



# VERMONT CONSORTIUM

for **ADOPTION & GUARDIANSHIP**

Support—Information—Education

## Spring NEWSLETTER 2020



### **In this issue....**

- **Creating family traditions**
- **Adoptees and their parents share their thoughts and experiences**
- **Upcoming trainings**
- **Explore some podcasts**
- **Camp for Me**
- **Encouraging talking about adoption**
- **And so much more!**

**A child born to another woman calls me mom. The depth of the tragedy and the magnitude of the privilege are not lost on me.**

*Jody Landers*

*Hang on—Spring is close so keep your eyes on the calendar—trainings are starting up!*

## Welcome to the Vermont Consortium's Spring 2020 Newsletter!

As I look out at the snow it can be hard to feel that Spring is approaching—but the birds' songs are changing and if you listen closely you can hear them welcoming the changing weather. There are times that winter seems to be a barren time of year but someone once told me that winter is the earth's time of preparation, getting ready to burst forth with new life! I hope everyone has been able to get out and enjoy some of the stellar winter days we have experienced this year and that you and your children take time to imagine all of the life that is getting ready for spring just under that blanket of snow. As I cross country ski over trails that I traverse every season I think of the trout lilies and spring beauties that are gathering their energy and preparing to burst forth.



Bird feeders are a wonderful way to connect children with nature and this time of year you will start seeing the birds that are making their way back north. Hang a bird feeder outside of a window where your children can easily see the visitors—black capped chickadees, white and red breasted nuthatches, juncos, goldfinches, and as the weather warms you will start seeing the goldfinches turn from olive to bright yellow, the purple finches will start turning up, and then an assortment of sparrows that we haven't seen since last fall. Keep a bird guide near the window so that you can help your children identify the different birds visiting the feeder.

And take time to get out and play in the snow with your children while you can—we'll be knee deep in mud before you know it!

*Catherine Harris*

***Please consider sharing pictures of your family*** with the greater community of Vermont families formed through adoption or guardianship.

We want to join you in celebrating your wonderful family—playing and working together, as well as those special occasions you celebrate.

Your family pictures would add a lot to future Consortium Newsletters and to the website.

Please forward them electronically to:

[vtadoption@vermont.gov](mailto:vtadoption@vermont.gov)

And feel free to add a few words or provide a story to accompany the pictures!



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## Family Traditions—Supporting Children’s Sense of Belonging

When a family is formed through adoption or guardianship introducing your children to established family traditions can support their “fitting in” and help develop their sense of belonging. Even more supportive of your children is the creation of family traditions that are unique to their joining the family. And ask your children if there are traditions from their birth family that they would like to continue to honor. These traditions can focus on a particular day of the week, a holiday, or even a time of year. Here are some thoughts to get you thinking and planning:

### Daily

- ⇒ A short family yoga practice every morning
- ⇒ A gratitude moment before dinner
- ⇒ Bedtime stories

### Weekly

- ⇒ Friday night pizza and a movie
- ⇒ Sunday afternoon family outside play
- ⇒ Game night

### Monthly

- ⇒ A date night where your child chooses the activity (with some guidance of course)
- ⇒ An adventure day—climb a mountain, visit a lake, go for a drive and stop someplace unexpected, or create a scavenger hunt
- ⇒ A dance party night
- ⇒ Volunteer day—it can be the same organization that you volunteer with monthly or a different service project each month

### Once a year traditions

- ⇒ The birthday child gets to choose the birthday dinner menu
- ⇒ Lawn chairs set up for viewing the perseids meteor shower in July/August
- ⇒ Harvest celebration
- ⇒ Spring puddle splashing contest
- ⇒ Sledding party with a bonfire and cocoa

### **For more ideas you can check out the following websites:**

<https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/60-family-tradition-ideas/>

<https://mommypotamus.com/family-tradition-ideas/>

<https://www.family-reunion-success.com/family-traditions.html>

<https://www.shutterfly.com/ideas/family-traditions/>

*And send in some pictures from one of your family traditions to share with all of us!*

