



108 Main Street, Suite 5
New Paltz, NY 12561
888.354.1342

Nurture and Heal

OVERCOMING THE CIRCLE OF TRAUMA AND TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES

29th Annual New York State Foster Care and Adoption Conference
Thursday, May 10 through Saturday, May 12 at the Hilton Albany



Made possible
with the support of:



Office of Children
and Family Services



CENTER for DEVELOPMENT
of HUMAN SERVICES
INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION
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Nurture and Heal, the Coalition's 29th Annual New York State Foster Care and Adoption Conference, will explore innovative therapies and methods to assist in accepting, expressing and healing trauma for ourselves, our clients, our families and our children. We will also focus on what parents in the trenches and those in the field can do to ensure that they get the support and self-care that they need and deserve.

As parents and professionals, we know the needs of our children sometime compete with the rewards our families and our work offer. Nurturing a child with a history of loss or other complex adverse experiences requires a deeper understanding of brain function, triggers and techniques. It also challenges us physically, mentally and emotionally.

The conference will offer participants an opportunity to become current on law and policy, learn new skills and strategies to work with families and children, network with other parents and professionals and provide parents and professionals alike with tools and resources to explore possibilities for change. Nationally known keynote speakers and experts in child welfare will share their expertise and vision for the future in over 30 different presentations.

About the Coalition

The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York is a parent-led 501(c)(3) organization that lives by its motto, "Family is the Most Important Thing." The Coalition provides support, information and advocacy for foster, kinship and adoptive families and related professionals in New York State. More about the Coalition and our programs can be found at affcn.org.

Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York
646-688-4321 • fax: 845-633-8041
info@affcn.org • www.affcn.org
Main office: 108 Main Street, Suite 5, New Paltz, NY 12561
Long Island: 21 Greene Avenue, Amityville, NY 11701
Southern Tier-Finger Lakes: 950 Danby Avenue, Suite 318, Ithaca, NY 14850

Richard Heyl de Ortiz, Executive Director
Claudia Corrigan D'Arcy, Director of Outreach and Advocacy

Mike and Kristin Berry

Mike and Kristin Berry are authors, bloggers, speakers, adoptive parents and former foster parents. They are passionate about reaching adoptive, foster and special needs parents around the globe with a message of hope and transformation. They are the creators of the award-winning blog, Confessions of an Adoptive Parent (www.confessionsofadoptiveparent.com) which has a global audience of more than 100,000 people every month. The site also hosts The Honestly Adoption podcast.

Mike and Kristin have co-authored the books *The Adoptive Parent Toolbox* and *The Weary Parent's Guide To Escaping Exhaustion*. Kristin also authored the best-selling book, *Born Broken: An Adoptive Journey* which chronicles her family's journey in raising children from extreme trauma. Their newest book, *Confessions Of An Adoptive Parent: Hope And Help From The Trenches Of Foster Care And Adoption*, was released in February.

Mike travels extensively throughout the United States, with a passion to reach hurting and overwhelmed foster and adoptive parents with a message of hope. Along with blogging and books, he is also a featured writer on Disney's Babble.com website. They have been married for eighteen years and have eight children, all of whom are adopted. They reside in the suburbs of Indianapolis.

Dr. Joyce Maguire

Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao, Ed.D., LCSW, LMFT was the Founder and CEO of Center for Family Connections, Inc. in Cambridge and New York and Pre/Post Adoption Consulting and Training (PACT). She is also the Founder and present Director of Riverside After Adoption Consulting and Training and All Adoption Consulting and Training.

Dr. Pavao has done extensive training, both nationally and internationally. She is a lecturer in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and she has consulted to various public and private child welfare agencies, adoption agencies, schools and community groups, as well as probate and family court judges, lawyers and clergy. Additionally, she has worked closely with individuals and families touched by adoption, foster care and other complex blended family constructions.

She has developed models for treatment and for training using her systemic, intergenerational and developmental framework, *The Normative Crises in the Development of the Adoptive Family* and her book, *The Family of Adoption*, has received high acclaim.

Dr. Pavao has received many awards and honors, including the Adoption Excellence Award for Family Contribution from the Children's Bureau of the United State Department of Health and Human Services and the Angels in Adoption Award from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption.



