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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.

Your email is solely used for the distribution of MARN newsletters, trainings and other news 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

### Kamaria Loves Getting Hugs



Kamaria, age 10, is a sweet girl whose favorite colors are red and black who loves having her hair done and takes pride in her appearance. She can be extremely shy, but with some persistence, she will suddenly come out of her shell. Kamaria's social worker describes her as "very funny, very considerate and very engaging." She enjoys going to the zoo, especially to see the polar bears, lions

and tigers. As for her favorite food Kamaria exclaims, "vegetables!" She likes broccoli and carrots the best but also likes fruit. Kamaria loves getting hugs and being praised for her hard work when achieving goals. She hopes to be a teacher when she grows up and if she could go anywhere in the world on vacation she would like to go to Africa.

Kamaria would do best in a family where there is structure, consistency and she can receive a lot of adult attention. Families will need to be open to future sibling contact as well as accessing the therapeutic services Kamaria needs. Kamaria very much wants a family and is open to the type of family that will adopt her. Kamaria does well with older children but may be best in a home without younger children.

For more information about Kamaria, please contact Carly Cantu, Targeted Adoption Recruiter at 612-543-0052.

## World / National News

### Brit Agency Provides Adoption Reunion Services

Like many adoption placing entities that provide post adoption search and reunion services, Norcap in England has struggled financially. Faced with hard decisions including cutting staff, Norcap now concentrates on offering support and guidance but is unable to provide help to those who cannot pay. Norcap provides support groups across the country as well as a national service of reconciliation and thanksgiving for all people affected by adoption. Attendees write the names of the lost family members on pieces of ribbon that are tied together and joined to the ribbons of the previous years. At the end of the service the ribbons are taken to the new venue for the following year. A brief memorial service is included for those whose relatives have died.

[For more information](#)

### One Child Policy Fallout Continues

Census results in China show that the One-Child Plan goal of reducing the world's largest population has been achieved with negative long-term results. The nation has 120 males for every 100 females, a shrinking labor force, declining fertility rates and a growing elderly population. While the government is adamant about continuing the policy, public discontent with the Family Planning Commission that enforces the policy is growing.

[For more information](#)

### Canada Considers Mandatory Identifying of Egg and Sperm Donors

A Vancouver judge will soon rule in a lawsuit brought by Olivia Pratten, who was born from donor conception, on whether the offspring of sperm and egg donors have a right to learn the identity of their "parents." The landmark case includes arguments that parallel to the opening up of adoption records throughout the Canadian provinces, the latest being the Yukon Territories. Currently in British Columbia, sperm donor records may be destroyed after six years so Pratten's records may no longer exist. Since 2005 Great Britain has mandated disclosure in such cases. Pratten says she never wanted to go to court, saying "The larger issue is not about me at all. I'm part of a movement that is demanding more accountability."

[For more information](#)

### Texas To Promptly Release Records for Foster Kids

A recent Texas Tribune article about young adults who age out of foster care and were being denied their records prompted lawmakers to pass a bill that will require immediate release of case files following a child's discharge from foster care. The bill will give the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 30 days to release case files and other information to a foster child once he or she ages out of care. To view the bill, [click here](#).

[For more information](#)

### Ben Vereen Discovers He is Adopted

Veteran singer, dancer and Tony Award-winning actor, Ben Vereen is currently writing his yet-to-be-titled autobiography that shares his journey of finding his birth mother and siblings. In the 1960s, the actor learned he was adopted when applying for a passport to go on tour with Sammy Davis Jr. However it was not until 1977 when Vereen starred in Alex Haley's ground breaking mini-series *Roots*, that he says he began "encountering transformative developments in his own life. The journey has been amazing. It was when I found my family, that I also learned I had been diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes."Thank you, Alex Haley," Vereen says with a laugh.

[For more information](#)

### Singer Discovers Family of Musicians

Singer-songwriter Suzanne Vega found out at the age of nine that she shared a different father than her three younger siblings of Puerto Rican descent. Vega was raised to be proud of her Latino heritage so she was shocked to learn she was white. Vega suddenly felt she did not fit in any more and never considered herself a "real" musician because she was doing something atypical from her family. So it was at the peak of her musical success that she decided to search for her birth father. Vega knew her father lived in California, played the piano, and had also been adopted. Months later she flew to California to meet her birth father, who years earlier had reunited with his own biological family. He was able to share with Vega everything he knew about the family tree including the discovery she comes from two generations of musicians. Vega recalls, "Something clicked: My talent, my flaws, were in my genes, passed down to me. Finally, I felt like I belonged."

[For more information](#)

## Research

### Research Explores Racial Disparities in Foster Care

Children of color experience more frequent placement changes and once they enter care are more likely than their white peers to not be adopted. Researchers E. Michael Foster, Marianne M. Hillemeier and Yu Bai found that risk factors leading to multiple placements were different depending on the child's race. Risk factors among African-American children included emotional and behavioral problems, being older when entering into foster care, lower socioeconomic status and a history of sexual abuse. Among white children, initial placement in a foster care setting predicted placement instability.