*Email it to [vtadopton@vermont.gov](mailto:vtadopton@vermont.gov)*



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## Building Relationship with my Biological Father

When I finally found my biological father, he was hesitant to talk with me at first. I had heard through other biological relatives that he was not in good health, that he described himself as a ‘hermit’ and did not have any family. I wrote him a letter introducing myself, and in that letter, I told him I’d had a very good life and wasn’t looking for anything other than to get to know him. Weeks after I sent the letter, he called me, and it was surreal- hearing his voice, constantly pinching myself that this was really happening- I had found him.



We talked weekly for months and I listened to him with an intensity that was both exhilarating and exhausting. He’d had a challenging life. His parents were in an unhappy marriage and both had relationships outside of their marriage. He shared that his mom was a Christian Scientist, and he had not seen a doctor until he enlisted in the Air Force. His father struggled with alcoholism. He had a general mistrust of doctors and people in general.

When that mistrust turned towards me, it hurt. He was afraid I was “after his money” and was only talking to him for some kind of inheritance. It was a delicate dance, to get him to trust me and believe in my intentions. I had to stay strong.



We talked more often, twice a week, he told me he loved me in one of those conversations. He never tried to be my father, we had a friendship and he expressed such thankfulness and respect for my adoptive parents. We became friends. Close friends. He said he had never talked to anyone as much as he had talked to me. I told him I loved him too.

He shared with me the situation that surrounded my birth and adoption. He asked me to understand, that he was young and did not want a family, and his choices then came from that place of fear and being overwhelmed. The information he shared was hard, but when we adoptees ask to know our story, we have to be prepared for the heartbreak that we may hear. I told him I understood, and I felt he made the best decision for both of us. I think that conversation alone was powerfully healing for him, as he had worried about the outcome of his choice all of my life. I think in some ways it set him free.

I am forever thankful for the opportunity I had to know him and build a friendship with him, the random chance of luck and Google that brought us together after so many years. —**Lisa**

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## Podcasts to Consider

If you find yourself in the car a lot or just don't have time to sit and read a book/magazine/newspaper there are a number of podcasts that you may want to consider taking in. The following are a few of the recommendations from post permanency workers and Consortium committee members:



### 9 Podcasts that Don't Whitewash Race (Yes Magazine):

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2019/04/29/podcasts-race-racism/>

### Five Podcasts to Encourage Diversity and Inclusivity (Forbes):

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/pragyaagarwaleurope/2019/08/27/top-five-podcasts-to-encourage-diversity-and-inclusivity/#fc00c3791dd4>



**Bustle Review of podcasts about race that are “definitely things you should be listening to”:**

<https://www.bustle.com/p/these-podcasts-about-race-are-definitely-things-you-should-be-listening-to-38711>

### April Dinwoodie, Born in June Raised in April: What Adoption can Teach the World:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/born-in-june-raised-in-april/id1088504227>

**Adoptive Mom—”a show for mamas and papas in the trenches of adoption, those considering and walking toward adoption, and the tribes that support us through this wild ride”:**

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-adoptive-mom/id1278808827>



### 11 of the Best Adoption Podcasts (American Adoptions News):

<https://www.americanadoptions.com/blog/best-adoption-podcasts/>

### The Brain Architects Podcast (Center on the Developing Child):

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/the-brain-architects-podcast-toxic-stress-protecting-the-foundation/>

*If there are podcasts that you would like to share with other families and professionals please send information to [vtadoption@vermont.gov](mailto:vtadoption@vermont.gov)*

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## 52 Ways to Talk About Adoption!

