

UTAH'S ADOPTION CONNECTION

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

Jean, age 14 is waiting...

UTAH'S ADOPTION CONNECTION

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QUARTERLY DCFS NEWSLETTER



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If you are interested in any of the waiting children you see in this publication, please contact The Adoption Exchange for more information at 801-265-0444.

For All That You Have Given Me

For all that you have given me,
I can return but love. For you
Bound up the wounds I did not see
And gave me hopes and passions new.
I can return but love for you,
Whose unmoved faith my heart did move,
And gave me hopes and passions new,
And loved me till I turned to love.
Whose unmoved faith did my heart move?
The mother of my heart, not blood,
Who loved me till I turned to love.
And I became the soul I would.
The mother of my heart, not blood,
Bound up the wounds I did not see.
And I became the soul I would
For all that you have given me.

By Nicholas Gordan

Handling the Dragons in our Lives

How to keep stress from managing us

By MARIS H. BLECHNER, M.ED., LCSW



Those of us who are parents would agree that we all lead high stress lives. Foster parents have particularly high stresses. The demands of family, agency, parent group, job and the world at large, are always there — and no doubt foster parents feel some days that they are paying a high price for being the helpful, caring people they are. In addition, like all parents, foster parents are always setting an example for the kids in the house — and the kids are always watching.

As an adoptive parent and child welfare professional, I have always been fascinated by the topic of stress, and stress management. After years of listening to and learning from experts, I have come to believe that stress is truly manageable. Stress management is an important skill for foster parents, who are the helpers of so many others, and who need to know how to take care of themselves.

Don't all of us know someone who was a great child advocate, and somehow just burned himself or herself out, and is no longer here fighting the good fight? Yet at the same time, look at how many other people are still with us, still standing and filled with energy. How is it that some of us can't hold on, and others do? It has to do with the ability to deal with stress, which can be seen as a series of fire-breathing dragons that don't leave us alone. We knock one down — and another is right there down the road.

To get a handle on stress, the first thing we have to do is take a look at some truths about stress management, and some myths that have to be thrown away.

MYTH #1: WE CAN LIVE A STRESS-FREE LIFE. NOT TRUE!

Truth #1: Stress will always be there, but it can be managed. We have to really want to — and keep on wanting to — because we can only conquer one dragon at a time. We have to learn how to win, because there will always be stress-dragons.

MYTH #2: THERE IS GOOD STRESS AND BAD STRESS. NOT TRUE!

Truth #2: A person's body doesn't know the difference between good stress and bad stress — and all parts of a person is affected by all stress. It doesn't matter whether you are at the airport meeting your long-lost love, or going into your boss' office thinking you are going to be fired. What is stress anyway? It is high excitement — and every system of our body is affected by excitement.

Remember those high school biology books that had clear plastic pages showing all the body's systems — circulatory, muscular-skeletal, digestive, uro-genital and neurological. Every part of a person's body is touched by stress. When people feel stressed they sweat, fall, stutter, can't eat and forget things. Stress has our body pay a big price. That's why it is so important to manage it.

MYTH #3: YOU HAVE TO MAKE MAJOR LIFE CHANGES TO MANAGE STRESS. NOT TRUE!

Truth #3: Little things, every day, make all of the difference. We, who are the caring people of the world, are in many respects the suckers of the world — the bleeding hearts who know that we were put here to help. The world around us, however, is made up of takers who recognize our desire to help and want a little more from us. Every day people ask us: will you make cookies for the scout meeting; will you take this call for me; will you write this report, go to this meeting, take the minutes; pick up the dry-cleaning; get milk for the office?

Sometimes the requests feel endless. Unless we do something to refill ourselves as people keep asking us to do things, and our energy gets depleted, by the end of the day we are on empty — which is not a good feeling. It is as though we are a pitcher of water, and people keep taking some water out but never putting any back.

The reality is that as people keep emptying us, we have to refill ourselves. Nobody is going to do it for us. How do we refill ourselves? By doing little things. We have to start by thinking of ourselves as three different parts: a body, mind and heart — and we

have to take care of all three parts, every day, in little ways. It isn't enough to take care of one or another. We have to watch out for all three parts. The good news, though, is that it only takes a few minutes.

We all know of small actions that make our bodies feel good: a hot bath, foot rub, lotion, sleep, food, exercise or chocolate. Even stretching our neck muscles while we are driving or stopped at a stop light makes a difference. Not letting ourselves get dehydrated works the same way.

What makes our minds feel good? Things that take our minds off our troubles: A puzzle, a mystery or romance novel, a home project, a garden project and renting a silly DVD. What makes a person's heart or soul feel good? A religious service; music; looking at the sea, or the stars; being with a friend or beloved relative; even just enjoying a good belly laugh.

All of us who are known for doing everything for everyone else, and not enough for ourselves, deserve to take 10 minutes and make three lists of the little things that make our body, mind and heart feel better. Then we need to post those lists on the refrigerator, and make sure that we do a drop every day from each list. Think of it as critically important self-discipline.

