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Zero Kids Waiting

is a program solely by Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

January 2011 - Volume 4, Issue 32

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Welcome!

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

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

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

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

Waiting Youth

A "Family" Poem Written by Michael, 16

Family is important to me. It feels like I'm free. Free to just be me. I get judged a lot. I tell them to stop. My family won't do that. They won't think to judge me, not even by a tad. To me people say they love, day in and day out, they think they have the key. I know there are problems to come, but a family will talk about them and then some. I wish I had a family that could just be there cause all I had in life was nothing but air. These are things I want in a family but most importantly I want a family just to accept me.



Michael, age 16, is an extremely motivated individual. Although quiet and reserved, he is an active participant in many school activities. He is a member of the band where he plays the saxophone during school pep rallies and in parades around the city. Michael enjoys being part of the chess club and robotics LEGO club. This past summer he took a money management class and has chosen Chinese as his foreign language class. Michael maintains A's and B's and is a good student. He would like to keep in touch with a few of his relatives and would like to continue to do so throughout the adoption process.

To learn more about Michael, please contact Cimena Gordon, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at 651-224-2172 or Angie Marks, Hennepin County Adoption Worker at 612-348-4355.

World / National News

Ethiopia Vows to Clean Up Adoption

December 2010

Ethiopia is making a commitment to improve the adoption system by implementing services that would clean up the fraud and deception associated with adoption in the recent years. As the focus of adoptive parents has shifted to Ethiopia, so has the troubles that have forced countries to shut down international adoption in other places. As the rate for adoptions in Ethiopia has increased, so has the number of orphanages willing to handle unscrupulous transactions for large sums of money. The United National children's agency UNICEF is working with the government to improve safeguards in the system.

[For more information](#)

Considerations Before Adopting

January 2011

A *Parenting Today* article, "Considering Adoption? The Statistics are Favorable" by the Child Development Institute gives a laundry list of considerations for parents who are looking to adopt. With the number of unsuccessful adoptions reported in the media, David Paltin, PhD asks, "Can we predict which factors can offer a positive and long-term outcome for both the parent and child?"

Research shows that adopting parents need to have realistic expectations and good preparation prior to the adoption. In addition to open communication and warm parenting styles, research from the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute reports that adoptive families use clinical services at triple the rate of non-adoptive families. Adoptive parents need to be willing and able to seek and access services when needed, even long past the finalization of the adoption. The Evan B. Donaldson report can be accessed at <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org>

[For more information](#)

Time Magazine Reports "Crisis" in Foster Care

January 2011

The January 10, 2011 *Time Magazine* article "Foster Care: Extreme Edition" praises innovations that St. Louis is using to recruit families for children in foster care. One key is coordination between the many professionals and volunteers who are assigned to this population of youth, but rarely intersect with one another. Another is hiring private investigators to track down members of a child's biological family to consider adopting the child. Relatives are more likely to adopt and to accept the special needs of a child according to the article's research.

[For more information](#)

Fictional Account of "Practice Babies" is Non-Fiction

January 2011

Lisa Grunwald's novel, *The Irresistible Henry House*, presents the premise of an orphan being used by college home economic students to learn child-rearing. The coeds lived in "practice apartments" and took turns parenting the very real orphaned baby, based on strict rules and regimented lab work. Universities including Cornell from 1919 to 1969 and the University of Minnesota during the 1918-1919 school year had such programs. The infants were returned to orphanages where it is was reported that adoptive parents were eager to adopt children who had been tended to with new scientific childcare.

[For more information](#)

Author Jaiya John Releases Collection of Poetry

January 2011

A Lyric of Silence, a new poetry anthology is in bookstores, penned by Jaiya John. John is best known as a national speaker on child welfare and author of *Black Hands White Baby: A View from the Crib*, his searing memoir of being the first African American baby adopted by a white family in New Mexico.

For more information about Jaiya John, visit

<http://www.soulwater.org/>

Research

Birthmothers Not Promised Confidentiality in Legal Paperwork

January 2011

A research project being conducted by Elizabeth Samuels, a professor at the University of Baltimore School of Law, is finding that women who relinquished children for adoption from 1930 to 1990's were not promised confidentiality in the legal paper requiring their signatures. No documentation has been found in the 84 surrendered documents gathered as of early January 2011. Thirty-four percent of the birthmothers signed documentation that they would not seek future information about or contact with the child; nor would they interfere with the child or the adoptive family. None were guaranteed that the child would be adopted. Thirty-three percent signed papers that expressly referred to a possibility of a placement other than adoption such as foster care or institutional care.

TV Accounts May Reduce Teen Pregnancy

January 2011

Despite a barrage of public criticism including the glamorization of teenage pregnancy, shows such as MTV's "16 & Pregnant" and "Teen Mom" may be a factor in the declining rate of teen birthrates. The Washington-based National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy surveyed teen viewers, ages 12-19. Their finding is that reality TV on the topic helps young people better understand the challenges of teen pregnancy and consequently avoid similar situations. Most of the youth surveyed agreed with the statement: "When a TV show or character I like deals with teen pregnancy, it makes me think more about my own risk of becoming pregnant/causing a pregnancy and how to avoid it."

[For more information](#)

Local News

Homeless College Students on the Rise in Twin Cities

A December 29 article in the *Star Tribune* examined statistics regarding college students, finding that at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) almost 10 percent of students identified themselves as homeless. An additional 15.5 percent of students surveyed report that they could not afford meals or groceries. Nationally, in 2009, nearly 50,000 college students applying for financial aid were self-identified as homeless. Researchers, college officials and advocates for the poor characterized homeless college students as yet another emerging result of the economic downturn that has not been measured or recognized.