Thursday, May 10

- 12:00 PM.....FASD Learn at Lunch
- 2:30 PM.....OCFS Foster parent Focus Group
- 4:00 PM.....Break
- 4:15 PM.....Parent Leadership Gathering
- 8:00 PM.....Gathering in the Sessions Lounge

Friday, May 11

- 7:00 AM.....Morning Yoga
- 8:00 AM.....Registration and Exhibits
- 9:45 AM.....Opening Session and Welcome
- 10:45 AM.....Workshop Period 1
- 12:10 PM.....Lunch featuring Keynote Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao
- 1:50 PM.....Workshop Period 2
- 3:05 PM.....Beverage Break
- 3:30 PM.....Workshop Period 3
- 5:00 PM.....Dinner Break (on your own)
- 5:30 PM.....Meeting of the Coalition Board of Directors and Advisory Committee
- 8:00 PM.....Live Performance of "Spitting in the Face of the Devil"

Saturday, May 12

- 7:45 AM.....Breakfast featuring Keynotes Mike and Kristin Berry
- 9:15 AM.....Workshop Period 4
- 10:30 AM.....Break for hotel check out
- 11:00 AM.....Workshop Period 5
- 12:20 PM.....Workshop Period 6
- 2:00 PM.....This Is Us Wrap Party (Includes boxed lunch)

**Includes boxed lunch*



Lunch and Learn: About Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders 12:00 - 2:00 PM

Children and adults prenatally exposed to alcohol show disabilities in social and adaptive function that persist throughout their life. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders disproportionately affect our children and foster, adoptive and kinship families. In this workshop Douglas Waite, MD, FAAP, Medical Director of The Keith Haring Clinic at Children's Village, will provide an expansive overview of diagnosis, treatment, prevention and implications of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). *This event is free and open to the public. Participants are welcome to bring lunch or order an optional boxed lunch from the Coalition.*

OCFS Foster Parent Focus Group 2:30 - 4:00 PM

Parent Leadership Gathering 4:15 - 5:30 PM

The power of our Coalition is in our parents and families. Parent Group Training: Long Island Adoptive Families support group leaders will present a training on how to best use social media for support groups. This workshop will show other support group leaders and those wanting to create a local support group how the use of Facebook, Twitter and blogging can help them grow their groups, educate members of the adoption triad and help families in your group stay connected between meetings.

Throughout the State: Join Coalition Executive Director Richard Heyl de Ortiz and others for an open discussion about legislative and public education priorities for the year ahead. This is an opportunity for parents, families and parent group leaders throughout the state to let the Coalition know what issues or trends they see in their regions and how we can all work together to improve services for our families. Open to all foster, adoptive and kinship parents. *Refreshments provided.*

Gathering in Sessions Lounge 8:00 PM

Take a break and relax while getting to know those in our Conference community in an informal gathering. We'll be meeting in the Sessions Lounge in the hotel lobby to make new friends and reconnect with old. Come join us when you wish. Stay as long as you like. *Cash bar.*



Morning Yoga

7:00 - 8:30 AM

Prep for a day of learning with an open heart, clear mind and calmed soul. Start the day off right with self-care: Morning Yoga with Lisa Maynard. For all skill levels. Some mats provided, but feel free to bring your own!

Opening Session

9:45 - 10:30 AM

Welcome to the official Conference kick off! Join Executive Director, Richard Heyl de Ortiz, for the “State of the Coalition” address. *Opening session also serves as the Coalition’s annual meeting.*

Workshop Period 1

10:45 - 12:00 PM

A Systemic-Relational Approach to Working with Biological Families Involved with the Foster Care System: Part 1

(SW CEUs PART 1)

Many parents whose children are placed in foster care have histories of complex interpersonal and systemic trauma themselves. The placement of their children in foster care is experienced as another trauma, leading most parents to respond with anger, rage and defensiveness. For service providers and caregivers of the children, the anger shown by the biological parent is often misinterpreted, perceived to be additional proof the parent is unable to keep the child safe and secure. In this workshop, a therapeutic approach will be presented that takes into account how

systemic oppression and complex trauma contribute to lengthy foster care placements. Holding a framework that integrates contextual and neurobiological factors allows others to work respectfully and collaboratively with biological parents in addressing safety concerns and meeting the emotional needs of their children. Using case vignettes and videos, participants will learn how to sequence parent, child and family sessions to work towards a range of necessary therapeutic goals.

Catherine Lewis

All are welcome at this workshop. For Social Workers seeking CEU credit: This is a two-part workshop with 2 CEU credits. You MUST attend both sessions to receive CEUs. Additional fee applies.

Family Socializations and Self-Care for the Stressed-Out Parent

This workshop will review and normalize the emotional toll that parenting a foster or adopted child can take. It will review and emphasize the importance of self-care, promote discussion about the barriers to self-care, provide some effective methods of self-care and assist attendees in completing their own personalized self-care plan. We will introduce the concept of family socializations – balancing the needs of children versus the needs of parents with the benefits to children versus the benefits for parents. *Emily Collins, Brianna Hayes, Karen Kelley, Elvira Northington and Rosie Williams.*



A Disability by Any Other Name: Why Children with Fetal Alcohol Neurodevelopmental Disorder Have Not Been Diagnosed and Treated (and what you can do about it)

Children and adults prenatally exposed to alcohol show disabilities in social and adaptive function that persists throughout their life. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders disproportionately affect our children and foster, adoptive and kinship families. This conference will provide an expansive overview of diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and implications of FASD. Attendees will leave with an understanding of FASD, intervention and services.

