

'Circle of Friends Adoption Camp' helps young children understand adoption while having fun

Exciting new offering of LSS Post Adoption Resource Center

During a sunny week in mid-July, children who joined their families through adoption enjoyed an interactive experience focused on adoption, family and fun. The first annual "Circle of Friends Adoption Camp" took place at Bethany Lutheran Church in Cromwell, Conn. It included children from kindergarten through fifth grade and was hosted by the Post Adoption Resource Center (PARC) of Lutheran Social Services.

The goal of the camp was to help children better understand adoption and to experience the camaraderie of other adoptees. Camp activities focused on the meaning and importance of family and of connection, while having a lot of fun together. Through stories, games, puppet play, cooking (and eating) and many other activities, campers learned lots about themselves and about each other as they explored what makes families the same and different.

Kelsey Ives, a college senior who was born in the Philippines and adopted as a young child, led the campers in their daily activities, assisted by several young teen adoptees who contributed lots of great programming ideas. Since every camper and every counselor were themselves adopted, there was frequent discussion about adoption and adoptive family life.

Campers made family trees together – a common school assignment that often challenges adopted children and their families – and incorporated birthfamily and birthculture into their trees to represent the many components of love and connection that make a family real. They also discussed the many questions that are posed to adopted people of all ages on a daily basis. To assist campers in addressing these questions, the WISE Up About Adoption program, developed by the Center for Support and Education in Baltimore, Md., was included in camp activities, giving children tools to answer questions from their peers about adoption.



Campers make new circle of friends at summer camp sponsored by the Post Adoption Resource Center of Lutheran Social Services.

One of the young teens remarked, "I liked showing the younger kids there are many people who feel special about having been adopted." And Kelsey, the camp facilitator, well summarizes the camp's impact by saying, "As an adoptee, I was inspired by having the chance to work with the young campers and discuss their experiences with adoption. There was a visible change in the young campers. They opened up, sharing both wonderful and difficult stories related to their adoption. It was a great experience for all because there was mutual growth, learning and happiness shared."

We hope to welcome an even larger "circle of friends" next summer.

**November is
National Adoption Month**

Welcome Home

International

CHINA

Bryan & Paula	Ruth, 1 yr.	CT
Christopher & Andrea	Emma Kay, 1 yr.	MN
Diane	Marcia Ruthanne, 16 mths.	WI
Jim & Laura	Anna Laura Xi, 14 mths	CT
John & Kimberly	Violet Rose, 8 yrs.	CT
John & Meredith	Adam Le, 20 mths.	CT
Michael & Paula	Megan Zhu, 14 mths.	NH
Patrick & Rhonda	Jack, 18 mths.	SD
Rick & Terry	Faith, 12 yrs.	CT
Ryan & Hillary	Meghan Leigh, 14 mths.	SD
Scott & Bobbie	Ella, 8 mths.	CT
Scott & Eva	Thomas George, 2 yrs.	CT
Steve & Mimi	Benjamin, 18 mths.	CT
Steven & Kristine	Hongzhi, 22 mths.	RI
William & Caroline	Grace Margaret, 2 yrs.	NH
Jason & Lisen	Chloe, 20 mths.	NH
George & Ruby,	Aidan, 4½ yrs.	NH
Whitney	Leah, 21 mths.	NH
Paula & Michael	Megan, 2 yrs.	NH
Robert & Karin	Lorelei, 3½ yrs.	NH
William & Caroline	Grace, 16 mths.	NH
Robert & Marcia	Laurel, 3 yrs.	MA
Christopher & Sandra	Elsa, 18 mths.	MA

COLOMBIA

Robert	Giordan Jaseth, 10 yrs.	CT
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ETHIOPIA

Peter & Marcia	Derba, 4 yrs.	MA
	Mita, newborn	

GUATEMALA

Jason and Lisen	Alisson, 3½ yrs.	NH
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INDIA

Sheral	Kaushal, 15 mths.	CT
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KAZAKHSTAN

Kevin & Nicole	Alexander, 18 mths.	MA
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KOREA

Dan & Jenn	Samuel Doohyun, 9 mths.	CT
Adam & Brenda	Myles, 9 mths.	CT

POLAND

Jerry & Lisa	Luke, 3 yrs.	CT
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RUSSIA

Marc & Jennifer	Nicholas Aleksandr, 18 mths.	CT
Stephen & Lindsey	Jakob Viktor, 1 yr.	CT
Steven & Judith	Jackson, 2 yrs.	CT
John & Nadia	Alexandra, 18 mths.	MA
Michael & Victoria	Brady, 2 yrs.	RI

