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# Zero Kids Waiting

is a program solely by Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

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## Welcome!

**Zero Kids Waiting** is the monthly eNewsletter of Minnesota Adoption Resource Network, a 31-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** and other announcements from Minnesota Adoption Resource Network including MN ADOPT training emails for parents and professionals, please click [SafeUnsubscribe](#) at the bottom of this newsletter.

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

## Waiting Youth

### Lin Seeks a 'Place to Call Home'



SungLin, age 15, prefers to be called Lin and is a young, energetic, engaging and intelligent young woman. Lin likes to be active and has participated in many activities including band, tennis, swimming, acting classes, dance and photography. She is a typical teen who enjoys

talking and spending time with friends. Lin is also an avid reader and enjoys trips to the library or bookstore. She enjoys school and talks about finding a job so she can save money to pay for medical or law school someday.

Lin values family and would like to stay in touch with her biological siblings. Lin is a little nervous about being adopted and says, "I have never known structure and would like parents that will stick with me, support me and love me forever." Lin would prefer to stay close to Grand Rapids, Minnesota. "I just want a place I can call home, to be part of family," says Lin.

To learn more about Lin, please contact Misty Koob, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Child Focused Recruiter at 651-266-4085 or [mkoob@hopeadoptionsservices.org](mailto:mkoob@hopeadoptionsservices.org)

## World / National News

### Finland Bans Adoptions

A working group in Finland is proposing the government ban independent cross-border adoption and introduce adoption age limits. Currently the Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs, a health and social affairs ministry body, is subject to permits granted by the board to approve all international adoptions. The Finnish justice ministry working group would like all adoptions, including those within the country, to be cleared by the board. The group also wants to impose an age minimum of 25 and a maximum of 50 for adopting parents as well as minimum and maximum age differences of 18 and 42 years between adopting parents and the adopted child.

[For more information](#)

### Argentine Military Leaders Face Baby Thief Trials

February 2011

Among the six facing charges in Buenos Aires for kidnapping children whose parents died or vanished during the 1976-83 military rule are Jorge Videla, 85, and Reynaldo Bignone, 83. Over 100 children were adopted by military or police couples during the Dirty War era, with the trial focusing on 34 children born to mothers imprisoned by the military. The case reached the Argentine courts largely due to the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo who relentlessly held public protests to find the whereabouts of their children and now grandchildren.

[For more information](#)

### Adoptive Mothers Accused of Human Trafficking in Egypt

March 2011

Suzanne Hagelof and Iris Botros are being accused of being part of a conspiracy to traffic children from Egypt to the United States. The prosecution allege the women along with their spouses, two doctors, a nun and Egyptian banker forged documents to adopt children illegally and smuggle them out of the country. A year ago, Hagelof and her husband who were living in Egypt adopted a child from an orphanage run by the Coptic Christian Church. Meanwhile, Botros and her husband left their home and business in North Carolina for Egypt in pursuit of adopting twins from another orphanage run by the church.

The trouble began when the women wanted to take the children to the United States. To get a visa for the children, both women went to

the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and according to their attorneys, the documents they presented included forged birth certificates and certificates signed by doctors stating they were the natural mothers. Officials became suspicious of the documents and contacted Egyptian authorities and soon afterward arrests were made. All eight defendants are being held in jail and await the May 16 proceedings. If they are convicted, the accused could each face up to 10 years in prison.

[For more information](#)

### **Hard Rock Cafe Rocks Rights of Adoptees**

March 2011

The Evan B. Donaldson Institute held a gathering entitled "Learning the *Right* Lessons about Adoption: What the Oprah Winfrey Reunion Story Teaches Us" at the Hard Rock Cafe in New York City on March 10. The focus of the event was to highlight the need for states to restore adult adoptees' access to their original birth certificates. The unique event showcased live performances by rapper Darryl (DMC) McDaniels and Zara Phillips (both of whom are adoptees) and featured a short film by Jean Strauss entitled "The Right to Know." The day also included discussions led by the Institute's Executive Director, Adam Pertman. McDaniel and other participants focused on two research-based reports on the subject by the Adoption Institute, "For the Records I and II," available at

<http://www.adoptioninstitute.org>

[For more information](#)

### **Texas Foster Children May Have to Live in Agency Offices**

Due to state budget shortfalls, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services may not be able to fund foster care providers, emergency shelter services or residential treatment centers. Hundreds of foster children may have to be housed in agency offices as happened during a budget crisis time in 2007. Texas has 28,000 to 29,000 children under state guardianship. Proposed cuts would reduce Child Protective Services, forcing investigative caseworkers to take on 15 percent more cases. Budget cuts would decrease the rate that foster care providers are reimbursed that ultimately would impact the Department's process of finding homes for foster children.