Douglas Waite, MD, FAAP

Trauma Informed Approach to Food Issues and How to Help your Adopted Child Feel Safe

Food related issues are all too common in adoptive families and can prove to be very frustrating, however, the issue is usually much more than just a natural aversion to noodles. This presentation will discuss a variety of food related issues including overeating, hoarding, stealing and food pickiness. We will discuss the trauma behind the food issue specifically in relation to the older child whether the child is still in care, was adopted from care or adopted internationally. Whether children have a past history of trauma or institutionalism, we will discuss the ways in which families have coped with and overcome these issues in a positive and emotionally healthy way to reduce stress on the whole family. *Theresa Dahn and Megan Montgomery*

Second Hand Shock Syndrome

Absorbing others’ trauma while controlling empathy negatively alters the brain’s structure, putting both parents and professional at risk, particularly for those dealing with childhood trauma who have faced traumatic events themselves. This workshop is aimed at parents and child welfare professionals who work with childhood victims of trauma. Through teaching, group work and discussion we will discuss common natural but disruptive by-product of working with traumatized clients such as Compassion Fatigue, Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder (STSD) and Vicarious Trauma including experiences that bring on these issues and symptoms to look out for. This workshop stands alone, but if followed by Caring for Ourselves will better provide participants with a helpful approach to recognizing potential issues and a strategy to deal with them. *Dr. Andrew Fitz-Gibbon and Jane Fitz-Gibbon*

Lunch and Keynote Plenary

12:15 - 1:30 PM

Finding Competent Therapeutic Assistance for the Journey from Trauma to Transformation

Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao

One of the most important jobs of a parent is to prepare the child to be a kind, productive and healthy adult. We know that we must provide to the children in our care a sense of trust, needed security, a feeling of belonging, a sense of being “seen” and acceptance for all that they are. Yet, there is the history of trauma for a child who has suffered losses in their

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young lives and the cumulative trauma makes it more of a complex issue.

We must walk through the inner life of the child, who is experiencing the trauma—both simple and complex-- that is a part of the passage for all the children in adoption, foster or kinship care. We must expand our look at the extended family of adoption and how we can honor it and in doing so, honor the child while building self-esteem and connectedness. We must give them the tools they need to be able to understand and own their journey even when as their troubled past can continue to affect all well into the future.

To be sure that the child/adolescent/young adult adopted person is able to organically integrate the often difficult past with a hopeful future, we need to identify and find HELP that is non-pathologizing and that is competent in the work of post adoption and trauma. How does a parent of caregiver find the right professional to help their child be guided to their true sense of self and to a place where their trauma is transformed?

Workshop Period 2 1:50 - 3:05 PM

A Systemic-Relational Approach to Working with Families Involved with the Foster Care System: Part 2 (SW CEUs PART 2)

Many parents whose children are placed in foster care have histories of complex interpersonal and systemic trauma themselves. The placement of their children in foster care is experienced as

another trauma, leading most parents to respond with anger, rage and defensiveness. For service providers and caregivers of the children, the anger shown by the biological parent is often misinterpreted, perceived to be additional proof the parent is unable to keep the child safe and secure. In this workshop, a therapeutic approach will be presented that takes into account how systemic oppression and complex trauma contribute to lengthy foster care placements. Holding a framework that integrates contextual and neurobiological factors allows others to work respectfully and collaboratively with biological parents in addressing safety concerns and meeting the emotional needs of their children. Using case vignettes and videos, participants will learn how to sequence parent, child and family sessions to work towards a range of necessary therapeutic goals. *Catherine Lewis*

All are welcome at this workshop. For Social Workers seeking CEU credit: This is a two-part workshop with 2 CEU credits. You MUST attend both sessions to receive CEUs. Additional fee applies.

NTI – Supporting Permanency through Improved Adoption Competent Mental Health Services

Adoptive parents cite competent mental health services as one of their greatest unmet needs, too frequently reporting practices that are ineffective or even harmful to their families. Families note that it is often difficult to find adoption competent mental health professionals – fully qualified and skillful clinicians who also understand complex adoption related issues such as trauma, attachment, grief



and loss and identity formation. Similarly, it is important that child welfare professionals understand the mental health needs of children in foster care who are moving to permanency through adoption or guardianship. The National Training Institute (NTI) is a web-based training for child welfare professionals and mental health professionals in nine pilot sites and is scheduled to be available nationally by mid-2019. This free, web-based training promises to greatly increase access to such training for child welfare and mental health professionals across the nation and, through enhanced adoption competent casework and mental health interventions, to improve outcomes for children and youth and their families.” *Lisa D. Maynard and Dawn Wilson*

Born in June, Raised in April: One Month at a Time - Adoption, Identity and Family

