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# Zero Kids Waiting

Minnesota Adoption Resource Network

March 2010 - Volume 3, Issue 22

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## Welcome!

**Zero Kids Waiting** is the monthly e-newsletter 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.

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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

### Frankie, Nervous and Curious About Finding Family



When thinking about finding an adoptive family, Frankie, age 13, admits to being nervous, scared, excited and curious. He says, "I really need a family that will support me even when I am having bad days. A mom and dad would be great, but I would also be okay with a single mom or single dad."

Siblings too would appeal to Frankie, especially if they would be older and willing to spend time with him. Rural or urban areas both appeal to Frankie who says, "I think I would be okay living most anywhere," adding humorously, "France would be awesome because I would love to see the Eiffel Tower some day."

Frankie gives a thumbnail sketch of himself that includes favorites of cheese pizza and macaroni and cheese, entertainment preferences of "Johnny Test, a cartoon that makes me laugh," and his preferred pastime being playing outdoors with the hope of someday being on a football or soccer team. "I'm a nice kid," says Frankie, "and I'm working really hard to keep moving forward in my life."

For more information about adopting Frankie, please contact Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, Bambi Holloway at 320-520-0862 or bholloway@pathinc.org or Sarah Hill, Wilkin County Social Worker at 218-643-8013.

## Feature

### **New Program: Adoptees Have Answers (AHA)**

March 2010

On April 1, 2010, Minnesota Adoption Resource Network will launch a new program, Adoptees Have Answers -- AHA, contracted by the Department of Human Services. AHA will provide a wide variety of opportunities for adoptees to be the adoption 'experts' in an adoptee-to-adoptee environment.

Based on current research, AHA's mission is to promote connections among adopted individuals of all ethnicities and adoption types while maximizing their lifelong well-being. In fulfillment of this mission, AHA installed an all-adoptee staff and assembled an advisory group of adoptees that have made it their life work to provide services to adopted individuals.

In addition, AHA will offer a virtual community of discussion boards, blogs and networking opportunities, a 12-part webinar series featuring adoptee-centric presenters, support groups and events that will showcase Minnesota's adoption history.

For more information about the AHA program, please contact Program Coordinator, Julia Decker at 612-746-5133 or jdecker@mnadopt.org.

### **Scholarships Available for Youth Formerly in Foster Care**

March 2010

Casey Family Scholars Program is accepting applicants through the [Orphan Foundation of America](#) (OFA) until March 31, 2010 for support to college students who were in foster care. Funding is anticipated for undergraduate and graduate school awards for the 2010-2011 academic year. Students of color are encouraged to apply. Applicants must have been in foster care for one consecutive year at the time of their 18th birthday or have been adopted or taken into legal guardianship after their 16th birthday.

[For more information](#)

The Fostering of Future Scholarship, sponsored by [Children's Action Network](#) and the [Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption](#), is a national scholarship program that provides financial aid for youth who were adopted from foster care as they pursue a college, vocational, or technical education. The deadline for submitting this application is April 20, 2010.

[For more information](#)

## World / National News

### Argentine Man Learns Identity

February 2010

Abel Madariaga of Argentina heaved a sigh of relief as he hugged his son, Francisco Madariaga Quintela, age 32, for the first time. In 1977, Madariaga's pregnant wife was kidnapped by Argentine security and imprisoned in one of Argentina's largest and most notorious torture centers. Surviving prisoners reported that a newborn was taken from her the day after she gave birth and disappeared shortly thereafter. Madariaga later returned to Argentina and joined the group [The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo](#), a rights group that believes about 400 children were kidnapped between 1976-1983. Madariaga became the first male member making it his life's cause to find the kidnapped children while never giving up hope of one day finding his son.

[For more information](#)

### Britain's Prime Minister Offers Public Apology

February 2010

Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown offered a "full and unconditional" apology on "behalf of the whole nation" for the tens of thousands of British children who were exiled overseas to Commonwealth countries up until the late 1960s. Some children were lied to and told they had been orphaned, then suffered physical and sexual abuse in orphanages and labor farms. Names and birth dates were falsified, making it impossible for families to reunite. Today, a Family Restoration Fund will help survivors trace lost relatives and reunite those separated and sent overseas. Brown calls the act "shameful" and though it would never happen today feels the responsibility to look back on history and acknowledge past mistakes and say "we are sorry."

