Community Fair

Come with family and friends for a morning packed with helpful health information.

### Over 50 health displays

#### Free health screenings including:

- Fasting lipid screening with glucose
- Includes cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, results and counseling. An appointment is required in advance and the number of available screenings is limited.

#### Children's area including:

- \$5 bike helmet sales and fittings

#### Cooking demonstrations, samples & recipes

#### Prize drawing including:

- \$100 gift certificates

#### Plus more!

*The ProHealth Community Fair was made possible by generous funding from ProHealth Care.*

**Register for the ProHealth Community Fair and for lipid screening at:**

[www.ProHealthCare.org/Classes](http://www.ProHealthCare.org/Classes) or call 262-928-2745.



## 5th Annual



## 5K Run/3K Walk

Registration	8 - 9:30 a.m.
Kids' Run	9:30 a.m.
5K Run	10 a.m.
3K Walk	begins immediately after 5K start

This is the 5th year of the Strive to Thrive Run/Walk event to support the Waukesha Education Foundation. This is a chip-timed event with a \$100 prize for the fastest male and female.

#### Run/Walk Fees:

5K Run	\$25
3K Walk	\$15
Under 12 Run	\$5



#### Register for Strive to Thrive at:

[www.waukeshaeducationfoundation.org](http://www.waukeshaeducationfoundation.org)  
or call 262-970-1035.



# 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.

**April 28, 2015; June 2, 2015; August 4, 2015; October 6, 2015; and December 1, 2015**  
**5:30 PM 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://wcwpds.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training/>. Please save the certificates after you have completed each module. These are required to become licensed.

#### When:

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.

### 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  
**Presented By:** Janis Ramos  
 Please RSVP to Janis (262-548-7267).

### Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

**Third Tuesday of each month.**

**Is Adoption Right For You?**

**Presented By: Susan Hubbell**

**March 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)

## Happy St. Patrick's Day

### Training

**Parents Place Programs**  
**262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org**

- **Parenting: The Early Years / Born Learning**  
Tuesdays, March 10 - 31 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Parent / Teen Relations**  
Mondays, March 2 & 9 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Unlock the Secrets to Discipline**  
Tuesdays, March 17 - 31 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **ADHD**  
Mondays, March 23 & 30 from 6:00 - 7:00 PM

**Coalition for Children**  
**[www.coalitionforicyf.org](http://www.coalitionforicyf.org)**

For other training opportunities, see the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families website: [www.coalitionforicyf.org](http://www.coalitionforicyf.org). They offer interactive webinars that count toward the required face to face training hours.

### 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

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



### January 2015 Placements

Level 2 Placements: 33 Children	Juvenile Corrections: 1 Child	Group Homes: 1 Child	Residential Care Facilities: 9 Children
Level 1 Placements: 47 Children	Level 2 Foster Homes: 99 Homes	Level 1 Foster Homes: 50 Homes	Total Children in OHC: 96 Children

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

**FASPP**  
 Norma Schoenberg  
 920-922-9627

**Jack Safto**  
 Toyota•Ford•Lincoln•Mercury  
 Lexus•Infiniti•Scion