This workshop will address how we deal with triggers and issues as they emerge during the lifelong journey; teen years, “anniversary” dates, holidays, birthdays, rites of passage and subsequent losses. We weave together the personal and professional to share their journey of adoption with the calendar as a backdrop. We will also guide participants through each month to explore how holidays, special days and transitions can be challenges and opportunities understand ourselves and how our role as members of the extended

family of adoption affects those around us. *Astrid Castro and April Dinwoodie*

Opening Up: Ending the Silence Through Animal Assisted Therapy

For many children who have suffered trauma, talking about this trauma is difficult. For children who have experienced child sexual abuse, it is difficult to trust. For therapists who work as trauma focused therapists, bonding with foster children and working on the behavioral challenges brought on by the traumas is also difficult. However, the bond between humans and animals has long been established, yet it has gone under-appreciated and underrated. By combining the natural ability animals have to comfort and heal their humans, it is by no surprise that the Animal Assisted Therapy world is finally being recognized as a fundamental part of the mental health healing process. The use of a therapy dog can allow clients who have difficulty expressing themselves to open up and feel safe in discussing their traumatic lives leading to increase healing and therapeutic alliance between the child and their therapist. *Zak Anolic, Wendy Padilla and Dolly the Therapy Dog.*

Caring for Ourselves as We Care for Others

Every parent faces stressful moments, but parenting or working with children who have trauma can increase that stress to a daily event. Chronic, ongoing exposure to stress interferes with your attitude,

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social and family relationships, work and health. Even the work of child welfare system in the body. It can raise your blood pressure, suppress your immune system, increase your risk for heart attack and stroke and speed up the aging process. This workshop will cover the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) reaction to stress plus how to balance it all out with self-care tools such as breath meditation and developing a life practice. This workshop stands alone, but can be taken after Second Hand Shock Syndrome to better provide participants with a helpful approach to recognizing potential issues and a strategy to deal with them.

Dr. Andrew Fitz-Gibbon and Jane Fitz-Gibbon

Workshop Period 3 3:30 - 4:45 PM

Lifelong Impacts of Relinquishment

With a panel of parents who relinquished at different stages of their lives, we will look at the way trauma has impacted all of us and how we have worked to heal. We will use our personal experiences and stories to illustrate the impact of relinquishment and what skills we have developed through our experiences to deal with it. Our own journeys can have impact on our relationship with our relinquished kids, whether during their childhood in open adoptions or when trying to navigate a reunion in adulthood. This panel can give insight to adoptees, adoptive and foster parents and professionals as to the experience of birth mothers and that insight may help them in navigating their relationships. *Annie Jacobs, Suz Bednarz-Kish and*

Claudia Corrigan D'Arcy



Walking on Eggshells: Recognizing and Responding to Trauma Triggers

We all carry emotional baggage with us from our past, but many of the youth in our personal and/or professional lives are driving a virtual U-Haul. We will briefly review basic information on the effects of childhood trauma and address how to recognize triggers as they emerge and helpful ways to respond to “trigger events.” Focus will be on defining and understanding “trauma triggers,” identifying common trigger points, exploring the need to play “detective” to discover your child’s particular triggers and end by providing some advice on how to respond to children who have been triggered. We can’t remove or control all triggers from the world we live in, but we can learn strategies and coping skills to deal with trigger events in a way that promotes regulation and minimizes likelihood of future triggers. Together we can create a more trauma-sensitive environment in our interactions with children and youth. *Emily Collins, Brieanna Hayes, Tess Mabnken-Weatherspoon and Rosie Williams*

Treatment Model for ADHD and Behavior Dysregulation for Children who have Experienced Trauma

Research shows that children who have experienced trauma are diagnosed at high rates with ADHD and/or emotion dysregulation. In our work with children in foster care we have seen a many children whose symptoms present like ADHD and Oppositional Defiant Disorder but at the root always has the comorbidity of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This workshop will address how we use ADHD and Emotion Regulation



management techniques together with adoption themes so children and their caregivers leave each session with a better understanding of their diagnosis and its relation and/or its impact on trauma, adoption identity and behavior. We will review how trauma impacts or exasperates a diagnosis of ADHD and share specific interventions and techniques to work with families. We will also describe and give examples of the caregiver work that accompanies each session. *Ana Maria Leon Gomez*

Reclaiming Connections: Stories and Tools to Nurture and Empower Youth and Families

This informative and interactive workshop will focus on recognizing and supporting the evolving face of families and the increase in youth being raised by nonparent caregivers. The significance of life story telling will be shown as a way to validate connections and the roots of strengths, survival skills and hopes to nurture healing and self-awareness. In this presentation, use of narrative therapy practices will be described and illustrated. You will learn and receive outlines for three life story writing techniques: “The Tree of Life,” “Mapping the Journey of Life” and “The Team of Life” and engage in a creative hands-on activity. We’ll talk about how sharing inspirational life stories can motivate grassroots efforts to build and sustain support groups. The panel discussion will also focus on present system barriers and identify needs and paths to make change. *Dena Adler, Barbara Bisig and Nikki Calhoun*

Tao of Parenting: Mindfulness, Spirituality, Energy Work and Natural Medicine for Trauma