Families who adopt through Vermont Foster Care get a tote bag of presents including a special deck of cards that provides 52 suggestions for talking with your children about adoption. This card game was created by The Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) to encourage family discussion of adoption. Their motto is “*Talking is Good for Everyone*” and the members of the Vermont Consortium for



Adoption and Guardianship agree! Children who grow up in families that have open communication about adoption do better. So if you need some help getting a conversation going or just want some ideas, pull out your deck of cards—and if you don't have one you can order a *52 Ways to Talk About Adoption Deck of Cards* from C.A.S.E. for \$10.00 <https://store.adoptionssupport.org/product/52WAYS/52-ways-to-talk-about-adoption-deck-of-cards>

## MENTORING...MAYBE IT'S YOU!

Now that you have adopted you may not have the space or time to continue to foster children—but you can still be involved! Do you remember that first time you fostered a child? You had questions about the process, the court hearings, how to best serve the child, and so many feelings about all that was happening. You wanted to talk to someone who could give you answers, someone who had walked in these same shoes.

When foster parents feel listened to and supported, they are more confident and likely to stay with the work. By mentoring new foster parents, you're helping to ensure the stability & success of the children placed in their homes.

If you have been or were a Foster parent for at least two years and have taken RPC+ or other advanced training, consider becoming a Mentor.



We invite you to take the Mentor Training online course. It's short and will provide you with some basic information about becoming a Mentor. Once you have taken the training, you will receive a phone call to match you with a Mentee.

For more information about becoming a foster parent mentor please contact Foster/Kin Care Manager, Joan Rock, at 802-760-0594 or email her at [Joan.Rock@vermont.gov](mailto:Joan.Rock@vermont.gov)

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## Meeting my daughter's birth family

*This is a story of love and loss and more love*

My youngest child, Rosa was adopted. She was born in Guatemala and lived in a foster home until she came to be with us a year later. She left her birth mother's side the day she was born and until she was 15, didn't show any interest in re-connecting. Her father and I had periodically offered a trip to Guatemala any time she was interested and said we would also try and figure out if it was possible to contact her birth family but she was more tied into her everyday life here with her friends, school activities and sports. The year when she changed her mind, she had traveled to Costa Rica with her school and returned saying she was ready to go back to Guatemala and wanted to look for her birth family.



A year and a half later we were flying to Guatemala to meet her birth mother, grandmother and two younger siblings. It sounds so simple and straightforward writing this, but it was not. It was complex, emotional, mysterious, amazing, and very anxiety provoking for all of us.

The preparations were all consuming at times. We first connected with an organization that brings adopted children and their families in a group to their countries of origin and offers to help with searching for birth families. We contacted a Guatemalan social worker that they recommended to search for Rosa's birth family. The search went fairly smoothly, and we were very lucky. We also had to decide to trust all of these people and organizations who we only knew through emails. We had to give them details about us, send money, make plane reservations, hotel accommodations and travel plans through them. We had some information about Rosa's birth family from 15 years before and Rosa gave her ok for all of it to be shared with the Guatemalan social worker who was recommended to us who does this work as her profession. That information proved to be all the social worker needed to make contact.



Then more decisions had to be made such as whether or not we or Rosa were going to correspond with her birth family before meeting them, what photos to send if any, what message to write, if any, who was going to greet her birth family, whether to bring gifts and then what gifts, what was initially going to be said, and so many related questions. We explored

these questions as a family but her father and I left the final decisions up to her which was difficult for all of us but my husband and I felt it was essential. This was our Rosa's life and she needed to have as much control over it as she could even though she was only 16. However, her father and I did let her know that she may feel that she would want to stay in Guatemala and this could not happen. We let her know that we would help her travel back, in the future, but she was going to return home with her family – the US is her home – and we are her present everyday family. We also made it clear to her that she could change her mind about any of the trip and reunion at any time. She decided to continue the trip plans and to exchange a few pictures and write a little note about herself and that was all.

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## Meeting my daughter's birth family—*continued*

So, our family, including her older sibling, arrived in Guatemala without difficulty and traveled with the group for a couple of days. Rosa was preoccupied, distant and a bit weepy at times. The anticipation was very difficult for her for sure. The plan was for the social worker to bring the birth family to a hotel where we would be waiting. Rosa wanted me to translate as I speak Spanish. That is the only decision I said no to because I was worried that I would be too overcome and wouldn't be able to communicate well enough and would miss important messages. The social worker, who usually translates in these situations was prepared to translate.

