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Strengthening Adoptive Family Ties!

www.coalitionofadoptivefamilies.org

Need to Know!

NEXT Discussion Topic- *Legal Issues Adoptive Parents Need to Know* Presenter: Rosemary Pomeroy Esq. (7/20/16)

Adoption finalization isn't the end of legal issues to consider, especially as your child reaches 18 years, the age of majority. Parental rights change significantly once a child legally becomes an adult, including the parent's right to know and have input into a range of health related issues. Learn about durable powers of attorney, living wills, health care powers of attorney, and trusts and how they can be used for your family.

9/18-11/6 "***Charting the Course***" is a course for parents, their teens or younger children who are struggling and want to better understand the challenges and behaviors of their



Happy Independence Day!

The Coalition of Adoptive Families became a 501(c)(3) in December, but we are far from financially independent.

If you are reading this—you know there is a need for an organization that educates, supports, and provides information and resources for families after adoption.

Join us—become a member and help us sustain stronger more informed adoptive families!

To join, go to our web page:

www.coalitionofadoptivefamilies.org and

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support and assist parents around adoption issues, as well as separate groups for teenagers and children to meet so that they can better understand and discuss methods for managing their emotions and behaviors in a safe and supportive atmosphere.

PASSS funds may be used to towards the series tuition.

Interested families contact:
cofaf4u@gmail.com

Brookwood Academy: Graduation is Possible!

Brookwood Academy focuses on service special need students with social and/or behavioral issues. Students diagnosed with Autism, Traumatic Brain Injury, Bipolar Disorder, Major Depression and other mental health issues often are successful at Brookwood Academy. Contact 614-231-1199

COFAF Facebook Page: A Source for Adoption News and Information!

Frank and honest information and news related to adoption is rare via most media outlets- so we are on the look out for information that enlightens and brings understanding to the adoption experience. Visit the Coalition of Adoptive Families Facebook page and "*like us*" to spread the word!

PASSS Signup Begins in July!

Ohio's PASSS program is one of the best in the country according to the Donaldson Adoption Institute's report, "*Supporting and Preserving Adoptive Families: Profiles of Publicly Funded Post Adoption Services.*" PASSS or **Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy** is available for any child that has been adopted (except for stepparent adoption), is under 18 years, and has a special need that existed before their adoption was finalized or can be attributed to a pre-adoption condition. PASSS is intended to pay for services not covered under other adoption subsidy programs, insurance programs, or Medicaid. There is a limit of \$10,000 per child per state fiscal year—however families may ask to apply for an additional \$5,000.

PASSS funding is distributed according to the state's fiscal year 6/30-7/1. To apply forPASSS contact Children's Services in the county in which you reside.

What We are Reading

This summer we've been recommending novels by adoptees. This month's read is **The Hundred Year Flood**, a novel by Mathew Saleses. Mr. Saleses was adopted

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Rumpus, the Center for Asian American Media, and *The Good Men Project*, among others. . The novel's main character "Tee" is a young mixed race American adoptee living in Prague Czech Republic in the wake of 9/11. *The story follows twenty-two-year-old Tee 'as he escapes to Prague in the wake of his uncle's suicide and the aftermath of 9/11. Tee tries to convince himself that living in a new place will mean a new identity and a chance to shed the parallels between him and his adopted father as he contemplates his own place in life as both mixed and adopted and as an American in a strange land full of heroes, myths, and ghosts."*

Previous books by Mr. Salesse include [Not Saying, I'm Just Saying](#) (Civil Coping Mechanisms), [Different Racisms: On Stereotypes, the Individual, and Asian American Masculinity](#) (Thought Catalog Books), and [The Last Repatriate](#) (Nouvella).

The Power of Empathy!

Katie Jae Naftzger a psychotherapist and adoption specialist spoke on empathy at the recent Korean American Adoption Network (KAAN) conference. She writes, *"Adoptive parents might say things such as, 'We'll always be here for you, no matter what.' 'You don't have to worry about that anymore. We are your forever family.' 'You can trust us!' 'You can talk to us!' These statements are variations on a theme in adoptive families. The idea is that if the adoptee hears it enough, at some point, it will start to sink in. It's meant to be encouraging and stabilizing. And, for the most part, it is! That is, until the teen years. When the teen years hit, those words of encouragement don't have that same connecting effect. Adoptive parents find that when they are trying to be encouraging and supportive, it can actually make things worse. In these interactions, adoptive parents may find themselves disagreeing with their teen in an effort to make them feel better. But, instead, the adopted teen ends up feeling **invalidated, misunderstood and even more alone and isolated than they already were.** That response is more appropriate for a younger child, but not for teens. With teens, the role of the parent is to maintain guidelines and expectations in a supportive way, but not try to change their mind or to make life easier for them. And, if possible, to help them to feel a little bit less alone."* Empathy doesn't try and fix things, rather it communicates—"I know how you feel".

Naftzger asked attendees to recall a situation when they felt different; not fitting in. By asking the attendees to remember what it felt like instead of intellectualizing and offering solutions for painful feelings or events, attendees got in touch with their own feelings of how they wished they had been treated. Given the isolation and alienation that so many adoptees feel inside, the importance of receiving empathic responses takes on heightened importance. Empathy balances teaching responsible behavior with compassionate understanding.

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