Inside MARN

Lifetouch Studios Photographs Kids Who Wait

Lifetouch Inc., the leading school portrait photographer in the United States that produces an estimated 16 million school portraits each year, is allowing the use of school pictures for the State Adoption Exchange. Lifetouch worked with Minnesota Adoption Resource Network/MN ADOPT to create a process that can be completed in less than one hour. Starting March 2011, JCPenney Studios as an arm of Lifetouch Studios, will do portraits for students not enrolled in public school.

Upcoming Webinar Begins Monthly Series with Dr. Richard J. Delaney

Thursday, January 20 from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

Beginning Thursday, January 20, Dr. Richard J. Delaney, acclaimed author and psychologist, uncovers the myths and unrealistic expectations parents often have when adopting a special needs child. Delaney offers suggestions for improving communication in order to assimilate to the needs of the child and preserve the relationship between parent and child. This is the first of a monthly series of online trainings offered by Dr. Richard J. Delaney.

Fee: \$15 webinar only; \$25 webinar & CD (CDs sold separately)

For more information or to register, visit www.mnadopt.org/training

Birthfathers Webinar Slated for January

Wednesday, January 26 from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Based on two years' research and her book, *Bringing Birthfathers from Out of the Shadows Into Adoption*, Minnesota Adoption Resource Network's executive director, Mary Martin Mason will present on January 26 webinar on the impact of excluding birthfathers in adoption and the long-term implications for adoptees if birthfathers remain outside the process. Included will be Best Practices that align with current research proving the need for adopted persons to find their identities through their birthfathers.

Fee: \$15 webinar only; \$25 webinar & CD (CDs sold separately)

For more information, please visit <http://www.aha.mn/webinars> or to register call Anne Johnson at 612-746-5122.

Archived MN ADOPT Webinars Available on CD



The following MN ADOPT webinar presentations are available on CD. All CDs include training content (PowerPoint) and audio commentary by each presenter. CDs run approximately 60 to 90-minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

#1106 ***Avoiding Power Struggles & Healing Hearts: Responsive Parenting to Engage the Reactive Child*** with Paul Buckley

#1107 ***Practical Strategies for Helping Troubled Adopted Children with Complex Histories: Focus On Anger Issues*** with Dr. Richard J. Delaney

#1108 ***Adolescence, RAD and Attachment: Guiding the Adopted Teen Towards Adulthood*** with Krista Nelson

#1109 ***Pathways to Permanency and Stability*** with Dr. Richard J. Delaney

#1110 ***Family Dynamics in Adoption: The Impact on the Adoptive Family of a Special Needs Child*** with Dr. Richard J. Delaney

Price

\$15.00 for each CD

\$130.00 for 10-Disc Collection

(Prices include tax & shipping)

To order, please visit <http://www.mnadopt.org/webinars.php>

Archived AHA Webinars Available on CD



The following AHA webinar presentations are available on CD. All CDs include training content (PowerPoint) and audio commentary by each presenter. CDs run approximately 90-minutes.

#2201 ***Adoptees Have Answers: Enlisting the Experts*** with Adam Pertman

#2202 ***Minnesota Orphan Train Riders: Historical Reflections on Adoption Over the Lifespan*** with Renee Wendinger

#2203 ***How to Start an Adoptee Support Group for Adults*** with Penny Needham, Sandy White Hawk and Kate Ingalls-Maloney

#2204 ***How to Start an Adoptee Support Group for Youth*** with Penny Needham

#2205 ***Beyond Boarding Schools: Truth, Healing and Reconciliation in the Native American Adoption & Foster Care Community*** with Sandy White Hawk

#2206 ***Passages: A Lifetime Perspective on the Developmental Tasks of Adopted Persons*** with Jae Ran Kim

#2207 ***Bringing Birthfathers out of the Shadows Into Adoption*** with Mary Martin Mason

Price

\$15.00 for each CD

\$85.00 for 7-disc Collection

(Prices include tax & shipping)

To order online, please visit <http://www.mnadopt.org/ahashop.php>

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

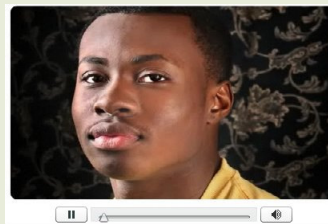
- Each Metro house of worship pledged to find a family for a waiting child or sibling group.
- Corporations promoted adoption "in-house" through bulletin boards, kiosks and newsletters.
- Populations who have been identified as potential parents -- older career women, empty-nesters, communities of color -- were better targeted in recruitment.
- Bureaucracy and barriers to adopting were reduced (Call us at 612-861-7115 if you are encountering either!)

* The number of Minnesota children waiting for families has decreased from 650 to around 400. While this shows progress our target is ZERO waiting children.

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Please visit our updated Zero Kids Waiting website at www.zerokidswaiting.org. The new site features highlights and photos from recent MARN events, adoption news, past eNewsletters and profiles of Minnesota Waiting youth.



[Watch Here](#)



Donate Today



The Zero Kids Waiting eNewsletter reaches parents willing to adopt children that are not reached by



MEET SMARTGIVERS STANDARDS
smartgivers.org

general recruitment measures. Please consider donating as much as you are able so that we may reach ZERO - Zero Kids Waiting.

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Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

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