We were finally in Guatemala waiting in a hotel for her birth family to arrive. The plan was for Rosa to greet her birth family at the hotel entrance and the rest of us would follow. At the last minute, Rosa asked me to greet them, so, yes, I went to the hotel entrance on my own.

Rosa's birth mother, two younger siblings and maternal grandmother were all there. There was an immediate emotional connection that was so incredibly positive. We hugged like we were old friends who had been separated for too long. And in some ways, we were. Her birth mother and grandmother thanked me over and over again for taking care of our daughter, and expressed such relief that she was alive and well. For 16 years they did not know what happened to her except that she had been taken from the hospital and hopefully adopted. They shared that they thought



about her every day. It speaks to the close bond birth families can have with the baby they could not care for and the sorrow and worry that does not go away.

The metaphor of flying into a loved one's arms is the best way to describe Rosa's reunion with her birth mother. There was no space between them as they hugged and cried and hugged some more. Their reaction to seeing one another also speaks to the bond an adopted child can feel towards a mother they haven't seen or heard from since the day they were born. Also, growing up, Rosa didn't ask much about her early life and when her father and I mentioned something about Guatemala she seemed disinterested. But there was always the mystery of her early life that she needed to explore when she was ready.

There was an immediate connection and comfortableness between Rosa and her siblings even though they all only learned of one another a few months earlier. We were scheduled to meet with them for 2 hours but after close to 5 hours they needed to get back home and the social worker also needed to leave. I did do most of the translation and this provided a wonderful connection between all of us that I don't think could have happened if we had to rely solely on the social worker. It was so very helpful to have her there as well. There was a great deal of emotion and I didn't always have the words I wanted and she was great in putting words to our feelings.

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## Meeting my daughter's birth family—*continued*

Saying good-bye was terribly difficult and sad and also necessary. Rosa's birthmother texted her the following day and encouraged her to continue to move ahead, be with her family (us) and she would always have Rosa in her heart and they could continue to communicate.

This experience was an amazing gift to all of us and it continues in its beauty and complexity. It has settled Rosa emotionally and also makes her life more confusing at times. It has been the same for me. She is my daughter, I have no questions about that. She also has two mothers, which is different than most people and this is a reality for us. She is of two cultures and has to navigate that as well. We, as her parents, need to help her navigate that when we can, support her exploration, give her the solid support and belief that she can manage whatever comes to her, be there when she needs us and step out of her way when she doesn't. I feel that this complexity has provided a wonderful, fascinating, deep family and cultural world for us. While our adoption experience has had some heartbreak and sadness, it has also brought such joy and wonder. We have been very blessed. So, yes, this is story of love and loss and more love and also forever connection.

- Karen Hack



And don't forget to attend the Camp For Me Fundraiser on March 29th at Axel's Frame Shop in Waterbury. To find out more or to submit your 6x6 artwork go to <https://vtadoption.org/6x6-art-show-and-fundraiser-for-camp-for-me.html>

## SUMMER DAY CAMP

FOR ADOPTED CHILDREN AND TEENS

TWO, ONE-WEEK SESSIONS

**WEEK 1: JULY 6<sup>TH</sup> – 10<sup>TH</sup>**

**WEEK 2: JULY 13<sup>TH</sup> – 17<sup>TH</sup>**

**THATCHER BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**WATERBURY, VERMONT**

VISIT [CAMP4ME.ORG](https://camp4me.org) TO FIND  
OUT MORE AND TO REGISTER!