[For more information](#)

### **Olympic Skater Adopted as Infant**

March 2010

Florent Amodio represented France in the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada in the men's ice skating competition. Amodio was born in Brazil and abandoned in the streets as an infant. He was later adopted by a French family and raised in France. Amodio began skating at the age of 4 when his parents brought him to an open skate. At the age of 12, he was diagnosed with Osgood-Schlatter disease which left him unable to skate for 18 months. Amodio later returned to competition in 2004 and went on to win the 2010 French National Open at the age of 20.

[For more information](#)

### **Senator Seeks to Expedite Pending Haitian Adoptions**

February 2010

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar met with Haitian and U.S. officials in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti last month, seeking to expedite adoptions that are still pending for American families. Klobuchar had plans to talk with Minnesota families who are waiting for their adoptions to finalize and noted that 24 Haitian children have already been united with their adoption families in Minnesota since the earthquake on January 12. The purpose of her recent visit was to urge "humanitarian parole" allowing Haitian children already in the adoption process to come to the U.S. on an expedited basis to join their new families.

[For more information](#)

### **Parents Help Children Develop Bicultural Identities**

February 2010

A recent Chinese New Year's Celebration in Chicago included many adoptive parents participating with their daughters adopted from China. A *Chicago Tribune* article, February 14, described how today's parents are using such occasions to educate their children's playmates about Chinese cultures as a preemptive strike against teasing. Research and practice reveal that beyond a nod to the child's cultural origins, adoptive parents need deeper and blunt conversations about differences that are often not celebrated and can lead to prejudice. Parents need to initiate discussions about bicultural identity and prejudice that adoptees encounter.

[For more information](#)

To learn more about developing biculture identities check out MN ADOPT's upcoming webinar, "Great Ideas for Increasing Biculturalism in Transracial Families" with Robert O'Connor on Friday, March 26, scroll down to *Inside MARN* and see "Upcoming Events" for more information.

## Arizona Bill Favors Married Couples

February 2010

Arizona House Bill 2148 states children do better in a home with a mother and father and gives preference to married couples over an unmarried person when considering adoption cases. The bill replaces existing practice that made the "best interest of the child" the primary factor when considering adoption. Instead the bill requires any agency that contracts with the state to give "primary consideration to placing children with married couples." Kris Jacober, president of Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents is afraid the bill will negatively affect the number of single persons who consider adoption. Jacober, an adoptive mom says, "To me, the most important thing in an adoption is commitment to that child."

[For more information](#)

## Court Upholds Child's Right to Two Fathers on Birth Certificate

March 2010

In a landmark case, a federal appeals court has ordered the state of Louisiana to issue an amended birth certificate for a child that contains the names of two fathers. Adoptive parents, Oren Adar and Mickey Ray Smith, a gay couple who now live in San Diego, were living in Connecticut when they obtained an emergency adoption decree in New York state court to adopt the baby who was born in Shreveport. In 2005, the Louisiana Office of Pubic Health and Vital Records refused to issue an amended birth certificate, saying Louisiana forbade such adoptions. Louisiana was ordered by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals to list both adoptive parents' names on the birth certificate after Adar and Smith sued the state, claiming their son had been denied an accurate birth certificate which in turn threatened the boy's enrollment in a health care plan.

## Psychiatric Diagnoses Undergoes Changes

March 2010

[The American Psychiatric Association](#) recently posted a draft of the DSM-V, considered to be "the bible" for psychiatrists as well as the basis for everything from insurance and disability determinations to societal definitions of normalcy. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, fifth edition, can be viewed on [www.dsm5.org](http://www.dsm5.org) where opinions can be posted through April 20, 2010. Among the changes are:

- Re-categorizing learning disorders that would eliminate Asperger's Disorder that would be a single diagnostic Autism Spectrum Disorder category
- Eliminating "substance abuse" and "substance dependence" as disorders, to be replaced with a single "addiction and related disorders" category
- Offering a new assessment tool for suicide risk
- Creation of new childhood disorder, temper dysregulation with dysphoria (TDD)

The DSM-V is scheduled for publication in 2012 resulting from 13 years' worth of literature reviews, independent research, and input from mental health professionals organized by the American

Psychiatric Association.

### **Genes Factor in Adoptee Suicide**

March 2010

On March 1, suicide of singer and star Marie Osmond's adopted son, Michael, 18, evoked a number of blogs and media articles about a possible connection between adoption and suicide. While the great majority of adopted persons do not attempt suicide, for those that do, researchers believe a genetic component may contribute to adoptee suicides.

