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# Zero Kids Waiting

Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

April 2010 - Volume 3, Issue 23

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## Welcome!

**Zero Kids Waiting** is the monthly e-newsletter of Minnesota Adoption Resource Network, a 30-year old organization that creates and supports lifelong nurturing families for children needing permanency. As an email subscriber to Zero Kids Waiting, you will receive a monthly update about what our organization and others are doing to promote adoption of Minnesota children and teens.

To opt out of receiving **Zero Kids Waiting** click [SafeUnsubscribe](#) at the bottom of this newsletter.

Your email will be used solely for the distribution of the newsletter and will not be shared or broadcast.

To learn more about Minnesota's waiting children and our goal to reach Zero Kids Waiting visit [State Adoption Exchange](#)

## Waiting Youth

**Jessica, Zest for Life and Dogs**



Jessica is not bashful when it comes to spreading the word about the need for teen adoptions. "Regardless of our age we still need love and support. Everybody is entitled to their hugs, kisses and love," says Jessica. At 15, Jessica is a vivacious teen with a zest for life. She enjoys playing Dance Dance Revolution, likes to sing and particularly loves dogs and hopes to have a dog or cat in her adoptive home. Jessica lists "Twilight" and "Marley & Me" among her favorite movies and enjoys staying active by swimming and roller skating. Jessica is a typical teen who likes to hang out with her friends and watch movies and describes herself as "strong, well-minded and hysterical."

As for having siblings in her adoptive home, she says, "I would love to have younger siblings because of my keen kindness towards younger children and people with disabilities." She is open to older siblings. However the most important thing for Jessica is to find a family that will fully commit to becoming her forever family. Jessica wants a family that possesses a balance of patience, structure and an understanding that there is a process but that she is well worth it.

#### **A Poem by Jessica**

*I am from dancing in the rain to the music of the thunder.*

*I am from the Heaven above with God and Angels of the world.*

*I am from rap and R.B.*

*I am from shopping until I drop.*

*I am from glowing purple.*

*I am from living wild, like the animals that I love.*

*I am from learning from my mistakes and succeeding in academics.*

*I am from a world of kids who are waiting for adoptive families.*

For information about adopting Jessica, please contact Yvette Giles at 763-447-0141 or Catie Stokes at 612-348-7480.

## Feature

### **Adoptees Have Answers (AHA) Launches**

April 2010

Minnesota Adoption Resource Network (MARN) proudly debuts AHA, Adoptees Have Answers, a unique program funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, to provide adoptee-to-adoptee training connections and resources. AHA supports a life experience that is often mythologized, pathologized and romanticized but rarely understood. AHA relies on new research findings that, in the evolving field of adoption, adopted persons are the experts. As MARN celebrates 30 years of advocacy in the state with a rich history of "firsts" in adoption, the premiere of AHA is both fitting and welcomed.

-Mary Martin Mason, Minnesota Adoption Resource Network.

For more information about the AHA program, please contact Program Coordinator, Julia Decker at 612-746-5133 or [jdecker@mnadopt.org](mailto:jdecker@mnadopt.org).

### **AHA Webinar: *Adoptees Have Answers: Enlisting the Experts* with Adam Pertman**

April 2010

Please join the AHA Staff and nationally recognized adoption researcher and author, Adam Pertman, for AHA's first webinar, Thursday, April 22, 2010, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (CDT). The webinar, *Adoptees Have Answers: Enlisting the Experts*, will feature an overview of the adoption research that inspired it -- 'Beyond Culture Camp: Promoting Healthy Identity Formation in Adoption,' conducted by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.

Adoptees, parents, professionals and others are invited to participate in this interactive online training. All you need is a computer with internet access, a telephone and a pioneer spirit.

#### **Fee**

\$20.00 webinar & free CD

\* *This is a limited time offer and only available April 20-21.*

*Registration is not available the day of the webinar.*

[View Flyer](#)

To register, please contact Anne Johnson at 612-746-5122. In the future you will be able to register online through the AHA website.