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# ABOUT US



Camp For Me is a **summer day camp for adopted children and teens** ages 7 – 17 held in two one-week sessions in July on the campus of Thatcher Brook Primary School in Waterbury, Vermont. Camp For Me offers traditional summer activities: **games, sports, arts & crafts, theater, field trips, swimming, nature studies, hiking and more**. Most importantly, Camp For Me is a unique opportunity for children to be with other kids who share the adoptive experience.

Founded in 1995 by the Vermont Children's Aid Society, Camp For Me evolved into our current organization in 2010 when parents, volunteers, and former VCAS staff came together to continue the vision and principles of the VCAS program. The program is grounded in a philosophy of **family-centered values** that offers campers **empathy, understanding and structure** – plus a whole lot of fun!

At Camp For Me young people who have been adopted into their families can smile and laugh with a group they belong to without doubts and explanations. For many it is a rare chance to leave troubles behind. Our campers come from a wide spectrum of origins and backgrounds, finding common ground and building friendships that last long past summer.

**Visit [Camp4Me.org](http://Camp4Me.org) for more information!**

# CAMP FOR ME

SUMMER DAY CAMP FOR ADOPTED CHILDREN AND TEENS

SINCE  1995

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**VERMONT CONSORTIUM**  
for **ADOPTION & GUARDIANSHIP**

## LIBRARY

The Vermont Consortium maintains an extensive library focused on providing resources for families who adopt or provide guardianship, and their children.

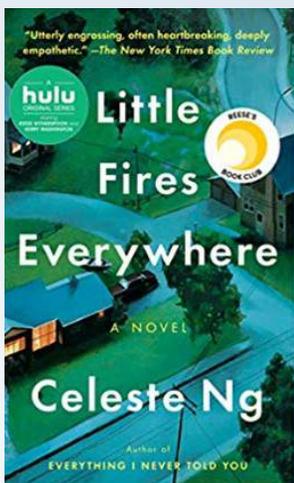
### Topics include:

- private adoption,
- adopting through child welfare,
- kinship,
- talking with your children about adoption,
- transracial/transcultural adoptions,
- developmental trauma,
- resilience.....
- and then there are picture books for children as well as books for youth!



The library is available to Vermont parents, children, youth, and the professionals who serve them. The library is physically located in the Vermont easterseals office, 14 N Main St, Suite 3004, Barre, VT—please call before stopping by: 802-622-3230 The library is also accessible on line at <https://vac.myturn.com> - open up your account, reserve the books you are interested in, and they will be sent to your home with a self addressed stamped envelope for you to return them to the library when they are due back.

*Don't miss out on this great support!*



### Little Fires Everywhere: A Novel by Celeste Ng

*Reviewed by Gillie Hopkins, MSW, Permanency Planning Program Manager*

**Little Fires Everywhere** is both a thought provoking and enthralling read about the complexities of parenting a child not born to you, the circumstances under which people make decisions not to parent, all steeped in the reality that class and race are present in those experiences. It is a story full of the pain and fear inherent in parenting via any path. The story weaves together the experiences of four families: The Richardson family lives a life of comfort with their four children. Three of them appear picture perfect while Izzy bucks against her mother's pressure and embraces a counter-culture look and perspective. We learn none of them fit as neatly with their labels as their parents would like the community to believe. Mia and Pearl Warren are a transient mother and daughter who rent from the Richardson family when they move into the community of Shaker Heights. Bebe Chow is a new American who found herself parenting and destitute, and left her baby at a fire station not understanding the implications of that act. The McCulloughs are a privileged family that has struggled with infertility for years when they finally receive placement of their perfect infant, Mirabelle. This story is a real page-turner, and each page turns adds a layer of complexity and compassion. I finished the book feeling raw and conflicted, and also liking every character. It is a story with no clear heroine or antagonist. The characters are, like in life, messy combinations of all things, and the story beautifully illustrates just how ethically complicated it is to make the decision not to parent, or to parent children not born to you.