Best practice in treating trauma involves not just psychotherapy but a host of alternative approaches that help calm the body, reprogram the nervous system, relax stress hormones and balance the energy systems. Taoist principles to describe a low stress parenting approach to high stress, traumatized kids. The fundamental shift is usually internal and as this is accomplished, the techniques flow more effortlessly, without reactivity, anger, guilt, shame or stress. This approach helps parents to stay clean, smooth, centered, powerful and relaxed. Approaches discussed include meditation, visualization, qigong, acupuncture, energy work, cranio-sacral, homeopathy, herbs, supplements, diet, yoga and strength training which can be used for both parents and children. The role of spiritual perspectives will also be discussed. *John Sobraske*

Friday Evening Dinner on Your Own

Enjoy dinner on your own. Our new downtown location offers a variety of dining options with walking distance of the Hilton Albany.





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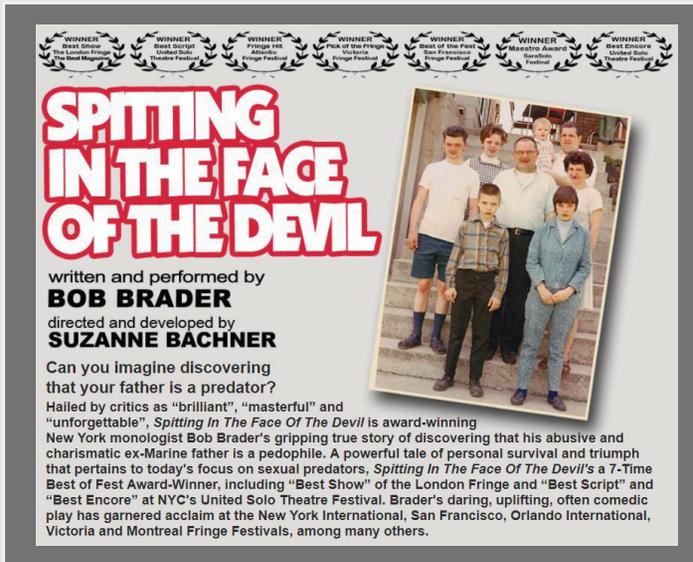
Meeting of the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Members of the Coalition's Board of Directors and Advisory Committee from around the state hold an in-person meeting.

Live Performance - Spitting In The Face Of The Devil 8:00 - 10:00 PM

Hailed by critics as “brilliant,” “masterful” and “unforgettable”, Spitting In The Face Of The Devil is award-winning New York monologist Bob Brader’s gripping true story of discovering that his abusive and charismatic ex-Marine father is a pedophile. A powerful tale of personal survival and triumph that pertains to healing from trauma and overcoming adversity, Spitting In The Face Of The Devil is a seven time Best of Fest Award

Winner, including “Best Show” of the London Fringe and “Best Script” and “Best Encore” at New York City’s United Solo Theatre Festival. Brader’s daring, uplifting, often comedic play has garnered acclaim at the New York International, San Francisco, Orlando International, Victoria and Montreal Fringe Festivals, among many others. We are so lucky to have the opportunity to bring this to our Conference! *Stay after for a Talk-Back with Bob and director Suzanne Bachner.*



Breakfast and Keynote Plenary 7:45 - 9:00 AM

Why Traditional Parenting Does Not Work with Children from Trauma; Understanding Trauma and How to Parent Differently OR Offering Hope for Families in the Trenches

Mike and Kristin Berry

Why don't traditional parenting methods work with children who have experienced trauma? Many of us grew up with these “traditional” methods and it can be a struggle to adjust the deeply ingrained patterns of thinking and give up this type of parenting.

As parents, we know that we are responsible for our families, but that responsibility extends way beyond food, shelter and clothing. We are responsible for their emotional development and relational healing. Adoptive and foster parents have to heal wounds we didn't inflict and redeem ground we didn't lose. This is a foundational reality that we have to embrace about parenting kids with trauma histories. We all accept that athletes need a coach and they need to practice so that they can be at their best. Yet, many parents are reluctant to accept that they need a coach or need to practice to be at their best. Let practice begin!

Mike and Kristin Berry get honest as they discuss parenting methods better suited for children from trauma sharing their own thought process form when they have been in the muck and mire of the trench hoping and praying for a shred of hope to shine forth.

Workshop Period 4 9:15 – 10:30 AM

The Ins and Outs: Child Welfare Legal 101

Are you confused in court? Does the case worker prep you for one thing and then court rules the opposite way? How can you advocate for the children in your care when you have no idea what is really going on? This is not a legal advice clinic, but an opportunity to improve your understanding of the many legal issues that adoptive, foster and kinship families face. We'll go over the basic legal options for children; informal care, Article 6 custody/guardianship, Article 10 direct placement, kinship foster care, KinGap and adoption with much of the time dedicated to a Q&A with our panel of legal professionals.