People think that self-discipline is not fun. However, if we aren't enjoying doing a little something to take care of ourselves, then we aren't doing it right. Children don't always say they are having fun. Sometimes they say "fun, fun, fun." We as adults need to do little things that are "fun, fun, fun" too. Perhaps that should also be put on the refrigerator.

MYTH #4: IT IS TOO LATE TO REASSESS OUR LIVES AND MAKE NEW PLANS. THAT IS NEVER TRUE!

Truth #4: Each of us not only has the right to make little changes in our lives — but we deserve it. We owe it to ourselves. The reality is that if we die suddenly, all of the people who kept asking us to do a little something more for them will all say things like: "She was such a hard worker. Too bad she didn't take a little time for herself!" We do need to keep things in perspective. When the stress does us in, all of those other people will still be around, and they will have fun, fun, fun.

The biggest truth that we all know already but need a little reminding about is this: Of all of the evil dragons, the worst of them is negativity. It is catching, like a virus. Thus we need to be careful who we hang around with. There is a rule to follow: Never eat lunch with toxic people — protect yourself from the negative. We all need to sit down and make a list of the toxic people in our lives — and make a secret little plan about how to mingle with them a little less.

HELPFUL HINTS FROM OTHER DRAGON-FIGHTERS:

- Do you have a personal mission — a written little statement of what you believe in and what you want to accomplish be-

fore you die? Everyone knows that writing things down makes them much more likely to happen, yet only a small percent of Americans ever write down their life goals.

- Are you having enough fun? If not, only you can fix it.
- Make sure that you are always learning from other people and teaching other people. There is a law of association that says: hang around with people you would like to be like.
- Do you spend enough quality time with the people you are close to? Some of us have lost a loved one in an instant. We need to be with people we love and who make us feel good about ourselves.
- Don't be afraid of failing. Everyone fails — and gets up — and keeps on going. Who of us isn't a survivor?
- Do you own at least one hour a day, four times a week just for yourself?
- Practice saying "yes" when someone says "May I help you?"
- Practice saying "no" when someone says "Can you do me a little favor?" Stand in front of a mirror and practice these words: "I am really sorry. I would love to help you, but I just can't right now. Please ask me again another time." Then practice patting yourself on the back for a job well done, when you finally say "no" to someone.

A FINAL NOTE:

Foster parents have tremendous responsibilities. There is no question that high among these is the responsibility to help the foster children in their home learn to deal with the sometimes terrible stresses in their young lives. Just as the adults need to learn to understand stress and how to combat it, so do the children.

Foster parents become their children's emotional tutors and can make a difference in every day of those children's lives. The dragons are far larger and scarier to the children — and they need the "fun, fun, fun" the most. As foster parents handle their own stress dragons, they will help the children handle theirs as well.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Maris H. Blechner is an adoptive and birth parent, and a grass roots child advocate who helped found Family Focus Adoption Services, the 20-year-old New York State adoption agency that she directs. Blechner is a nationally recognized speaker on children's issues who says she has always had a particular interest in stress management, "to save all of our lives."

This article first appeared in Fostering Families Today Magazine, March/April 2007. To view the article visit www.fosteringfamilies.com.

ADOPTION CLUB

Speak Out

In the speak out link on the Adoption clubhouse website Kids can write and say what they think about adoption. Kathryn, 16, Pennsylvania wrote Over the years you can and may try to hide the fact that you're adopted. For so long, I tried to run away from it, not wanted to believe it. But as I get older, you have to come to peace with it, and maybe later in life, you can look back and reflect of all the experiences you had, whether it was getting made fun of, learning about your past, and so many other good things. We are different from other kids; we share something special that not many other kids have. We should be proud of it. The kids that visit this website can also make art. They can draw, paint or photo to share there feeling with adoption club house.



"It's a very online. I r puzzles ur

Marissa, ag

Homework Help

In this site you can get help with all types of homework that has to do with adoption. They give you information of the history in adoption about when it was started. For Centuries, there was a tradition among some Indian Nations that the first grandchild would be adopted by the grandmother. The also give you several ways of doing a family tree that includes both your birth family and your adopted family. Elementry School activities are provided, ideas include autobiographies and photo Essays. In this site they also give you project options if your class is doing a project and you are told to write a paper on how your traits get passed on to you from your parents. If you not ready to talk about Nurture/Nature what makes me, me?