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## Family

By Scott Morse

I was adopted into a large family. Four of my parent’s children were biological and four were adopted. Because of this, adoption wasn’t considered a big thing, or even anything special. The idea of a “Gotcha” day would never even have crossed my parents minds. I was their child, just as their biological children were theirs. We were all equal in our house. There were no adoption certificates on the wall, no long, drawn-out conversations about me being adopted. I was just “Scott”, their son. The only time the word “adoption” ever passed my mother’s lips was when a family history was required at the doctor’s, and it always felt strange to hear her call me adopted.

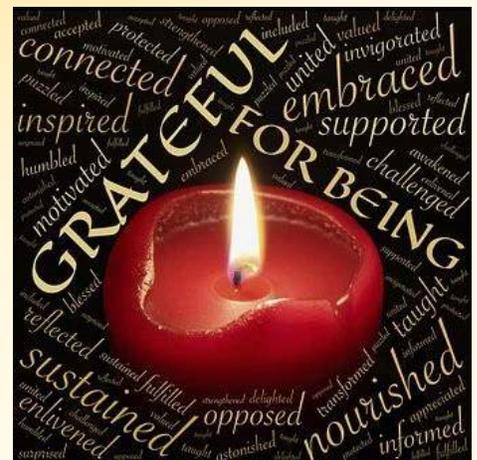
Children at school would say that I looked like my father and I’d smirk, though I secretly loved the fact that they thought we looked alike. My siblings treated me like big sisters do. They picked on me and made it very clear that they knew I was mom’s favorite. “Scott can do no wrong,” they’d say. They weren’t wrong. Mom told me a number of times that I was her favorite, but it had nothing to do with being adopted and everything to do with being one of the youngest and one of the only boys (she had six daughters and two sons).

My parents were in their late 40’s when they adopted me. They’ve both passed away now but they left a legacy that I’ll never be able to live up to. My parents took in dozens of foster children over the years, of all ages. Some were adopted, like myself and my sisters, while others moved on to their forever homes. My mother also ran a daycare. It wasn’t unusual to have 16 children running around in the summer months. That, of course, was before stricter daycare laws were created. I guess the reason I mention this is because children were all over, all the time. None of us were treated special, we were all expected to pull our weight and do our chores, but we were all loved unconditionally. Imagine living with 9 other girls and having only one bathroom? I guess that’s where I learned patience from!

My mom made a big deal about me getting to know my biological mother. “You need to go see her,” my mom would say. “But mom,” I’d reply, “she’s not my mom, *you* are.” Mom would smile a bit and say, “yes, but still...” She was always supportive about her adopted children keeping in contact with their biological family, but respected our decisions if we decided we didn’t want to interact with them.

I am grateful.

I am so beyond grateful that there isn’t a word for it. I have biological half siblings, including a sister who grew up with my biological mother (continued on next page)



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## Family—*continued*

(continued from previous page) and her husband. This gives me the unique opportunity to see exactly what my life would have been like had I not been adopted by my parents. My biological father had a lot of “summer” kids (some are here, some are there), and the majority of them have struggled a great deal over their lifetimes with mental health issues and legal problems.

I have steady employment and own a home. I have two amazing children that I am raising with my wife of almost 20 years. I have hobbies (Go Habs!) and love spending time visiting historic sites and seeing new parts of Vermont.

*I am thriving.*

And it is all thanks to my parents. When the state called my parents and asked if they were willing to take on an 18 month old boy, they were in the process of packing for a trip to California to see their oldest son. “Can we take him with us?” they asked. “Of course!” the social worker replied. I find it hard to believe that it would be so easy to bring a foster child out of state so quickly in today’s climate, but back then it seems like the social worker was just happy to have a safe place for me to go. It could have been so easy for my parents to say no, that they weren’t in the right place to take on a foster child, and my life would be completely different. Maybe it would have been worse. I honestly can’t imagine it being much better.

I hear of a lot of adopted children struggling with their identity or feeling as though they didn’t fit in. Maybe I’m the exception, but I’ve never felt that way. Maybe it’s because my parents didn’t make a big deal about adoption, or maybe it’s because there were so many children in our home and everyone was treated equally. I’ve always felt as though I belonged. They are my *family*.