Studies of adopted adults suggest that impulsively, even more than depression, may be an inherited aspect that mediates suicidal behavior. A study by Schulsinger of Danish adoptees found that the rate of suicide in the biological relatives of adoptees who have completed suicide was six-fold higher than the rate in the biological relatives of living adoptees. Regardless of adoptive status, strong connections with family decrease the likelihood of suicide attempts and represent a protective deterrent for all adolescents.

[For more information](#)

### **Faces of America Explores Roots on PBS**

March 2010

Twelve famous Americans learn of their genealogical origins on the new PBS series *Faces of America* with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The Harvard scholar uses the latest tools of genealogy and genetics to explore family histories of comedian Stephen Colbert, novelist Louise Erdrich, Jordan's Queen Noir, musician Yo Yo Mai, actress Meryl Streep and figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi. As to the importance of reconnecting with one's ancestry, Meryl Streep said, "We carry these lives around us. We retain them in our corporate selves." Author Erdrich explained her interest in her German and Chippewa heritage that she has traced back 200 years saying, "We seek connections to know who we are."

[For more information](#)

A similar series called *Who Do You Think You Are?* began on Friday, March 5 on NBC. Among the stars learning of their ancestry in the opening show were Sarah Jessica Parker, Emmitt Smith, Lisa Kudrow, Matthew Broderick, Brooke Shields, Susan Sarandon and Spike Lee.

[For more information](#)

## **Research**

### **Shining Light on Declining Numbers in Foster Care**

March 2010

While statistics just released by the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services show a decline of children in foster care,

some are questioning the decrease from 132,000 to 123,000 between 2008 and 2009. A predicted increase in foster care numbers failed to accompany the recession although poverty is cited as a major reason for children entering foster care.

In response to forced budget reductions, some counties around the country have revamped child protection categories so only the most egregious abuse results in interventions. Workers report that neglect cases may be under- or not reported, and cutbacks have forced a reduction in staff and services that investigate and intervene in such cases. While the numbers reported have declined, some believe that severe cuts at the entry level where children enter under a state's guardianship may account for the lower numbers.

[View statistics](#)

### Trauma May Imprint DNA

New research indicates that childhood trauma may impact genes that were inherited at conception. Researchers from McGill University in Quebec studied the brains of suicide victims and found DNA modifications in those who had been abused as children. Lead scientist in the study, Patrick McGowan, says, "The idea that abuse changes how genes function opens a new window for behavioral and drug therapy."

[For more information](#)

### Study Shows Decline in Child Abuse

The [Administration for Children and Families](#) (ACF) Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE) recently released the Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect. The study includes national data on child maltreatment from 2005-2006. Compared to previous data, results show a slight decrease in child abuse, including physical and sexual abuse. However an increase was found in emotional neglect, which may be partially related to agencies' increased efforts on domestic violence and substance abuse, specific types of emotional neglect. The study is conducted approximately every decade in fulfillment of requirements found in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

[For more information](#)

## Inside MARN

### MN ADOPT Trainings Offered by MARN

MN ADOPT provides adoption-competent trainings for professionals, educators and families. For more information or to see a full list of programs visit [www.mnadopt.org/training](http://www.mnadopt.org/training) or call 866-303-6276.

To view private and county adoption orientation meetings, please [click here](#) to view the calendar.

## Upcoming Events

### **Friday, March 26, 2010**

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

#### **WEBINAR: "Great Ideas for Increasing Biculturalism in Transracial Families** with Robert O'Connor, MSW

Join us for this one-hour presentation as Robert O'Connor shares practical ideas on how to live a more diverse and bicultural life with your children, both in the home and in the community. "Culture is not what you do, it is how you live." [View flyer](#)

\$20.00 per person

[REGISTER NOW](#)

To learn how you can own a CD collection of our webinar presentation(s), [click here](#) to view more details.

## Free Adoptee Support Group

Adoptees MN is a support group for adult adoptees (18 years of age or older), led by adoptees that will meet each 2nd Saturday of the month from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Loring Park Office Building at 430 Oak Grove Street Minneapolis, MN 55403 in the Community Room, Suite #207.

For more information, please email [adopteesmn@gmail.com](mailto:adopteesmn@gmail.com) or call Carrie at 651-457-2252 or Penny at 612-616-3139.

## 650 Will Move to ZERO in Minnesota if...

- Each Metro church 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!)

## Zero Kids Waiting





**PSA Airs on You Tube**

[Watch Here](#)



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Waiting.

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