Adopt Talk

Adoption words, you can find a glossary of adoption-related terminology. It is helpful in answering questions that you might have. Adopted like me helps you realize you are not alone in adoption. It is estimated that about 1 million children in the United Sates live with adoptive parents, and that between 2% to 4% of American families include a child who was adopted. Do you get annoying questions all the time and have run out of comebacks or answers? Well, they give you 9 questions with multiple answer options. Why don't you look like your parents/ brother/ sister? You can say proudly "I think I'm pretty lucky not to have my brother's big feet" or reply humbly "I'm so beautiful that I don't worry about where I get my looks!" Do you have biological brothers? Did you ever meet my parents? Are you afraid to ask these questions? Afraid to ask will help you find ways to ask and answer some questions like did I cost anything? The message board has rules and if your up to following them you can leave messages about your thoughts and feeling about adoption. You can also meet friends who are adopted who share your same feelings and know what its like.

*... fun place to visit
... really like the jigsaw
... under fun stuff."*

e 9

For Parents

The Adoption Clubhouse is a program of the National Adoption Center, whose mission it is to expand adoption opportunities throughout the United States, particularly for children with special needs and those from minority cultures. Adoption is not the end but the beginning of a lifetime of experiences and relationships heightened by the unique aspects of being adopted. The Adoption Clubhouse is designed with your child's adoption needs in mind. Through the activities and information on this site your child can experience a sense of belonging to a wider adoption community of peers. The staff of Adoption Clubhouse takes every precaution to insure a safe internet experience for your child but we ask you to be the lead in guiding them when using this and other websites.

Famous People

You can read about famous people and their story of how adoption changed their lives. From DMC a legendary Hip Hop singer to Basketball Player Alonzo Mourning. Dave Thomas founder of the Fast Food Restaurant Wendy's, Miss U.S.A. 2000 Lynette Cole, Carolyn Johnson founder of National Adoption Center. All of these well known achievers, leaders and entertainers have had their lives changed by adoption. Kids can read these stories and be inspired and realize just how important adoption is and how adoption changes lives for the better and gives hope to become something great.

Clubhouse Library

Clubhouse library is where you can find books about adoption. They make it very easy, you can make a list and print it out and go find these helpful books at your local library. These books range from picture books, middle grade books to teenage books. You can also find movies and descriptions about the movies, CD'S and audiotapes.

Fun Stuff for Kids

Fun stuff for kids has hilarious jokes warning you to not answer your dad if he asks "Do I look stupid to you?" and begs you not to tell your Mom "Mom, your diet isn't working!" Puzzles are also available Hidden Words, Words Searches, Secret Message and Jigsaw Puzzles are just a click away. You can also make e-cards and send these to the ones you love, friends or family. Coloring pictures is always fun you can have your choice of what picture just print them out, you can even scribble out of the lines.



Utah Foster Care
FOUNDATION

Couple Seminar for Pre-Adoptive and Adoptive Families 2007

The Art & Science of Love: A Workshop for Couples

The University of Utah ,DCFS, and the Utah Foster Care Foundation are partnering to present a FREE workshop intended to strengthen marriages.



The goal of the workshop begins by focusing on the couple's relationship and then translating that to all relationships within the family and aimed at helping parents meet the challenge of raising adopted children.

The FREE workshop is designed to promote healthy attachments between all family members.

The Art & Science of Love: A Workshop for Couples

Monday, May 7 _____	2:00-5:00 p.m.	Tuesday, May 1 _____	6:00-9:00 p.m.
Monday, May 14 _____	2:00-5:00 p.m.	Tuesday, May 8 _____	6:00-9:00 p.m.
Monday, May 21 _____	2:00-5:00 p.m.	Tuesday, May 15 _____	6:00-9:00 p.m.
Monday, May 29 _____	2:00-5:00 p.m.	Tuesday, May 22 _____	6:00-9:00 p.m.

The Utah Foster Care Foundation Office :
5296 South Commerce Drive
(320 West) Suite 400

Holladay DCFS Office:
645 East 4500 South

Presented by:

Bruce Parsons, Ph.D.

Research Associate Professor
Social Research Institute
Graduate School Of Social Work
University of Utah

Learning and practicing the principles for successful marriage will help participants create a stable, satisfying, and long term relationship.

Successful and stable marriages in turn foster dynamic and secure parenting practices.

Learn the Art and Science of Love for yourself, your partner and your children.

Topics include:

- 1) Creating a love map of your partner's world.
- 2) Build fondness and admiration.
- 3) How to turn towards each other
- 4) The difference between solvable and unsolvable problems
- 5) Regulation of conflict
- 6) Changing gridlocked problems into perpetual dialogues.
- 7) Create shared meaning.

Cost: **Free.** We will provide food and each couple will receive a **\$40.00** stipend, upon completion of the workshop . Completion of this workshop series will provide **24 hours of continuing education credit** which can be used to meet DCFS re-licensure requirements.

PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE SEMINAR by Calling : Rebecca Smith 585-3524

Please leave your **name, phone number and the seminar title** on Rebecca's voice mail and you will be registered.

- Training hours may be applied to re-licensing requirements ■ These classes are for adults
- No children may attend ■ Please be on time ■ Plan on attending all four class to receive 24 hours of continuing education credit which can be used to meet DCFS re-licensure requirements.