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## Upcoming Consortium Trainings

The Consortium has put together the Spring training schedule—so get these into your calendars. Watch the Consortium website for more details and registrations opening up!



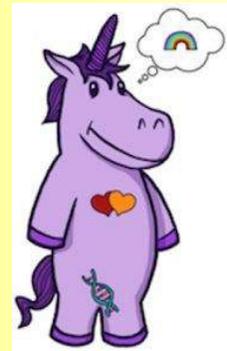
**Talking with Our Children about Adoption** trainings are being scheduled in  
Barre—Middlebury—St. Albans

If you want to schedule one for your area please email [vtadoption@vermont.gov](mailto:vtadoption@vermont.gov)



**It's a Rainbow World: Parenting LGBTQ+ Children/Youth**

Burlington, June 6th



**Taking the Long View:**

**Thriving as a Transracial/Transcultural Family**

Burlington, May 2nd

In the Fall this training will be scheduled in Hartford, Rutland, and Burlington

The **Vermont Consortium for Adoption and Guardianship** invites you to contribute to strengthening and building the adoption/guardianship communities of Vermont by joining a committee!

- ◆ **Conference Planning and Training**
  - ◆ Contribute to the design and dissemination of our “Creating Adoption Sensitive Schools” and “Talking with your Children about Adoption” trainings
- ◆ **Diversity in Adoption**
  - ◆ Contribute to the design and dissemination of our transracial/transcultural trainings and help with creating additional trainings
- ◆ **Library**
  - ◆ Assist with the usability of the library and get the word out about this amazing resource

For more information email Catherine Harris at (802) 241-0901 or email [catherine.harris@vermont.gov](mailto:catherine.harris@vermont.gov)

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**Registration has Opened for the  
Vermont Foster and Adoptive Family Association  
Spring Conference  
at the Doubletree Hotel in South Burlington  
from March 27 to March 29, 2020**

*Creating a Vision with Commitment, Courage, & Compassion.*

March 27-29, 2020

- \* Friday they welcome folks from [The Daily J.A.M.](#). Most recently Adrian McLemore spoke in Vermont at the Kinship Conference.



- \* Saturday [April Dinwoodie](#) will be presenting the Keynote welcome AND two engaging workshops.



- \* Sunday they wrap up the weekend with [Rajnii Eddins](#):  
"Children Are Treasure: Honoring Our Stories and Healing Through Creative Self Expression".



Go to <http://vfafaconference.org/> for additional details and to register

## Creating an Adoption Sensitive School

*Schools can experience challenges when working with children who have joined their families through adoption or guardianship.*

*The VT Consortium for Adoption &*

*Guardianship offers a FREE 2-hour training to assist school staff in more effectively meeting children's learning needs.*

***Encourage your school to schedule a training!***

***email [vtadoption@vermont.gov](mailto:vtadoption@vermont.gov) or call 802-241-0901***

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## VERMONT SUPPORT GROUPS FOR FAMILIES

*“The support group was my **LIFELINE** especially in the early years. My grandson and I were adjusting to a different life. I truly would never have been able to survive had it not been for the people in the support group.”*



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

### Addison County

Support Group for Adoptive and Guardianship Families held the 4th Tuesday of the month. 5:30-7:00 pm. Please contact Donna Provin for more information and for the location at (802) 343-0565 or email donnap@lundvt.org

### Bellows Falls

Circle of Support for Adoptive and Guardianship Families meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6 to 8 pm at the Health Center at Bellows Falls, 1 Hospital Court. Please call Stephanie Amyot for more information (802) 735-5031

### Bennington County

3rd Thursday of the month from 7 - 9 pm at the Shaftsbury Methodist Church. For more information contact: Jill C. Bouton at (413) 884-5589

### Brattleboro

Support Group for Adoptive and Guardianship Parents the second Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30 pm. Please contact Danna Bare, M Ed, for more information and for the current location (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.