International

SWAZILAND

Don & Carlye	Maya & Olivia, 2 yrs.	CT
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TAIWAN

James & Kelly	Sunny, 8 yrs.	MA
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VIETNAM

Maryanne	Richard Francis Tuan, 1 yr.	CT
Paul and Kristin	Sophie, 15 mths.	NH

Domestic

Bill & Heather	Violet, newborn	CT
Corey & Kelly	Tyler Owen, newborn	CT
David & Peggy	Rose, newborn	CT
Dudley & Carol-Ann	Catherine Ana, newborn	CT
Harold & Jocelyn	Abagael Kristen, newborn	CT
James & Lori	Riley Marie, newborn	CT
John & Lisa	Emma Rose, newborn	CT
Jose & Joanna	Alexander John, newborn	CT
Marc & Tanya	Amalie, 2 mths.	CT
Richard & Lori	Nathaniel, newborn	CT
Robert & Russell	Robert Benjamin, newborn	CT
Sean & Jill	Sara Jane, 4 mths.	CT

Tom & Michelle	Joanna, 6 mths.	
Eric & Linda	Alexia Marie, newborn	CT
Calvin & Theresa	Traver, newborn	NH
	Avery, 7 yrs.	NH

Antonio & Barbara	Yordanka, 4 yrs.	
Joseph & Laurie	Catherine, newborn	NH
James & Robyn	Casey, newborn	MA
Neil & Jennifer	E.J., newborn	MA
Marie	Dylan, newborn	MA
Charles & Amy	Mason, 2 yrs.	MA
Eric & Jean	Myles, 3 yrs.	MA
Steven & Jessica	Meghan, newborn	MA
	Madison, newborn	MA



A camper works intently on his family tree project in mid-July at the Circle of Friends Adoption Camp, sponsored by the Post Adoption Resource Center of LSS.

Connecticut Office

2139 Silas Deane Hwy #201, Rocky Hill, CT 06067
860-257-9899 / CTadoption@lssne.org
Lynn G. Gabbard, Director of Adoption Services

ADOPTION INFORMATION SESSIONS -- An opportunity to explore international and domestic adoption options at no cost or obligation now being offered monthly throughout Connecticut. **Advance registration required: 800-286-9889.**

- **First Tuesday** of every month, 7-9 p.m., Rocky Hill office
- **Second Tuesday** of every month, 7-9 p.m., Somers Congregational Church, Main St., Somers
- **Third Monday** of every month, 7-9 p.m., Bethesda Lutheran Church, 305 St. Ronan St., New Haven
- **Third Thursday** of every month, 7-9 p.m., St. James Lutheran Church, 111 Peter Rd, Southbury

SPECIAL ADOPTION INFORMATION SESSION for families interested in hearing about waiting children in the United States and abroad – Tuesday, Nov. 17, from 7-9 p.m., Rocky Hill office.

WAITING FAMILIES SUPPORT GROUPS

International – Socialize with other waiting parents and explore a variety of topics relevant to adoptive parenting, facilitated by social worker, Jennifer Phillips. Highlights include visits from adoptive families who have come home recently with their children, including families who have adopted through waiting child programs. Second Thursday of every month, Rocky Hill office.

Domestic – Waiting families in the Domestic Adoption Program meet quarterly to socialize and discuss topics of particular interest, including networking, birthfamily meetings, and openness in adoption. This group is facilitated by social worker, Theresa Hixson.

ADOPTIVE PARENT PREPARATION SEMINARS

International – Hague-approved training. Required for all families pursuing international adoption as a part of home study process. Dates and times available from our Rocky Hill office.

Domestic and Special Needs – Required as part of the home study process. Scheduled as groups fill throughout the year.

OUR SUMMER FAMILY PICNIC had to be cancelled due to inclement weather for the first time in MANY years. We look forward to catching up at our rescheduled **“Indoor Picnic”** Sunday, Nov. 15, to celebrate **National Adoption Month**.

STAFF NEWS – **Theresa Hixson, LCSW**, joined the Connecticut Adoption staff on a part time basis earlier this year, after having provided contracted homestudy services for LSS clients for several months. Theresa, the parent of two, adopted her daughter through LSS. We feel very fortunate to have her as an integral and much valued member of our staff.