The University of Utah and Child and Family Services

Present:

A WORKSHOP FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Attachment, Trauma and The Relational Brain: Helping Families Heal Hurt Children and Teens

A FREE parenting workshop for couples. The goals of this workshop are to strengthen parenting partnerships and increase parents' understanding of how they can help their children recover from relational trauma. Workshop objectives include increasing understanding of how the child's brain is shaped by early relationships, how dysregulated feelings and behaviors are related to trauma, and how positive relationship experiences can reshape the child's brain and promote healing. Couples will learn about the importance of establishing and maintaining a strong parenting alliance and mobilizing support to sustain each other and the family as a whole.

NEW DATES

Location, Dates and Time:

Salt Lake City: Thursdays, May 31st, June 7th, 14th, 21st 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Holladay DCFS Office 645 E. 4500 S.

Cost: FREE. Refreshments will be provided. Each couple will receive compensation upon completion of the workshop series.

Training Hours: Completion of this workshop series will provide 12 hours of training credit, which can be used to meet Child and Family Services re-licensure requirements.

Presented By: Kathy Moroz, L.C.S.W., D.S.W., Social Research Institute, College of Social Work—University of Utah.

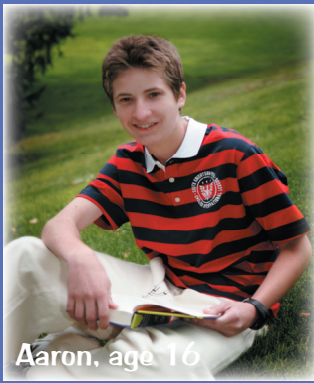
Topics Include:

- Understanding attachment and trauma.
- Learning how the brain is shaped by early relationships.
- Understanding mental health diagnoses.
- Getting needed mental health treatment for children who have been traumatized.
- Building new pathways in the brain.
- Increasing your child's ability to regulate feelings and behaviors.
- Having high hopes and setting realistic expectations.
- Helping your child to be accountable for their actions.
- Enhancing understanding, communication, and support between parents.



Please plan to attend all four sessions of this workshop to receive full credit. Couples may register by calling **Rebecca Smith at (801) 585-3524**. Please leave your **name, phone number, and the workshop title** on Rebecca's voice mail and you will be registered. You will also receive written confirmation of your registration.

Training hours may be applied to re-licensing requirements.



Aaron, age 16



Johnathan, age 15



Wanda, age 16



Aaron, age 16

Youth are NEVER

“You are never too old to be adopted,” said one young woman during an interview for a recently completed study on successful adolescent adoptions. “It’s the most important thing that happened to me,” said another adoptee. “I got a family and found love. I have everything one hopes for. I fit in a family.” These two adoptees were among 37 youth who were adopted as teens and who participated in a study about successful adolescent adoptions conducted by the Center for Child and Family Studies at the University of South Carolina. During interviews, the youth talked about making the decision to be adopted, the best and worst parts of adoption, and why it worked for them. We can all learn from their insight.

Deciding to be Adopted

For teens, the prospect of being adopted can be complicated by birth family loyalties, the drive to be more independent, and the sense that they are no longer children who need parental supervision. Adoptees in this study decided to become a permanent member of a new family for four primary reasons.

Belonging. Many participants talked about the need to be cared for by people who made them feel safe and secure. They needed to belong. “I felt that I have found a match for myself. I found out that it was right for me,” reported one youth.

Another said, “It wasn’t the fact of having a family as much as having people that loved me and cared enough about me to spend time with me.”

Stability. Other adoptees considered adoption because they wanted to have a stable family. As one teen expressed it, “I would have a family who would always be there for me. I wouldn’t have to move around all of the time.”

“And no matter what,” asserted another participant, “when I grow up and I move out into my own house, I would always have a mother to come back to. When I have kids, they will actually have a grandmother.”

Opportunities. Some adoptees said they thought they would have more opportunities (for school, life options, etc.) if they got adopted. “I decided that I could have a better future in America. I wanted to be a lawyer, and the orphanage could not afford to pay for law school.”

Most talked about being a better person and having more chances to try new things. “I probably would have been a hoodlum or causing a lot of trouble,” claimed one youth, “if I didn’t make this choice in my life to be adopted.”

Reuniting with siblings. For many teens, adoption was an avenue

through which they could live with their siblings. “I was happy,” noted one youth, “because I then knew I would be with my family—if not all of it, at least half of it.”

Another adoptee summed it up simply: “Being with my sisters was a big plus.”

Going through the Adoption Process

When asked to identify the difficulties they anticipated prior to adoption, the youth had a lot to say. Among their concerns: adjusting to a new family, school, and community; missing birth family members; and worrying about disruption.

“I didn’t know if I would like my parents.”

“I thought I would not be accepted, but I have friends.”

“It would be difficult to show trust for my parents when they told me things.”

“I had to change schools again. I was starting a new middle school, which is a whole new ball game.”

