



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2017



If you are interested in becoming a member of the VAC please consider joining us for the March 9th VAC meeting from 9:30—1:00 at the Hartford Police Station

We invite parents and professionals to contribute to the quarterly newsletter.
Please e-mail
vtadoption@vermont.gov with possible submissions.

In this issue....

- Introducing our new VAC coordinator
- Learn more about opportunities within the VAC
- VAC Library
- Fostering to Forever
- Tax Information
- Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship
- Learning & Support Galore!



Welcome to our Winter 2017 Newsletter,

As this new year gets going I am happy to be in my new role as the Post-Permanency Program Manager for the State of Vermont and the Vermont Adoption Consortium Coordinator. In this position I have the privilege and responsibility of ensuring that there is a robust system of supports for our adoptive and guardianship families – something that I deeply care about. My professional commitment to this area of work began in 2001, a few years after I moved to Vermont, when I began working with Lund Family Center and Project Family as a permanency counselor working with families who adopted children from foster care and providing post-adoption services to some of those families. Then in 2009 I accepted the District Director position in Barre where one of my focuses was timely permanency and the need for children to know as soon as possible where they were going to grow up feeling safe and nurtured. Underpinning this is my own diverse parenting experience as a birth parent, an adoptive parent, a foster parent, and a step parent – and I come from a family where kinship care is the norm – my parents raised my uncle while also raising my siblings and me. As I know from my own experiences, raising a child who was not born to you presents unique opportunities for joy and celebration as well as challenges as we are called on to adjust our typical parenting strategies to meet the needs of these children. While developing new skills and understanding isn't always easy it does provide our families and the children we love opportunities to build resiliency, heal, grow, and to create thriving families. It is my sincere hope that this newsletter will provide you with information and resources that support your success as an adoptive/guardianship parent!

I hope to have an opportunity to talk with you at one of our upcoming conferences – the annual Vermont Foster and Adoptive Parents Conference is scheduled March 31st through April 2nd and then the Vermont Adoption Consortium's Annual Conference is scheduled for April 21st – see you there!

Catherine Harris

If you are interested in continuing to receive this newsletter please email catherine.harris@vermont.gov with your email address or call 802-241-0901 to indicate you would like this to continue to be delivered by mail.

For your information and convenience the current membership list of the Vermont Adoption Consortium Executive Committee is found here:

Gillie Hopkins, representing Project Family

Lynn Besette, representing Post Adoption Services- Easterseals

Angela Walters, Children's Director Northeast Kingdom Human Services, representing mental health

Janet Benoit Connor, representing the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership

Lisa Campbell, Parent representative

Ruth D'Angelo, Parent advocacy representative and Howard Center

Ann Clark, Adoption Advocates, representing private adoption agencies

Wanda Audette, Lund & Project Family

Catherine Harris, Vermont Adoption Consortium Coordinator

Feel free to reach out—All can be reached via

vtadoption@vermont.gov

The **Vermont Adoption Consortium** is a dynamic organization where you will find opportunities to contribute to adoptive and guardianship families. If you want to participate please consider joining one of the following committees:

- ◆ Conference Planning and Training
- ◆ Parent Advocacy
- ◆ Post-Permanence
- ◆ Diversity and Adoption

If you would like more information or are ready to join please contact:

Catherine Harris at 802-241-0901 or

Catherine.harris@vermont.gov

Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.

Urie Bronfenbrenner

I wonder if there is a book about that?

There just might be. With over 700 books and approximately 50 audio-visual materials, there is a good chance the Vermont Adoption Consortium (VAC) Lending Library might be able to help. Browse the entire collection on the web at:

<http://www.vtadoption.org>. If you'd like to borrow an item, it will be sent to you at no charge.

Or call ahead to let us know when to expect you (802-223-4744) and come in to browse the shelves to make your choices. (The physical Library is located at the Easterseals VT offices in Berlin, VT.)

Either way, if you live in Vermont, we are happy to be of service to you.