Massachusetts Office

20 Hamilton St, 1st Floor, Worcester, MA 01604
508-791-4488 / MAadoption@lssne.org
JC Roussel, Program Director

ADOPTION INFORMATION SESSIONS – An opportunity to explore your international and domestic adoption options at no cost or obligation. **Advance registration required: 508-791-4488.**

- **Third Thursday** of every month, 6-8 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church, 41 Whitmarsh Ave., Worcester
- **Last Thursday** of every month, 6-8 p.m., Worcester office, 20 Hamilton St.

Adoption and Foster Care Training – LSS will hold a comprehensive training day for staff, families and anyone wanting to learn about adoptive and foster care issues Nov. 17 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. in Brockton, Mass. RSVP at 508-791-4488.

Parent Education Series – Nov. 3 from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m., Worcester office, 20 Hamilton St.

MAPP Training – Oct. 7, 8, 21 and 22. Please call our office for the full fall and 2010 schedule.

Holiday Party – Our Holiday Party for families will be held Jan. 9, 2010, at the Rhode Island office from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Invitations will be sent.

Open House – **The Massachusetts Adoption Office has moved down to the first floor. We hope you'll come tour our new office and join us for a light lunch Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 12-1 p.m.**

Staff Changes – Social Work Supervisor **Katie Tarrentino** (now Katie Griffith) has taken a position closer to her new home in Rhode Island. **Catherine Stack** (Catt), her replacement, comes to us from the state Department of Children and Families. **Richard Nevalsky**, who has a tremendous amount of experience working with children and adolescents, will be working parttime for Adoption and parttime for the Intensive Foster Care Program of LSS. **Amanda Bailey**, who recently graduated from Wheelock College, Boston, has agreed to do contract work for LSS – we just couldn't let her go!

Rhode Island Office

Bethany Lutheran Church, 116 Rolfe St.
Cranston, RI 02910
401-785-0015 / RIadoption@lssne.org
JC Roussel, Program Director

ADOPTION INFORMATION SESSIONS – First Wednesday of every month, 7-9 p.m. **Advance reservation required.**



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Rocky Hill, CT 06067

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NEWS FROM THE POST ADOPTION RESOURCE CENTER

The **Post Adoption Resource Center** (PARC) has had a busy year presenting training workshops for faculty and staff at schools in Connecticut. These workshops are funded by a local foundation to enhance the knowledge of teachers and school staff about the impact of adoption on the educational lives of children and have been well received. Please contact Lynn Gabbard at 860-257-9899 or lgabbard@lssne.org if you would like a presentation at your child's school.

W.I.S.E. Up About Adoption

The PARC will be offering this two-part workshop again this fall. The program was developed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education to empower children ages 5-10 to respond to questions and comments about adoption. It is facilitated by an adult adoptee and has been one of our most requested programs in the several years we've offered it. Please contact Lynn Gabbard at 860-257-9899 or lgabbard@lssne.org for dates and times.

Adoption Talk Series 2009-2010

A series of open discussions for adoptive parents, adults in the process of adopting and those thinking about adoption. Join us for facilitated discussions on a variety of topics unique to adoptive family life. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and chat with other adoptive parents. We suggest a donation of \$15 per family. Evenings from 7-8:30 at one of these two locations:

♥Bethany Lutheran Church, 50 Court St., Cromwell, Conn.

♥Bethesda Lutheran Church, 305 Saint Ronan St., New Haven, Conn.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: Call 860-257-9899 or email lgabbard@lssne.org

Upcoming programs include:

♥Thinking about a Trip to Your Child's Birth Country?

Wednesday, Nov. 4, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥The Internet and the Adoptive Family

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥Race and Culture in Your Child's Life

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥Adoption Awareness during the Pre-School Years

Monday, Nov. 30, 7-8:30 p.m. (New Haven)

♥Creative Strategies for Raising Responsible Children and Handling Challenging Behaviors – An Introduction to Love and Logic Parenting Model

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥Books, Movies and Media: What Messages Are our Children Receiving about Adoption?

Monday, Jan. 25, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (New Haven)

♥Sharing Difficult Adoption Information with Children

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥Openness in Adoption

Monday, March 22, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (New Haven)

♥Parenting Teens

Tuesday, April 27, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)

♥Sibling Relationships in Adoptive Families

Monday, May 24, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (New Haven)

♥Lifebooks and Family Scrapbooking Activities

Tuesday, June 15, 2010, 7-8:30 p.m. (Cromwell)