“Before the adoption, I was real hesitant because none of the other relationships ever worked out, and I didn’t think this one would...but I’m still here.”

When asked to rate adoption from 1 (low) to 10 (high), most were enthusiastic.

“I would give it a 10 because I have a normal life now. I have a driver’s license, and I drive. I have friends, and I get to go on overnights. There is no comparison to what my life is now and what it was before.”

“Number 10 all the way. Everything I ever wanted from a family, I got: love, comfort, warmth, someone to love me.”

“Eight or nine, there isn’t really a negative part. The whole experience is really great. There were some feelings that were not really great like wondering if they were going to keep me. I didn’t have those feelings after we went to court, and they officially gave me my last name.”

A few study participants gave lower ratings—a seven, a five, and even a one. Without exception, though, the low ratings were given because the process took so long!

The Best and Worst Parts of Being Adopted

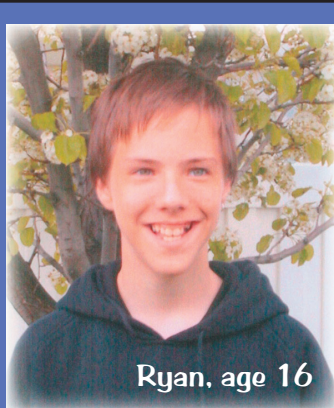
At the time the youth were interviewed, all of their adoptions had been finalized for at least one year. Many adoptions had been finalized for five years or more. Adoptees were more than willing to share their feelings about the best and worst parts of adoption. The best aspects mirrored their anticipated benefits.

“The best part is to have a family and a home to come home to when you’re not feeling safe.”

“I have more freedom, as in I feel more like a human being and not like I am someone’s property. Before I was adopted, I was the property of the



16



Ryan, age 16



David, age 16



Angela, age 16

Too Old to be Adopted

By: Wendy Welch and Cynthia Flynn

state, and when you are a property you can only do so much. Just being adopted feels better.”

“If it weren’t for my mom, I wouldn’t be where I am today. In the beginning, I had given up. I really tested her, especially in school. There is no way I’d be where I am today without being adopted. The best part is the relationship I have with my mom now.”

“My parents persevered and understood me. I didn’t make it easy for them.”

“The attention is the best part. The attention and love are something I never got when I was little.”

Aside from typical teen complaints (“The worst part is having curfew when I’m not in church.”), many of the adolescents could not think of a worst part about the adoption itself. They did, however, express sadness at being separated from old friends and birth family members.

“The worst is not being able to go home to see my friends.”

“It’s hard not seeing my real mom.”

Why It Worked for Me

Toward the end of the interview, adoptees reflected on what made their adoption work and what advice they would have for teens thinking about adoption. Reasons given for success were quite varied, though themes of perseverance and commitment were evident in most responses.

“It worked because my mom is not a nutbag. We worked together. We went to counseling. We never gave up.”

“My dad is very laid back and doesn’t yell, and that was what I needed. I need him for support.”

“I think it worked because my dad and I had a chance to get to know each other, and we were very close. We hardly had any difficulties, and we were both dedicated to making it work.”

“It worked because my mom and I had a lot of things in common.” When asked to give advice to other teens considering adoption, the adoptees shared their wisdom and experience.

“If you get a chance, it’s the greatest thing in the world. No matter how old you are, you still need love and to give love. You need someone to see on the holidays, and you need grandparents. You need a family and the support they give.”

“Do it! You don’t want to be a part of the system until you are 18 because you will have no one. It is never too late for a teen to be adopted.”

“Seize the opportunity. You will have a stable family and someone to fall back on. You will have a last name to call your own. You don’t have to worry about where you will be next week or next month.”

“Yes, I would do it again...before I was kind of scared to be adopted, and I know what it feels like and how nice it is.”

“Don’t give up. There is someone out there for everyone.”

“Don’t hold back your feelings. If you want to be adopted, don’t hold back because of what peers think. Do what is right for you and what’s going to help you in life.”

“If it looks like it is going to be a good situation, go for it.”

It is not always easy for youth to verbally express feelings and opinions

about adoption, but those who had a chance to share their wisdom and opinions through the Successful Adolescent Adoption Study became very vocal. Now it is time for teens considering adoption, adoptive parents, and adoption workers to hear their words and act accordingly. Youth are never too old to be adopted.

Tips for Facilitating Successful Teen Adoptions

The Successful Adolescent Adoption Study was designed to explore the concept of success in adolescent adoptions and determine what leads to success. In listening to adolescent adoptees and their adoptive parents, it is clear that the adoption process needs to be adapted to better meet adolescents’ needs. Below are recommendations for facilitating the successful adoption of adolescents.

Individually prepare adolescents for the adoption process by 1) explaining their legal status; 2) offering adoption as a viable option for permanence; 3) offering support and information as they consider the adoption option; 4) explaining how the adoption process will proceed; 5) assessing adolescents to determine their level of adjustment regarding birth family issues; and 6) providing support as needed to help them deal appropriately with birth family issues.