-Carol MacDougall, Easterseals





Fostering to Forever

A class offered by the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership

This 3.5 hour class is designed for pre-adoptive parents and permanent guardians who hope to provide permanent homes for children. It is intended to help your family prepare for this ongoing commitment, while learning from families in similar situations. Topics covered include: transitioning from fostering to permanence, an introduction to the world of adoption, AND information on resources available to you before *and after* you finalize your adoption or guardianship. **This class is required of anyone who is adopting from the State of Vermont, Foster Care System. For further information please contact the Training Coordinator listed. Our complete schedule of trainings for foster/kin/adoptive parents can be found at our new website: www.training.vermontcwtpp.org**

Here are the spring 2017 Offerings:

Barre: Monday, February 20, 5:30-9:30 pm

Hartford: Tuesday, April 11, 5:00-8:30 pm

Morrisville, Thursday, April 4, 5:30-9:00 pm

Caleb.Kiernan@uvm.edu or (802)246-7835

Bennington: Thursday, April 13, 5:30-9:00 pm

Brattleboro, Thursday, April 13, 5:30-9:00 pm

Rutland, Wednesday, April 26, 5:30-9:00 pm

Deidra.Razzaque@uvm.edu or (802) 257-7967 x304

Burlington: Monday, March 27, 5:30-9:00 pm

Middlebury, Tuesday, April 11, 5:30-9:00 pm

Sharon.O'Neill@uvm.edu or (802) 656-3359

Newport: Tuesday, April 25th, 5:00-8:30 pm

St. Johnsbury: Tuesday, April 25th, 5:30-9:00 pm

jbenoitc@uvm.edu or (802) 279-6478

St. Albans: Wednesday, February 1, 5:30-9:00 pm

Wednesday, March 8, 9:00 am-12:30 pm

Amy.Bielawski.Branch@uvm.edu or (802) 578-0426

A Book to Share—this book came highly recommended by an experienced foster/adoptive mom:

A Safe Circle for Little U is for anyone who has experienced the loss of a safe harbor and must risk forming a new attachment, and for those who help make that extraordinary journey possible. Dedicated to all the children take the risk to stick again and the parents who become their safe circles, the story of little u is the story of us. Written by renowned speaker, author, and child therapist **Paris Goodyear-Brown** as an outgrowth of her work with children from hard places, this story was birthed out of the experience of walking with children and families through the loss of a primary caregiver. - You can find this in the VAC Library!!

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Tax Season is here!

This is the time of year when tax questions start bubbling for adoptive and guardianship families and answers aren't always easy to find.

Does my child qualify as a dependent this year?

Am I eligible for the adoption tax credit?

How do I find a Vermont tax specialist to help me?

While we can't provide specific answers you may find the following websites helpful:

"Yes, the Adoption Tax Credit is for Foster Care Adoptions" by Becky Wilmoth <https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/opinion/yes-the-adoption-tax-credit-is-for-foster-care-adoptions/23606>

Hear from the IRS directly <https://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html>

Hear from The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption https://davethomasfoundation.org/guest_blog/what-parents-need-to-know-about-the-adoption-tax-credit/

Hear from the North American Council on Adoptable Children <https://www.nacac.org>

For help in finding a tax specialist

<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/choosing-a-tax-professional>

<http://tax.vermont.gov/tax-professionals/resources>



QIC•AG Quality Improvement Center for Adoption & Guardianship Support and Preservation

The Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (www.qic-ag.org) is a five-year collaborative project working with eight sites across the United States. In Vermont the collaboration is with the Family Services division of DCF, Lund, University of Vermont, and University of Texas-Austin, Vermont. As part of this project the **Vermont Permanency Survey** will soon go out to adoptive and guardianship families. Please keep an eye out for the survey and know that the information you provide will help Vermont strengthen the system of care for adoptive and guardianship families. What you can do right now to help is to send us your email address so that we can be sure to reach you! Please e-mail Christina Shuma at christinas@lundvt.org to provide your updated contact information and feel free to ask her any questions you have about this project.

Watch for updates in our Spring newsletter!

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR FAMILIES

The following Support Groups are provided by the Vermont Adoption Consortium in collaboration with Post permanence Services (From Lund, Easterseals, NFI or NKHS). Some groups are also co-sponsored by community partners.

Addison County

Support Group for Adoptive Families held the 4th Tuesday of the month. Held in Middlebury. Contact Donna Provin (below) for where it will be held this month. Please call Donna Provin at (802) 343-0565 or email donnap@lundvt.org for more information.

Brattleboro

Support Group for Adoptive Parents the second Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30 pm. Brattleboro Savings and Loan Community Room
Please contact Danna Bare for more information: Danna Bare, M.Ed, (802) 258-0308

Chittenden County

Chittenden County Circle of Parents Support Group for Adoptive and Guardianship Families This group is held the LAST Tuesday of every month from 5:00-6:30pm in South Burlington. Pre-registration is required.
For more information or to RSVP, contact Katherine Boise, BSW, M.Ed at Lund at (802) 864-7467.