[For more information](#)

### **Adoptees from Illegal Adoption Ring Come Together on Facebook**

February 2011

In 1988, a couple, Harriet and Lawrence Laurer were caught by New York authorities for running an unlicensed private adoption agency called Childhaven of Northeastern Pennsylvania and New York. The Lauers and the lawyer for their agency, Seymour Fenichel, ultimately received a 144 count indictment that alleged they illegally sold babies to the highest bidder and intimidated mothers to go through with the adoptions and falsify birth certificates. The children adopted through Fenichel are now grown up and banding together through Facebook to find their birth families. Rachel Bernstein, an adoptee, decided to form the group "Seymour Fenichel Adoptees" about a year ago. Bernstein says, "The group is a kinship. We are all connected. We speak the same language...I started this group to encourage others to not give up on their searches because of the bad things they read about Fenichel online."

[For more information](#)

## Research

### New Approach Replaces Foster Care

Tennessee's Youth Villages is finding success with a program that forgoes foster care in favor of returning youth to their families or relatives who are provided with extensive in-home support services. The program increases better educational, legal and mental health outcomes for youth when compared to their peers in foster care. The program operates at a considerable savings to the states where it has been implemented by Youth Villages, established to run residential treatment centers for troubled youth in the state. The family-services approach identifies problems that are addressed by counselors with a placement plan that enlists both child welfare advocates and the courts.

[For more information](#)

### Sexual Activity Declines Among Teens

According to The Guttmacher Institute, teens and young adults are refraining from sexual activity in greater numbers. Interviews of 5,300 young persons, ages 15 to 24, revealed that those who had never had any type of sex increased from 22 percent to 28 percent in the last decade. The pregnancy rate among women has declined steadily. Factors contributing to these trends include improvements in contraceptive use, school health policies and programs, and sex education programs that include information about abstinence. Strong evidence suggests that comprehensive approaches to sex education help youth to delay having sex too soon and to develop responsible and "mutually protective relationships" when they do become sexually active.

[For more information](#)

## Updates

### Minnesota Leads Nation in Group Home and RTC Placements

The United States Department of Health and Human Services has just posted data state by state on child welfare for 2009. For every 1,000 children in Minnesota, the rate of foster care entry is 4.7 percent. Of the children 12 or younger who entered foster care, 17 percent were placed in a group home or residential treatment center. Minnesota has the second highest percent in the country of residential treatment and group home placements, outpaced only by South Carolina's 19.5 percent. The child victim rate for the state for children under the age of 18 is 3.9 percent of every 1,000 children. The percentage of adoptions for teens aged 13 to 18 is 3.9 percent.

[For more information](#)

### Website for Adults and Teens Living with FASD

Look for advocacy, resources, community service projects and more on a new website Braided Cord, designed specifically for adults and teens living with the diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

[For more information](#)

### **Tax Benefits Available for Some Adoptive Parents**

Families who adopted a foster child between 2005 and 2010 may be eligible for a federal adoption tax credit. The tax credit is available to qualifying families who adopted a child with special needs from foster care. Other families may be eligible for the credit with proof of documentation. Partnering with NACAC, H&R Block is offering tax preparation discounts to adoptive families valid through April 30, 2011. To download the coupon and determine qualification for the tax credit, please go to <http://www.nacac.org>.

### **Tax Credit Course Available for Adoptive Parents**

Adoption Learning Partners is offering an Adoption Tax Credit webinar to help adoptive families determine their eligibility for the current adoption tax credit. The course is designed to help families track and document expenses and to evaluate how the adoption tax credit applies to various types of adoptions and financial situations. Adoption Learning Partners offers web-based education for professionals, parents and adopted individuals.

[For more information](#)

### **Court's Role with Children and Families Subject of Upcoming Event**

Ann Ahlstrom, staff attorney for the Minnesota Children's Justice Initiative, will explore The Court's Role with Children and their Families at an upcoming Perspectives Breakfast on April 19. Sponsored by the Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association, the free breakfast will offer a discussion of how the Courts decide what is in the best interest of the child.

Please RSVP by Friday, April 8, 2011 to [www.MKCA.org](http://www.MKCA.org) or call 877-917-4640 or 651-917-4640. The breakfast will be held on Tuesday, April 19 from 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM at St. Paul's College Faculty Dining Room, 235 Marshall Avenue in St. Paul.