Employ caseworkers for adolescent adoptions who have positive attitudes about teen adoptions and who are eager to find homes for adolescents. Streamline the process as much as possible so that the teens can be adopted when they are ready.

Include recruitment strategies that offer opportunities for adults in the community to get to know teens in foster care. Work through ongoing programs like Big Brothers Big Sisters or establish a new program with similar opportunities for pairing adults and adolescents. After attachments develop, employ traditional teen adoption recruitment strategies.

Initiate or continue contact with biological families when it is safe to do so and teens desire it. Adoptive parents can teach teens how to be safe during these contacts so that teens can learn to protect themselves physically and emotionally.

“From Adoptalk, published by the North American Council on Adoptable Children, 970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55114; 651-644-3036; www.nacac.org.”

Boondocks

Fun Center

(75 E. SOUTH FORK DRIVE (14270 SO.), DRAPER, UTAH)

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MINIATURE GOLF, LASER TAG, AND KIDDIE COVE
10 ARCADE TOKENS FOR GUESTS 60" AND TALLER
20 ARCADE TOKENS FOR GUESTS UNDER 60"
SOME HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS REQUIRED ON SOME ATTRACTIONS

TICKETS ARE GOOD MONDAYS THROUGH FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS, SPECIFIC HOLIDAYS AND SUMMER BREAK. OFFER GOOD UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2007. PLEASE CALL TO VERIFY HOURS.

ORDERING IS EASY!

TO ORDER YOUR TICKETS USE ANY OF THE THREE STEPS BELOW:

1. CALL: (801) 265.0444
2. FAX THIS COMPLETED ORDER FORM TO (801) 265.0834
3. MAIL THIS COMPLETED ORDER FORM TO:
THE ADOPTION EXCHANGE
302 W. 5400 S. SUITE 208
MURRAY, UT 84107

YOUR TICKETS WILL BE MAILED OUT TO YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

CONTACT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING BOONDOCKS TICKETS:

_____ ALL DAY PASS 60" AND ABOVE-\$20.00

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Heart Gallery 2006

This fun 14 year-old girl really enjoys dancing, singing, and spending time with friends. She also enjoys playing the guitar and is good with little kids. Shalee is mature for her age and can make friends easily. This young woman is very excited to find a good family. She attaches easily and tends to have good relationships with peers and adults. Shalee struggles with anger at times but attends therapy weekly to work on this.

It is important to Shalee to stay in contact with her Uncle and other family members. Her caseworker feels she would fit well in any type of family. Any home that can provide this young woman with the love and structure she needs is urged to inquire. **If you are interested in learning more about Shalee, contact The Adoption Exchange at 801-265-0444.**

Help Shalee and many other waiting children find their way home.
Visit Heart Gallery 2006 this summer.

April-May
June-July

Southern Utah University Library
West Valley Multicultural Center

Cedar City, UT
West Valley, UT

Wendy's Wonderful Kids Helps:

Adan and Gabe- Brothers and Best Friends

By: Lance Gamero

Most parents think their kids are wonderful. They are quick to brag, slow to criticize and overall feel a sense of pride for their children. Yet what happens when the parents are less than wonderful? Who thinks the kids in the foster care program are wonderful, good enough to adopt as part of their own family?

For this reason began Wendy's Wonderful Kids, a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. The foundation has a recruiter in every state in the country, Rajathi Noel of the Adoption Exchange is the recruiter for Utah. Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters are expected to be agents of change in the lives of the children for whom they are