Self-Care Support Group for Adoptive and Guardianship Caregivers: This group meets once a month at Lund (S.Burlington) from 12:00-1:15. It focuses on self-care activities and discussions. To get more information and specific dates or to RSVP, please call Melissa Appleton at 864-7467. For the current schedule see <https://vtadoption.org/self-care-support-group-for-adoptive-and-guardianship-caregivers.html>

### Franklin County

1st Thursday of every month at the Senior Center, 75 Messenger Street, or the Church on the Rock, St. Albans from 5:30-7:30 pm. Dinner and childcare provided at no cost. Please contact Nina Hill (802) 495-6187 or Monica Darrah (802) 495-6535 to RSVP or for more information.

### Morrisville

Please contact Pam Montgomery, easterseals of Vermont, (802) 595-5046 for information

### St Johnsbury

The Northeast Kingdom Foster and Adoptive Community is on a break until new staffing and support is identified.

### Upper Valley

Kinship Care Support Group meets the first Thursday of each month, 12:00-1:30 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](mailto:jbush@together.net)

### Transracial support Groups :

#### Burlington

Transracial Adoptive Families of Vermont meets up in various locations, generally in the Chittenden Country area. Please contact Jordy Baker for more information [jordybaker@me.com](mailto:jordybaker@me.com)

#### Montpelier

Families of Color, open to all families. Play, eat and discuss issues of adoption, race and multiculturalism. Bring snacks and games to share, and dress for the weather. Third Sundays, 3-5 p.m. Unitarian Church, 130 Main Street, Montpelier.

Alyson, 439-6096 or [alyson.mahony@gmail.com](mailto:alyson.mahony@gmail.com)

*Hang on—Spring is close so keep your eyes on the calendar—trainings are starting up!*

## POST PERMANENCY SERVICES FOR FAMILIES



Families formed by adoption or guardianship may need support and those needs usually change over time as children and families grow and change. Post Permanency Services address the normal issues adoptive and guardianship families face as well as more significant issues that can arise when raising a child who has experienced a traumatic start in life.

Supports offered include:

- ◆ In-home adjusted parent education, identifying strengths and challenges and developing plans that foster growth
- ◆ Consultation to treatment teams and advocacy, providing education supports within schools and collaborating with treatment teams
- ◆ Referrals to community resources
- ◆ General adoption/guardianship information
- ◆ Kinship placement support



These services are provided by a Post Permanency Service Provider meeting with the family and working with them to assess and determine what services are needed. Together a plan will be made and goals set for these services. To support the family in meeting their goals the Post Permanency provider will be meeting with the family monthly in their home as well as attending any meetings that the family identifies—such as treatment team meetings and school meetings.



*“I would like to **thank** the Post Permanency Services staff they have been wonderful people to work with who are a wealth of knowledge and support. Whether just listening to me vent and bounce ideas off of, or to giving me advice on how to deal with difficult birth family members, or how to deal with school staff. They have given us awesome contacts to help with these struggles. Thank you all for that you do. I wouldn't know where I'd be today without you.”*

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

**BARRE, BENNINGTON, HARTFORD,  
MORRISVILLE, ST. JOHNSBURY &  
RUTLAND AHS Districts**

**EASTERSEALS**

14 North Main Street, Ste 3004, Barre. VT 05641  
Lynn Bessette, Program Manager (802) 279-4241 [lbessette@eastersealsvt.org](mailto:lbessette@eastersealsvt.org)

**BRATTLEBORO, BURLINGTON, MIDDLEBURY,  
NEWPORT & SPRINGFIELD AHS Districts**

**LUND**

P.O. Box 4009, Burlington, VT 05401  
Melissa Appleton, Supervisor (802) 864-7467 X2019 C:  
782-3311 [melissaa@lundvt.org](mailto:melissaa@lundvt.org)

**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](mailto:Kristenlococo@nafi.com)

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