## **Inside MARN**

### **AHA Meet-Up Brings Together Adoptees and Local Organizations**

On Thursday, March 10, [Adoptees Have Answers](#) (AHA) hosted an informal meet-up for adoptees and friends at The Lyric, a renovated warehouse lounge in St. Paul. Arriving early and staying late, almost fifty adoptees came to enjoy the food, company and live jazz music. Local adoptee organization such as AdopSource, Adoptee MN, MCAR, the Resource Committee of Adopted Adults, and the Latino Culture Center of Minnesota assembled together for the first time ever to distribute materials and provide an overview of their mission and goals. AHA's Project Manager, Kate Ingalls-Maloney says, "It was a very successful event. Consensus is that adoptees need more opportunities to gather informally and share their stories."



(Local adoptees gather for the Meet-Up at The Lyric)

### **AHA Presents Part II of the Skin I Live In: Transracial Adoptees Speak on Adoption**

Wednesday, March 30, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM

On Wednesday, March 30, from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM, Adoptees Have Answers (AHA) offers part two of the webinar featuring a panel of transracial adult adoptees. AHA Advisory Group members Sandy White Hawk, Julie Hart and Robert O'Connor, and AHA Support Group facilitator Amy Fjellman will draw from their own experiences and perspectives to discuss some of the key issues in transracial adoption. *Part I of The Skin I Live In: Transracial Adoptees Speak on Adoption* is now available on CD (Part I and II is now available on CD for \$25.00).

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

To register online, please go to <http://www.aha.mn/webinars>

### **AHA Hosts Upcoming Event for Adoptees**

On Saturday, March 26, 2011, Adoptees Have Answers, in conjunction with First Nations Repatriation Institute (FNRI) and Metropolitan State University's Department of Social Work, will host an all-day Transracial Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Forum at Metro State University's St. Paul Campus. The Forum model was originally developed by First Nations tribal leaders in 2004 to address the grief and loss among First Nations adoptees and fostered individuals and to provide opportunities for connection with tribal culture. The event will provide a venue for adoptees to meet other adoptees and fostered individuals from Minnesota and neighboring states. It is a rare opportunity for family members and professionals to hear first-hand how adoption and foster care impact our families and communities.

For the first time, this Forum will be open to ALL adoptees and formerly fostered people, friends and family members, social services professionals and interested community members. Questions? Please contact Anne Johnson at 612-746-5122.

To register online, please go to <http://www.aha.mn/aha-events/>

[View Flyer](#)

### **Deena McMahon Presents Webinar in April**

Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

Join MN ADOPT on Wednesday, April 6 from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM as local therapist and speaker Deena McMahon addresses "Sexually Abused Children in Adoption and Foster Care: What You Need to Know." McMahon share what parents and professionals need to

know when helping children heal from the trauma of sexual abuse. McMahon will discuss the impact sexual abuse has on adopted and foster children, offer parenting strategies and share outcomes for healed youth. McMahon is a licensed therapist with over 25 years of experience working with families and children in the areas of child sexual abuse, trauma, attachment and brain development.

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

To register online, please go to <https://www.mnadopt.org/Events/>

### 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 McMahon

#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 McMahon & 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

#1111 ***Understanding Behavioral Problems in Special Needs Adopted Children*** with Dr. Richard J. Delaney

#1112 ***Sexually Abused Children in Adoption and Foster Care: What You Need to Know*** with Deena McMahon

#### **Price**

\$15.00 for each CD

CD Collections are now available online!

*(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

#2208 ***Part I - The Skin I Live In: Transracial Adoptees Speak on Adoption*** with Sandy White Hawk, Julie Hart, Robert O'Connor and Amy Fjellman

#2209 ***Part II - The Skin I Live In: Transracial Adoptees Speak on Adoption*** with Sandy White Hawk, Julie Hart, Robert O'Connor and Amy Fjellman

**SPECIAL!** #2210 Part I & II - ***The Skin I Live In: Transracial Adoptees Speak on Adoption*** (2-disc set includes Part I & II; \$25)

**Price**

\$15.00 for each CD

\$115.00 for 9-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.
- 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.

## Zero Kids Waiting

is a program funded solely by Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

Please visit our updated Zero Kids Waiting website at [www.zerokidswaiting.org](http://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 general recruitment measures. Please consider donating as much as you are able so that we may reach ZERO - Zero Kids Waiting.

To make a secure, tax deductible online donation, click [Donate](#)

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