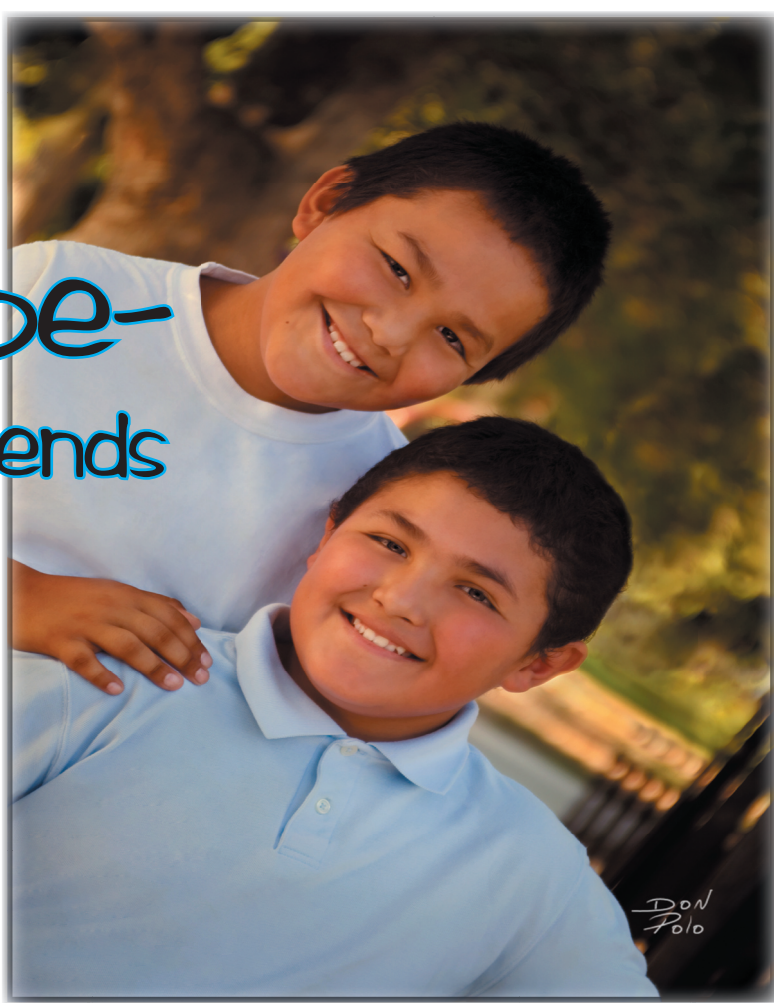
recruiting. They employ an intensive and exhaustive Child-Focused Recruitment Strategy. Their goal is specific and direct: For each child in the foster care system, find an appropriate, permanent and loving adoptive family. Wendy's Wonderful Kids takes initiative in finding homes for which adoption is sought after. And why not? These kids are truly spectacular.

Take Adan and Gabe for instance. Adan is ten-years-old, while his older brother, Gabe, is 11. These two jovial and very friendly youths make quite the first impression. They constantly laugh, play, wrestle and joke. Both love sports and play them regularly. Gabe plays football with his schoolmates and both will begin playing baseball this summer. Gabe wants to play shortstop while Adan would like to be a pitcher. They love to wrestle and Gabe says he has never lost a wrestling match to his younger brother, but Adan says he will beat his older brother someday. Of course, sports are fairly typical in the life of a young child. Yet, something else stands out with these two brothers.

These two young men give off a radiance that seems to elevate others around them. They are helpful and seem to be much more keen to the needs of others than one might imagine a typical 10 or 11-year-old boy being. It is evident in their future ambitions of career. While Adan aspires to be a K9 police officer, Gabe is intrigued by art and music. He said he was inspired by a recent field trip to hear the Utah Symphony perform. Although he really doesn't yet have any outstanding musical talent, Gabe wants to be a member of the symphony. He said he would also like to be an artist as he presented several drawings he made, which he made just for fun. Dogs are a common portrait and both Gabe and Adan one day dream of owning their own dog.

And how many young children hate weekends because they don't like being away from school? These two brothers despise weekends because they love learning. Math is one of their favorite subjects. They enjoy their teachers as they both quickly touted how nice their teachers were to them. If they could, they would attend school seven days per week. Both brothers have aspirations of attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, as they were both impressed by a recent visit to the BYU Bookstore.

Although Adan and Gabe would like to be adopted one day soon, the boys enjoy living in the foster home where they currently reside. The foster family is Tongan and the brothers enjoy learning the new culture. They





have learned new words and phrases like “restaurant” (fale kai) and “be careful” (tokanga), a phrase both boys admitted to hearing often in the home. The brothers are active in the community and both are involved in scouting. Gabe carries a first class ranking in the Boy Scouts and is thrilled to tell people about the Arrow of Light Award he received, the highest honor in the Cub Scouts. Adan wants to follow his brother’s example and receive his Arrow of Light. He currently is a member of the Webelos in the Cub Scouts. Both brothers hope and plan to earn the Eagle Scout Award, the highest honor in scouting.

When Gabe was asked what message he would like to tell the world, he said: stop smoking because it’s bad for you. Adan’s message: no guns, with the exception of police officers. It is clear both youngsters love others and care for the welfare of people, even people they have not met. And when asked what they would tell another child who has just entered the foster care system, they replied: “It’s going to be alright. We’ve been through it. It’s going to be fun. You learn different cultures and meet different people.”

The brothers would like to be adopted and prefer to be in a home with “nice people.” They both said every home they have been in with the foster care system has provided a friendly family, something they are happy about. Pets