[For more information](#)

### **Child Abuse and Adolescent Depression Have Genetic Link**

Dr. Kate Harkness of the Queen's University in Ontario conducted research using MRIs to show that children with a history of abuse and neglect can result in a brain changes, making them more liable to develop depression. Adolescents with this history can release high levels of cortisol, a stress hormone when stressed. Lead scientist Dr. Kate Harkness, found that cortisol can build up to increase the risk of endocrine impairment and more pronounced depression. The research corroborates other studies linking depression to childhood trauma.

[For more information](#)

### **Local News**

#### **Legislature Considers Giving Birth Parents "Second Chance"**

Proposed legislature is under consideration by the Minnesota Legislature to allow children removed from birth family to reunite in some cases if adoption proceedings have not started. The law would not apply to parents who have abused their children, and it would be considered only in cases where the birth parents and children have been separated at least two years.

[For more information](#)

### **Inside MARN**

#### **MARN Director Receives Vilardi Humanitarian Award**

At the American Adoption Congress (AAC) Orlando conference Mary Martin Mason received the 2011 Vilardi Humanitarian Award on April 18. The award is named for Emma May Vilardi, an AAC founder who in 1975 began the International Soundex Reunion Registry, Inc. (ISRR) as a free mutual consent registry serving adoptees, foster children and others separated from birth family. Mason who is the Executive Director of Minnesota Adoption Resource Network is stepping down after six years serving as AAC Legislative Chair. To commemorate the presentation, documentary producer Jean Strauss made a short movie recounting Mason's efforts to support adoptee access to their original birth records.



(Mary Martin Mason, Executive Director of MARN receives Vilardi Humanitarian Award)

### Soccer Celebrity Donates Camp Experience to Youth

Thanks to the generosity of U.S. World Cup Soccer star, Tony Sanneh, 14-year-old Yosief will attend soccer camp this summer.

Sanneh has been organizing soccer camps for boys and girls, ages 10 to 19, since 2009. The camps provide an environment where players of all levels can learn about the game and improve their skills. Sanneh has assembled a staff of local and national coaches to guide players based on this experience and methods. The international soccer star says, "I understand the importance of shaping the development of young men and women beyond the field." His foundation sends him on humanitarian missions where in Haiti, Greece and Pakistan he assembles youth who have experienced war and disaster.

When Sanneh donated a full week of soccer camp at a MARN gala silent auction, MARN board member Sara Reisdorf held the winning bid, stipulating that it go to a Minnesota youth awaiting adoption. Yosief was selected among dozens of participants due to his love for the game. Yosief says, "I've been playing soccer ever since I came out of my mom's stomach. And I am most excited about being able to play soccer both day and night."

For more information about The Sanneh Foundation, visit [www.thesannehfoundation.org](http://www.thesannehfoundation.org)

### Mothers Remembered During Adoptee Author Event

On Tuesday, May 3, **Adoptees Have Answers** hosted a *Mother's Day Adoptee Author Reading and Open Mic Event* with readings by several Minnesota authors, all adoptees. The event was emceed by Kate St. Vincent Vogl who shared excerpts from her memoir, *Lost and Found: A Memoir of Mothers*. The evening also included author Deborah Jiang Stein who read selections from her short stories and poet Jennifer Kwon Dobbs who read from her published book of poetry, *Paper Pavillion*. The authors spoke about the complexity of having two mothers, the mother who gave them life and the mother who raised them. Vogl says, "Our stories are much more than about adoption, more than one story of losing a mother and gaining another. It's a story about finding strength after loss." The evening concluded as several members from the community and AHA Advisory Group shared written work inspired by their adoption stories. For more information about AHA events, please visit <http://www.aha.mn>

[/aha-events](#)

### Adoptees Are Changing the Discourse on Adoption

Thursday, May 19; 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

Adoptees are challenging and changing the discourse on adoption in the United States and advocating for policy and adoption practice change. Adoptees are also growing in the academic and research arenas as well. On Thursday, May 19, **Adoptees Have Answers (AHA)** will offer the webinar, *Activists, Authors and Academics: Adoptees Changing the Discourse on Adoption* with Jae Ran Kim. Kim will be discussing the history of adoptee activism in the U.S. and around the world. Included will be how memoirists, poets and artists have changed the adoptee narrative; how adoptee researchers and clinicians are challenging research and clinical practice on adoptees and how technologies such as internet discussion boards, blogging, Twitter and Facebook are connecting adoptees to each other.

#### Fee

\$10 webinar only; \$20 webinar & CD  
(CDs sold separately)

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

### MN ADOPT & Adoptees Have Answer (AHA) Webinars Available on CD



All MN ADOPT and Adoptees Have Answers (AHA) 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.

#### Price

\$15.00 per CD  
CD Collections are now available online!  
(Prices include tax & shipping)

For presentations hosted by **MN ADOPT**, please visit  
<http://www.mnadopt.org/webinars.php>

For presentations hosted by **Adoptees Have Answers**, please visit  
<http://www.mnadopt.org/ahashop.php>

## \*400 Will Move to ZERO in MN 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 less than 400. While this shows progress our target is ZERO waiting children.

## Zero Kids Waiting

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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 donation 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](#).

## Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

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