Amy Drayer, Amy Ingram and Judge Mary Work

Art and Expression: Exploring Your Adoption Experience through Theatre and Writing

Everyone has a story to tell. We want to help make that possible with this hands on, interactive, dynamic jump right in, get out of your head and into your body, get in touch with yourself and connect with others group experience. We will be facilitating the artistic expression of personal adoption experience through joining together as a community of artists to explore through light physical warm up, theatre games, storytelling and

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writing practice. The workshop is designed as a shared, connected group experience, balanced with an opportunity to turn inward and creatively express and share their true stories. We will practice the lost art of listening – both to the self and to others. We will also experience the potential for art and advocacy and the power of members of the adoption community telling their stories and creating change. No theater or writing experience is required. Participants can share as much or as little as they are comfortable with.

Suzanne Bachner and Bob Brader

What Your Body Wants You to Know

This interactive workshop invites participants to learn about various postures or character structures that can become embedded in the body. We will observe various postures and what they might reveal about a person's early physical development and possible attachment style. We will look at the how psychological and emotional development coincides with physical development. We will also learn about our ability to form connection through gentle touch. By the end of this workshop participants will be able to have more awareness of what their own body and others are communicating on a non-verbal level and how we can choose more connected and creative ways of responding as well as having more compassion for ourselves.

Mary Catherine Donnelly

School's Out . . . Now What?

Parents of traumatized youth often face challenges once the structure of school is

over. New activities and the freedom of summertime can pose added stress to the family. This workshop will better prepare parents to enter the season with a plan in place and tips to be able to make the summer an enjoyable experience for both the child and the family. This interactive training will cover various issues parents face during school vacations such as supervision, typical behavior and behavioral issues, employment, activities and available resources. We will cover various topics such as summertime activities, summer school, modified summer rules, vacations and trips and camps and other summer programs.

Nicole Hayward and Richard LeFebvre

Transgenerational Trauma and Co-Triggering Between Parents and Children

Adoptive and foster parents who have experienced trauma can feel both blessed and cursed. They have a background that helps them better understand their children's wounds because they have 'been there'. On the other hand, revisiting trauma via their children can trigger their own wounds again. The resultant reactivity can further activate their children as traumas trickle down into later generations. The path can flow along biological as well as foster and adoptive families. This workshop explores how to make trauma knowledge a benefit rather than a bane. We will discuss how this occurs through epigenetics, in-utero stress, unconscious transmission and patterns of meaning and behavior. Strategies for breaking the cycle will also be considered.

John Sobraske



Workshop Period 5 10:40 – 11:55 PM

Yoga Mind, Body and Breath to Heal Trauma

A critical aspect of recovering from trauma is learning ways to regulate intense emotions and to gain a sense of agency over one's life. Yoga, a practice that is thousands of years old, has long been demonstrated to help calm the mind and body. Recently, Bessel van der Kolk's research has shown that Trauma Center Trauma-Sensitive Yoga (TCTSY) practices can reduce autonomic sympathetic activation and muscle tension and decrease physical and emotional symptoms – in other words, a method of self-regulation. Exploring trauma through TCTSY, survivors may experience shifts in physiology (from stress to relaxation), attitude (from fear to creative inspiration), control and agency (the ability to control one's felt body through choice) within a safe, authentic shared experience. TCTSY was recently recognized as an evidence-based intervention by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This workshop will cover the theoretic underpinnings and key aspects of the model, methodology, class dynamics, an overview of the research and an experiential exercise. *Dena Adler and Lisa Maynard*

Time Management for You

Often times we live in a microwave society - We do not take time out for ourselves and we cannot buy into the myth to multitask because something gets left out - and we get burned out. In this workshop you will learn the tools to having less stress in your life, more joy and completing more tasks on time.

Shamele Jenkins

Social Media and the Adoption Triad

Social media has changed the way we all communicate; birth parents, adoptees and adoptive families are no exception. People can now use social media and the internet to find prospective adoption opportunities, initiate and maintain contact with birth families and find online support and resources from others. When using social media, it is important to remember that the adoption process is not only your story. The details you share of that story impact all members of the triad. In this session, we will discuss various ways to use the internet and social media to find community, maintain connections with birth families. We will also address some of the guidelines for adoptive and birth parents to consider when using social media to communicate about their adoption journey as well as the technical ways to use Facebook while maintaining privacy. *Josette Crean, Pamela Rothfeld and Chemene Vizzi*



Supporting African American Children During Traumatic Events Associated with Racial Discrimination and Bias

We cannot pretend that racial discrimination and biases do not exist anymore as they have been on display in the news, social media and communities across the country more than ever. The impact of these events, whether experienced directly or indirectly, challenges American's perception concerning the value of African American lives. For transracial adoptive parents, these perilous times present a learning opportunity for greater understanding about the impact of traumatic events, healthy child development and ways to support their children that affirm self-worth. This workshop is designed to assist families in identifying, supporting and offering protective factors to help mitigate the trauma associated with racial discrimination and understanding the Black child experience today. Through real-world examples, group discussions and exercises and a scholarly literature review, parents will gather relevant tools to address racial discrimination experienced outside their safe enclaves. *Christine Haynes*

Voices from Foster Care: A First-Hand Account From Youth Directly Impacted by the Child Welfare System

Starting with a screening of Foster Care Film's Feeling Wanted, this workshop will youth currently and formerly and foster care using personal narratives to articulate the positives and negatives of life in the child welfare system.