Franklin County

1st Tuesday of every month at the Senior Center, 75 Messenger Street, St. Albans from 5:30-7:30 pm. Dinner and childcare provided at no cost. Please contact Nina Kempf-Miller (802) 524-1700 or Monica Darrah (802) 578-2702 to RSVP or for more information.

Morrisville

2nd Thursday of the month, the Morrisville DCF office - 5:30 - 7pm
For information contact: Karen Langdell, Easterseals of Vermont, (802) 730-6667

Shaftsbury

3rd Thursday of the month from 7 - 9 pm at the Shaftsbury Methodist Church.
For more information contact: Amy Prentiss-Rogers at (802) 343-6310 or Jill C. Bouton at (802) 223-4744

Upper Valley

KINSHIP CARE SUPPORT GROUP
Meeting the first Thursday of each month, 1-2:30 pm 2458 Christian Street, Wilder, VT (next to Dothan Brook School on Route 5)
For more information contact: Judith Bush, ACSW (802) 356-9393 x 2 or jbush@together.net

POST-PERMANENCE SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

Post Permanence Services are available to adoptive and guardianship families. For information regarding services in your area please contact:

NEWPORT, ST. JOHNSBURY AHS Districts

NKHS Northeast Kingdom Human Services

P.O. Box 724, Newport, VT 05855

Karen Hack, Supervisor, (802) 334-6744 x2140

khack@nkhs.net

ST ALBANS AHS District

NFI, Northeast Family Institute

12 Fairfield Hill Road, St. Albans, VT 05478

Kriss Lococo, Regional Manager, (802) 524-1700

Kristenlococo@nafi.com

BARRE, BENNINGTON, BURLINGTON, HARTFORD, MORRISVILLE, RUTLAND AHS Districts



EASTERSEALS

641 Comstock Road, Suite 1, Berlin, VT 05602

PPSP Manager, Lynn Bessette, Program Manager (802) 279-4241 lbessette@eastersealsvt.org

BRATTLEBORO, BURLINGTON, MIDDLEBURY, SPRINGFIELD AHS Districts

LUND

P.O. Box 4009, Burlington, VT 05401

Melissa Appleton, Supervisor (802) 864-7467 X2019 C: 782-3311 melissaa@lundvt.org

Member Agencies

Adoption Advocates

Shelburne - (802) 985-8289

Department for Children & Families

Waterbury - (802) 241-2131

Dothan Brook Associates

Wilder - (802) 356-9393

Easterseals Vermont

Berlin - (802) 223-4744

Friends in Adoption

VT & NY - 1-800-982-3678

Howard Center

Burlington - (802) 488-6600

Lund

Burlington - (802) 864-7467

Northeastern Family Institute

St. Albans - (802) 524-1700

Northeast Kingdom Human Services

Newport - (802) 334-6744

St. Johnsbury - (802) 748-3181

Vermont Child Welfare Training

Partnership Burlington - (802) 656-3311

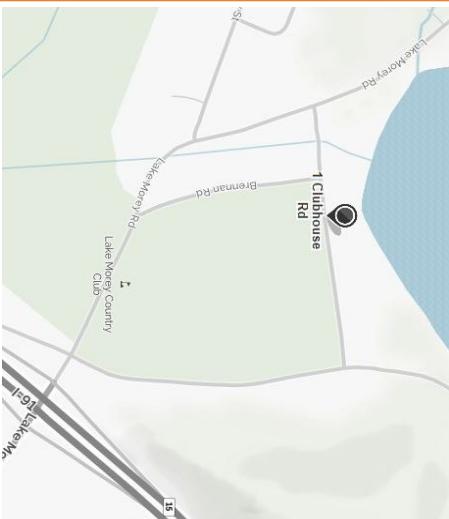
Vermont Foster & Adoptive Families

Assoc. Essex Junction - (802) 878-3984

Vermont Kin As Parents

Winooski (802) 871-5104

**VERMONT
ADOPTION CONSORTIUM**



Vermont Adoption

Consortium
Conference

April 21st, 2017

Lake Morey Resort



Adoption and Guardianship

Evolving in the 21st



We are conveniently located less than one mile off Interstate 91 and just 15

The Vermont Adoption Consortium is comprised of agencies and groups from around the state who have joined together for a common purpose:

The Annual Vermont Adoption Consortium Conference is a day to join together to build our adoption/guardianship knowledge and skills, to reenergize ourselves and strengthen our commitment to these amazing children!