## World / National News

### France and Spain Provide Adoptee-to-Adoptee Support

April 2010

La Voz de los Adoptados is a national organization of domestic and international adoptees created five years ago in France, joined by adoptees in Spain in 2009. Like AHA - Adoptees Have Answers, a new adoptee-centric program launched recently by MARN, the overseas counterpart includes blogs and a website to allow adoptees to express their viewpoints. The aim is to provide a means for exchange and support for adopted persons.

[For more information](#)

### Russia Suspends Adoptions after International Incident

April 2010

Russia, the third largest source of children to Americans adopting internationally, has stopped all adoptions in the wake of the Tennessee family putting their 7-year-old adopted son on a plane back to Russia. The child had a note in his backpack from Torry Hansen, adoptive mother that said, "I am sorry to say that for the safety of my family, friends and myself, I no longer wish to parent this child."

Adoptive parents as with parents by birth have no legal right to abandon their children. The case raises concerns about parents being prepared and capable of adopting institutionalized children, about incomplete histories provided to such parents, and about further traumatizing children when adoptions disrupt.

Adam Pertman, executive director of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, in a *New York Times* interview said adoptive parents have the responsibility to seek help early. He said, "There is this weird lingering myth that love will conquer all. Guess what, it doesn't in biological families and it doesn't in adopted families."

To hear Adam Pertman in AHA webinar, join us on Thursday, April 22 from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM (CDT). To learn more, [click here](#).

[For more information](#)

### **Klobuchar Pushes for Russian Adoptions to Continue**

Minnesota leads the country in the number of adoptions from Russia. In the wake of Russia suspending all adoptions, United States Senator Amy Klobuchar is lobbying the State Department to intervene on behalf of approximately 3,000 families already in process to adopt Russian children. Senator Klobuchar met with Minnesota families on Sunday, April 18, to hear their concerns. She is also working on legislation to support post adoption services as is provided through MN ADOPT and to provide information to families regarding children adopted from Russia.

### **CNN Reports Parents Overwhelmed During Transitions**

April 2010

CNN reports that the adjustment time immediately following an international adoption can be challenging for new adoptive parents. Children from Eastern bloc orphanages may arrive with institutional damage and multiple diagnoses. Dr. Ronald Federici, a clinical neuropsychologist who works with adopted children, told CNN that the recent Russian case should encourage prospective parents to get educated and to seek counseling and support from adoption specialists.

[For more information](#)

### **AdoptUSKids Recruits African American Families**

March 2010

AdoptUSKids is offering a packet of tools and information for working with and recruiting African American families. To obtain these free resources, send your name, address, and the desired quantity to [professionals@adoptuskids.org](mailto:professionals@adoptuskids.org) or call (888) 200-4005. Some of the resources, including a media kit for recruiting families, are available online at: <http://www.youdonthavetobeperfect.com/media.php> A guide, "Working with African American Adoptive, Foster, and Kinship Families," is also available at: <http://adoptuskids.org/images/resourceCenter/Working-With-African-American-Families.pdf>

### **Adoption Tax Credit Increases**

April 2010

Effective as of this year, an adoption tax credit for \$1,000 for all types of adoptions occurring after January 1, 2010 was enacted as part of the health care reform bill. Extended until the end of 2011, the tax credit is retroactive and the credit increases the total to \$13,170 for tax year 2010.

*\*The Adoption Tax Credit is mentioned on pages 903 and 906*

[View Bill](#)

### **States Battle Fate of Baby Emma**

April 2010

Virginia and Utah have issued opposing judicial decisions on whether a baby was legally or illegally taken from birth father, John Wyatt, who filed paperwork eight days after the baby's birth in his state of Virginia. Emma has been adopted by a Utah couple. Adoption attorney Joan Hollinger says of the case, "Utah laws make it virtually impossible for an out-of-state father to prevent the adoption of an out-of-wedlock child when the mother is determined to go forward."