They discuss how these experiences impacted their life beyond foster care and what helped them to persevere. These youths strive to break the cycles that put them into foster care in the first place and to overcome this circle of trauma by taking care of themselves first. For many, once in a safe environment, taking care of themselves starts by reclaiming their narrative. Sharing stories through spoken word, writing, music, poetry and film have empowered many of the youth we work with to find their voice and use it to make change in their own lives as well as the world around them. *Yasmin Mistry and youth panel*

Workshop Period 6 12:15 – 1:30 PM

Don't Cover Your Ears

Oftentimes, our children demonstrate behaviors that seem like opposite reactions to what were expected. Sometimes, those actions can seem really negative. This workshop will help parents be able to understand the behaviors that youth in care sometimes exhibit and help to identify the needs associated with the action. By understanding the youth's experience while in foster care, the parents will be able to be more empathic and attentive to their child's needs. In order to heal we must understand what is holding us back from healing. This workshop is fun and allows you to connect with others and know you're not alone on the journey of healing. *Brieanna Hayes and Rosie Williams*



Adoption and the Impact on Biological Sibling Relationships

This panel discussion will provide insight into the family dynamics in different types of blended families with on adoptive families raising biological children and adopted/foster children in the same household as well as biological siblings growing up in different households. This panel discussion will include biological youth from a foster/adoptive home, adopted children/siblings not raised in the same household and adoptive parents who have adopted out of birth order with details of their own experiences to help educate all families on what to be prepared for when having biological children in a foster/adoptive home. Strategies these families have tried successfully and sometimes not so successfully will be discussed. *Danielle Skelly, Chemene Vizzi*

Advocating for Your Adopted Child at School: Trauma-Informed Strategies That Work

Best practice in treating trauma Adoptive parents are often at a loss for how to help their children at school. Trauma is widely not considered when trying to understand a child's unique behaviors or learning struggles. Yet a significant number of adopted children have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that hamper their school success. This workshop will focus on trauma-informed strategies that can be

implemented with or without an IEP and will help the child feel safe and connected, get regulated and learn. This interactive lecture with some hands-on practice of concepts will explore challenges adoptive parents of traumatized children face when working with schools including an overview of how IDEA and ADA laws work and the processes of obtaining IEPs or 504 plans. *Stephanie Garde*

Play Therapy: What is My Child's Counselor Doing?

Children express their thoughts and emotions through play. Unfortunately, quite often the parents and/or caregiver have no understanding of what is happening in their child's counseling session. This workshop will give the basic information about Play Therapy. We will talk about some of the symbolism, look at trauma play and also talk about developmentally appropriate play. It will also touch on the toys and activities in the playroom and what they can represent to the child. *Pamela Talbott*

How to Keep Your Marriage/ Parenting Partnership Healthy When Parenting Children with Trauma

Even under the most ideal circumstances, parenting can put a strain on any marriage or partnership. Children with special needs or who have experienced trauma will, as a consequence, require additional care and attention which has the potential to increase the workload *cont...*





and pressures on the relationship. It is likely that you and your partner may go through a difficult period at some stage in your lives together and sometimes, even if seems impossible, it is most beneficial for the whole family unit to put your relationship's need first. This workshop will focus on practicing self-care for your relationship. *Mike and Kristin Berry*

Wrap Up 2:00 - 3:00 PM

This Is Us: Adoption in the Real World

Wrap up the Conference with an encore performance of the Coalition's This is Us panel discussion. Season two of NBC's hit television series raised issues of foster care and continued on the themes of identity, loss, love, family relationships and reunions in a family formed by adoption. Grab your boxed lunch and join us as our final event uses key vignettes from the show as jumping-off points for further discussion with our own panel of "characters."

Boxed lunches will be handed out before the panel

Registration Information

Please register at www.affcny.org. Submit a separate registration form, including workshop selections, for each attendee. All completed registrations will receive a confirmation email and be added to the email list for Coalitions Conference updates. If you have any trouble registering online, do not receive your confirmation email or need help, please call the Coalition at 646-688-4321.

Registration Fees

Please note, the Coalition has made changes to the membership inclusion policy. In previous years, the Coalition offered a two-tier conference registration fee structure dependent on current membership status. In an effort to be more relevant and inclusive, the Coalition has changed its by-laws and abolished distinct monetary requirements for membership.