Tina Bleau is a Licensed Psychologist

Masters, specializing

in the assessment and treat-

ment of developmen-

tal trauma, adop-

tion, and attachment

issues. For over 20

years, Tina has pro-

vided consultation, supervision, and training

to caregivers and professionals in childcare set-

tings, mental health, post-permanency service

agencies, and schools. Tina is recognized as

a leading voice in building trauma and adoption

-informed systems for children and families. She

also provides psychological assessment services

throughout the state. Tina is trained in EMDR,

DDP (Dr. Dan Hughes' attachment model),

and a variety of family systems modalities.

The Child Trauma Academy acknowledges that

Tina has completed NMT Training Certification

through the Phase II level. She is a graduate of St. Michael's college.



Registration

Please fill out your information and send by April 14th along with a check for \$50.00 payable to:

ADOPTION ADVOCATES

9:00-9:15– Welcome

9:15-9:45– Keynote: The evolution of

Adoption and

Guardianship.

Diane Dexter

9:45-12:00– Plenary: Building Hope and Healing, Tina

Bleau

12:00-1:00– Lunch (Provided)

12:00-1:15– Resource Fair

1:15-2:30 Session I Workshops:

Your choices in Adoption: Private

Domestic, International, and Public

What would I have wanted to know then

that I know now? (Parent Panel)

Advocating for your child: From the

school to the pediatrician to residential

care

2:45-4:00 Session II Workshops:

Everything I wish my parents had known

(Adoptee Panel)

Openness in Adoption

Transracial Adoption & Parenting

If you require special accommodations, please contact us in advance at (802) 241-0901 and we will endeavor to assist you.

Please tell us who you are:
 I am a parent/foster parent/guardian
 I am a professional with _____
 I am a DCF employee

Please indicate any special dietary needs:

Announcing the 30th Annual VFAFA Spring Conference

March, 31 - April, 2

Friday Institute co-sponsored by NFI VT

Celebrating 30 Years!

Weaving Together the Past, Present, & Future!

FRIDAY INSTITUTE

Enhancing Resilience: Nine Things Youth at Risk Need

Dr Michael Ungar – internationally recognized expert on resilience in at-risk youth.

Learn more at www.michaelungar.com

SATURDAY KEYNOTE SUNDAY CLOSING

Sue Schmidt - Learn more at www.sueschmidtcomedy.com

"Sue teaches how to take the funny and poignant events of our lives and turn them into stories that heal, inspire, and entertain listeners."

Workshops Galore, Saturday Banquet & Dancing and the opportunity to connect with Foster, Kin and Adoptive Parents from throughout Vermont

»»» REGISTRATION PROCESS HAS CHANGED ««« PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS BELOW

- REGISTRATION for the Friday Institute and Saturday/Sunday Conference are 2 separate processes.
- If you are planning to stay at the hotel – that it a 3rd process –all links below.
- VFAFA membership- \$35.00 per family must be paid online when registering, or by check to "VFAFA" Send to Bill Beard- VFAFA Treasurer, 14 Cherry Ave. Montpelier, VT 05602

ALL INFORMATION & LINKS FOR REGISTRATION CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.VFACONFERENCE.ORG

(please note this website is separate from the traditional VFAFA website and looks like the "celebrating 30" image above)

1.

REGISTER for
Saturday/Sunday
VFAFA Conference:
www.vfafaconference.org

2.

REGISTER for
Friday Institute:
www.vfafaconference.org look for
information and links under "Friday
Institute" or go directly to
<http://conta.cc/2k6nOBy>

3.

REGISTER for
a room online:
<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/vfafaconference2017>

Contact vfafacoordinator@gmail.com with general conference questions. Contact kaitlyn.Moore@nafi.com for Friday Institute questions. Contact My-Lanh.Graves@Vermont.gov for specific rooming questions. www.vfafaconference.org

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Catherine Harris, VAC Coordinator
Family Services Division
280 State Drive, HC 1 North
Waterbury, VT 05671-1030

CAMP FOR ME

Summer Day Camp for Adopted Children & Teens

2017

TWO ONE-WEEK SESSIONS

July 10-14 & July 17-21

Stowe High School in Stowe, Vermont

With bus service from
Burlington, Williston & Waterbury

FOR AGES 7 – 17

Visit our website for registration forms and information:
www.camp4me.org | info@camp4me.org



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