[For more information](#)

### **Singer Walks Cross Country For Foster Youth**

March 2010

On January 1, 2010, Jimmy Wayne, well-known country singer/songwriter started a public awareness campaign called Project Meet Me Halfway. The solo walk began at Monroe Harding Children's Home in Nashville, Tennessee and is heading halfway across America to the Home Base Youth Service in Phoenix, Arizona. His cross country trek spotlights how aged out teens/young adults on their 18th birthday will be released with no destination but homelessness.

If you would like to follow his journey log onto <http://meetmehalfway.jimmywayne.com> or follow him on Twitter@Jimmy Wayne.

[For more information](#)

### **Native American Journalist Publishes Memoir**

April 2010

Award-winning Native American journalist Trace A. DeMeyer has published a memoir, *One Small Sacrifice: Lost Children of the Indian Adoption Projects*, an exposé on generations of American Indian children adopted by non-Indian families. DeMeyer started her research on adoptees in 2004, which led to the 227-page biography that includes congressional testimony, evidence of Indian Adoption Projects and how the Indian Child Welfare Act came to exist.

[For more information](#)

## Research

### **PSTD Identified in Birthmothers of the Past**

March 2010

According to Karen Wilson-Buterbaugh, co-founder of Origins USA, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a common disorder in mothers who relinquished from 1945 to 1973, a time in which large numbers of unmarried women were secretly sent to maternity homes so that their children would be adopted. After World War II, pregnancy outside of marriage came to be pathologized by psychologists, psychiatrists, clergy and placing agencies. Birthmothers were removed from their babies immediately after birth, encouraged to forget the child, and provided no post-relinquishment counseling. Wilson-Buterbaugh cites common symptoms such as flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, avoidance and phobias among the birth mothers.

[For more information](#)

### **Illinois Foster Youth Stay Longer, Fair Better**

New research reports allowing foster youth to stay in care until they are 21 has resulted in positive outcomes. Researchers from the University of Washington and University of Chicago followed youth from foster systems in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin over a 6-year period. Not surprising, many had profound struggles including unemployment, criminality, and unplanned pregnancies. Youth from Illinois fared better in essential categories, a state that extends the age for staying under state guardianship to 21. A 2008 law that matches state money with federal funding for states that extend foster care to 21 has so far only been utilized by Illinois, New York, Vermont and the District of Columbia.

[For more information](#)

To view a National Public Radio slide show, *Reflections on Aging Out*, [click here](#)

## Local News

### **Local Adoptee 'Hurdles' Through Life**

April 2010

Mounds View senior, Kayla Sawtell was the second of three

biologically unrelated black children adopted by Kim and Ron Sawtell, a white couple who raised two birth sons. From a young age Kayla was not shy about showing resentment towards her adoptive mother Kim, often responding 'You're not my real mom.' Kim acknowledges the comments hurt but realized it was just another battle in their long and painful war of wills.

By the time Kayla was in seventh grade, Kim got her involved in Mound's View track and field, a traditionally strong athletic program. Over the next few years Kayla's pleaded to quit, but Kim would not budge. By her sophomore year Kayla decided to make peace with her adoption and went on to win a Class 2A championship in the 100-meter hurdles and second in the 300-meter hurdles. Her talent on the track has earned Kayla a scholarship at Howard University, a historically black college in Washington D.C. Kayla says, "Now that I'm going off to college, I'm realizing how much I really love my mom," because "she kept me in track, and look where it got me."

[For more information](#)

### **Children Who Wait should be Seen and Heard**

A video show featuring some of Minnesota's Waiting Children offers a special opportunity to hear children and youth portray their need for families. The event is being sponsored by Wendy's Wonderful Kids (Hope and PATH) along with Hennepin and Ramsey County. Come hear from the children their interests and hopes on Thursday, May 6 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Ridgedale Library, Room #229 in Minnetonka.

To register, please call or email [carly.cantu@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:carly.cantu@co.hennepin.mn.us) or 612-543-0052.

### **Children's Theatre Celebrates National Foster Care Month in May**

The entire month of May is a celebration of National Foster Care Month at the Minnesota Children's Theatre. Please consider bringing your family to join the productions of [Disney's Mulan, Jr.](#) or [Biggest Little House in the Forest](#) (preschool show). The Children's Theatre is extending a special welcome to Minnesota's foster, adoptive and kinship families, as well as the staff who serve them. Special discounts are being offered for the month of May.