The Coalition will continue to offer a discount, as it has in the past, but this discount is based on date of registration. Specifically:

Early Bird Registration

Through March 31
Two day: \$200
Friday only: \$120
Saturday only: \$120

Open Registration

April 1 to April 30
Two day: \$220
Friday only: \$130
Saturday only: \$130

Late Registration

May 1 through Conference
Two day: \$250
Friday only: \$140
Saturday only: \$140



Registration fees include all instructional materials, refreshment breaks, Friday lunch, Saturday breakfast, Saturday boxed lunch, hotel parking fees and any other scheduled conference activities for the two-day conference. Other fees may apply to Thursday's Pre-Conference events and continuing education credits. A limited number of scholarships will be available. Applications will be available online soon. See affcny.org/conference for details.

Extras and Add-On's

Continuing Education Credit
Thanks to partnerships, the Coalition offers two forms of continuing education credit:

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for Social Workers

Four state-approved continuing education credits will be available for Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSWs) and Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs). Four state-approved continuing education credits will be available for LMSW and LCSW's who attend both Part I and Part II of "A Systemic-Relational Approach to Working with Families Involved with the Foster Care System" workshop offered on Friday. Attendees wishing to earn these MSW/LCSW credits should indicate so on their registration form and pay an additional fee of \$80.

Continuing Education Credit
A certificate granting one continuing education credit (10 contact hours equal 1 CEU)

will be awarded by Tompkins Cortland Community College (TCCC) to anyone attending the full two-day conference. Those attending the conference who wish to earn the TCCC credit should indicate so on his or her registration form and must pay an additional fee of \$30.

A Coalition certificate of attendance is available upon request after the conference.

Cancellation Policy: A \$50 administrative fee will be charged for all cancellations. The balance of the registration fee will be refunded if written cancellation is received by Friday, April 27. NO refunds will be issued after the conference. Any registration may be transferred to another person with advance notice to the Coalition. Please note that no-shows will be billed. Agencies are responsible for paying purchase orders for any no-shows. Please calculate registration fees carefully. Any overpayment will be considered a donation to the Coalition.

Please register online before Monday, May 7th. Registrations after that will only be accepted at the door.

Accommodations

The conference will be held at the Hilton Albany. Conference attendees receive a special discounted room rate of \$116 plus applicable taxes (reservation code 4AFFC). The hotel must receive reservations no later than April 19. Reservations made after this date will be subject to availability.



Conference Information and About Us

Contact the Hilton Albany In-House Reservations Line at 518-427-3030 and reference the code, 4AFFC, in order to book under the agreed-upon group rate.

Hilton Albany

40 Lodge Street • Albany, NY 12207
866- 691-1183

Useful Information

This brochure and presenter bios are available online at www.affcn.org. The conference will feature a large adoption, foster care and kinship care bookstore plus sales of select Coalition items. Credit cards and checks are welcome.

Children cannot attend workshops and plenary sessions.

Support the Conference!

Promote your organization or business in our conference program and/or on signage at the conference. Send your materials for our resources table or reserve an exhibit table!

Sponsors and exhibitors, please call Claudia Corrigan D'Arcy at 646-688-4321 or visit affcn.org for details.

THANK YOU!

New York State Office of Children and Family Services through a training and administrative services agreement with SUNY Buffalo State/Institute for Community Health Promotion/Center for Development of Human Services.

The Coalition provides support, information and advocacy for foster, adoptive and kinship families and related professionals.

Incorporated in 1975, the Coalition is the state's foster and adoptive family association. We have a strong history of working collaboratively with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS), local social service districts, child welfare agencies and other advocacy groups to ensure that families are best able to support and parent the children in their homes.

Programs of the Coalition include: AGAPE, or Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Program for Everyone, is a new post-adoption and post-guardianship support program funded by the Regional Permanency Resource Centers initiative of OCFS

Foster and Kinship Care Support, a new initiative funded by the Redlich Horwitz Foundation that provides dedicated support and education for foster and kinship families as well as the nurturing and development of parent support groups and parent mentors

HelpLine, a free, statewide helpline for foster parents, adoptive parents, relative caregivers and professionals.



Conference Information and About Us

Education and Training Academy, which includes our Educational Support Series, this conference and award-winning videos.

Online Statewide Services Directory and Website, containing over 400 pages of information and resources for families and professionals general public, designed to promote Advocacy and outreach to leaders and the issues of importance to families and to educate about foster care, adoption and kinship care

Our Mission

The Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition unites foster, adoptive and kinship care families, giving them a voice and providing them support, information and advocacy. By fostering communication and collaboration between families, agencies and concerned citizens, we seek to ensure the stability, well-being and permanency of all children touched by the child welfare system.

Our Vision

That no foster, adoptive or kinship care family in New York State will feel alone or unsupported and that all such families will have the tools, support and community they need to nurture their children and be role models for others.

More information about the Coalition and our programs can be found at www.affcn.org.

Disclaimer While every effort has been made to provide accurate and complete information, the Office of Children and Family Services, the State of New York and the Coalition assume no responsibility for any errors or omissions in the information provided herein and make no representations or warranties about the suitability of the information contained here for any purpose. All information and documents are provided "as is," without a warranty of any kind.