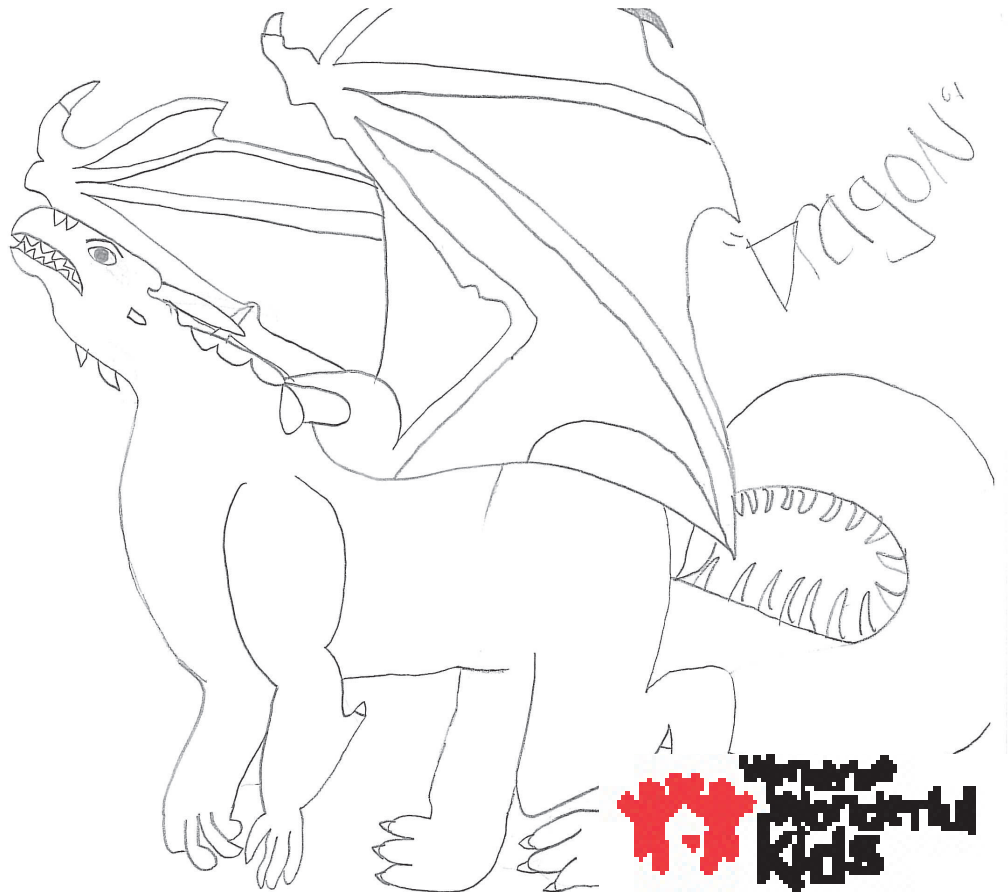
are also a bonus as both brothers love animals. They can be placed in any order in a family as they are both wonderful with children. This is easily noted as Adan held the foster family’s infant daughter on his lap the entire time he was interviewed. These brothers need to stay together and be adopted by a family hopefully in the state of Utah. “Give us a chance. Give all the kids a chance,” said Gabe when he was asked what he would say to prospective, yet unsure, adoptive families. “We’re good kids.” The boys are appreciative of the Adoption Exchange’s efforts in helping to find a family for them. They have been a part of the Heart Gallery, a program used to showcase the children with professional portraits. The portraits are then displayed in different art galleries throughout the valley. All of this is done voluntarily, as both the photographers and art galleries donate their time, equipment and space for the children.

The brothers have also been a part of the Wednesday’s Child program and were featured during the 2007 Utah Adoption Exchange Telethon which aired on April 4, 2007, on the Salt Lake City CBS affiliate, KUTV 2. The efforts to place Adan and Gabe in a permanent home have been extensive and interested families are urged to inquire. And why not? “These kids are so helpful and fun,” said Stephanie, their caseworker. “They haven’t had major problems and they both just love life.”

The foster mother, Ahi, couldn’t say enough positive things about these two brothers. “These are good kids,” she remarked while fighting to hold back tears. “They love each other. They are fun. They are just good kids.” And Ahi would know. Prior to getting married she worked as a nanny. She has always loved and worked with children, so becoming a foster mother was not a difficult thing for her to do.

“I don’t care what their problems are, hard or easy, I just love it!” Ahi said. “The most important thing a foster family can have is love. You can’t do it for the money. And you must treat them the same as all other members of your family.”

Wonderful kids need wonderful families. Adoption makes that happen. These kids are given a second chance at a family, something no person should have to go without.



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CALL YOUR POST-ADOPTION SPECIALIST

Northern Region:

Aubrey Myers (801) 626-5800

Salt Lake Region:

Linda Vrabel (801) 264-7500

Western Region:

Louise Brown (801) 224-8575 (ext. 205)

Southwest Region:

Rick Clements (435) 867-2760

Eastern Region:

Blanding /Moab Steve Shafer (435) 259-3720
Price/Castledale Amy Smith (435) 636-0228
Vernal/Roosevelt Fred Butterfield (435) 722-6561

**Utah's Adoption Connection Web Site
Launched a New Look for the New Year**



In January Utah's Adoption Connection launched a new look, the content of the site remains much the same just a fresh new look. Don't forget to check out the lending library. Watch for new video clips of waiting children to come in the future. To view video of Wednesday's Child log on to KUTV2.com.