#### **Prices**

\$15.00 for Disney's Mulan, Jr.

\$10.00 for Biggest Little House in the Forest

To order tickets, visit [http://www.childrenstheatre.org/groups/groups\\_2010\\_form.html](http://www.childrenstheatre.org/groups/groups_2010_form.html)

*\*You must mention National Foster Care Month as "organization" to receive discount.*

If you have questions, contact Jeanette at 612-872-5319 or [publicgroupsales@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:publicgroupsales@childrenstheatre.org)

### **Summer Camp for Adoptive and Foster Care Kids**

Sarah and Travis Guida, founders of Family Foundation Minnesota, LLC knew being around children was something they were born to do. As foster and adoptive parents they understand the variety of issues facing their children. Beginning in June, the Guidas will host three sessions of Character Training Camp at Eagle Beach resort in northern Minnesota. The Character Training Center is a camp facility for adoptive children or children in the foster care system. The camp focuses on meeting the needs of children with attachment disorder, anxiety, abuse and neglect, ADHD, E/BD, learning disabilities, and other emotional needs. This is a 3 night/4 day camp with access to nature trails, basketball court, sand volleyball, tennis, shuffleboard, horseshoes, canoes, kayaks, playground equipment, a swimming pool and much more.

To learn more about the camp cost, registration and available scholarships, please visit [Family Foundations Minnesota](#)

[Training Schedule](#)

[Register Now](#)

### **Free Adoptee Support Group**

Adoptees MN is a support group for adult adoptees (18 years of age or older), led by adoptees that will meet each 2nd Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Loring Park Office Building at 430 Oak Grove Street Minneapolis, MN 55403 in the Community Room, Suite #207.

For more information, please email [adopteesmn@gmail.com](mailto:adopteesmn@gmail.com) or call Carrie at 651-457-2252 or Penny at 612-616-3139.

## **Inside MARN**

### **MN ADOPT Trainings Offered by MARN**

MN ADOPT provides adoption-competent trainings for professionals, educators and families. For more information or to see a full list of programs visit [www.mnadopt.org/trainings](http://www.mnadopt.org/trainings) or call 866-303-6267.

[Training Calendar](#)

### **Archived Webinars Available on CD**

The following webinar presentations are available on CD for you to own. All CDs include training content (PowerPoint) and audio commentary by each presenter. All presentations run approximately one hour.

**Presentations Include:**

#1101 "Tough Questions, No Easy Answers: Some Useful Tips for Raising Hurt Kids" with Deena McMahon

#1102 "Back to School with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)" with Kari Fletcher

#1103 "Silent Night: Calming the Holidays for Children with Sensory and Neurological Differences" with Kari Fletcher

#1104 "The Mosaic: When Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD) Meets Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) with Deena McMahon & Wendylee Raun

#1105 "Great Ideas for Increasing Biculturalism in Transracial Families" with Robert O'Connor

**Price**

\$15.00 for each CD

\$65.00 for 5-Disc Collection

\* *Prices include tax & shipping*

[For more information](#)

[View Order Form](#)

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**650 Will Move to ZERO in Minnesota if...**

- Each Metro church pledged to find a family for a waiting child or sibling group.
- Corporations promoted adoption "in-house" through bulletin boards, kiosks and newsletters.
- Populations who have been identified as potential parents --

older career women, empty-nesters, communities of color -- were better targeted in recruitment.

- Bureaucracy and barriers to adopting were reduced (Call us at 612-861-7115 if you are encountering either!)

## Zero Kids Waiting



**PSA Airs on You Tube**

[Watch Here](#)



[twitter](#)

## Donate Today



The Zero Kids Waiting e-newsletter reaches parents willing to adopt children that are not reached by general recruitment measures.

Please consider donating as much as you are able to that we can reach ZERO -- Zero Kids Waiting.

To make a secure, tax deductible online donation, click [Donate](#)

**Minnesota Adoption Resource Network**

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