Adoption Journeys Newsletter

A seasonal update of our programming for adoptive families living in Western Massachusetts

Dear Parents,

We have been alongside you this year, through the pandemic and through the extremely visible national (and local) manifestations of racism. The events of this week are yet more signs of the power of white supremacy and racism. We are committed to anti-racist awareness, stance and work. We know that these public episodes can shake the sense of safety and security we strive to maintain in ourselves and our families. In the service of care for ourselves, our families, our children, our community and our nation, here are some resources that may be helpful to draw on at this time. We are also here, as always, for a phone call or a Zoom session to offer support as we move through these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Nancy

Nancy Solow, LICSW, Regional Manager

*Webinar on Nurturing Joy and Resilience in young Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) Children, and many many other resources in the EmbraceRace website: https://www.embracerace.org

*Anti-racist parenting during COVID https://www.yesmagazine.org

*Anti Racist Parent Dialogues from The Gordon School https://www.gordonschool.org

Adoption Journeys Parents!
Come cook with us at our Recipe for Wellness Event Friday, January 29th, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Adoption Journeys is hosting an evening with Dayna Altman, author of the Bake It Till You Make It cookbook. Dayna combines a fun, interactive baking-with-you demonstration with personal storytelling. The recipe becomes a chance to reflect on mental health. Dayna uses her story to help engage others in better understanding the experience of mental health challenges and the journey towards wellness and resilience.

The event comes with a home delivery of all the ingredients as well as a copy of Bake It Til You Make It.

Dayna Altman, MPH is a bold and authentic mental health entrepreneur, author and public health professional based in Boston MA. She is a professional speaker, documentary filmmaker, and author of two books using food to create a palatable and accessible way for all to approach mental health.

TO REGISTER: Email Lisa Mintz at lmintz@cfservices.org or call the Adoption Journeys office. The last day to register is Monday, January 18th.
**Winter Story-Reading Series**

Join us for three winter Sunday evenings and get truly inspired by story time!

Author, and children’s book expert, Megan Lambert, and illustrator Nicole Tadgell, will share expertise in story-reading with young children and parents.

Sign up for this delightful 3-part online event. (Pre-registration required.)

Feb. 7th, Reading of *Real Sisters Pretend* by the author and illustrator! 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Feb. 21st, Parent Program: the *Whole Book Approach* to reading with children: 4:30-6:00 p.m.
March 7th, Reading of *Alma and How She Got Her Name*: 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Please note that the story-reading sessions are intended for parents and children, while the Parent Program on Feb. 21st is a special session designed just for parents to learn a new way to get your kids talking about what they’re thinking!

*This unique series will include delivery of your own copies of these two very special books:*

Megan Dowd Lambert’s picture book, *Real Sisters Pretend*, illustrated by Nicole Tadgell, was inspired by a loving conversation about adoption between two of her daughters after a stranger questioned whether they were “real sisters.”

*Alma and How She Got Her Name*, by Juana Martinez-Neal, introduces how names can be an important part of our identities. We see that considering the origin of names is a good way to begin conversations about our own histories. Alma asks how each of us receives a name, and how it connects to who she is. What is the story of your name?

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**Winter Story-Reading Series Registration — Feb. 7th, 21st, & March 7th**

Please return with payment by February 1st, and mail to PO Box 60006, Florence, MA 01062

Names of adults and youth attending: ____________________________________________________________

Please send $10 per family, and make check payable to Child & Family Services Inc.

Enclosed is a check for $___________ email confirmation: ________________________________

Mailing address for books: ________________________________________________________________

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Megan Dowd Lambert, an inspiring local children’s book author, reviewer and educator will share her passion for the power of literature. She is an adoptive parent in a multiracial family and enjoys bringing these pieces of her identity to her work. The parent session will be an interactive presentation on engaging children using Megan’s *Whole Book Approach*, a story time model created in association with The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art. The central goal in this approach is to bring children’s ideas and questions to the center of shared reading, while celebrating the picture book as a visual art form. We are excited to have her join us, and we invite you to learn more at megandowdlambert.com/about/ or go HERE.
Let’s get outside and go Snow Tubing!
Bousquet Mountain Family Snow Day
Thursday, February 18th, 1:00-3:00 pm, and
Saturday, February 27th, 1:00-3:00 pm
Just $5 per family member. Register by January 29th.
Join us for one or BOTH days!

Plan your family snow day and join us in the Berkshires at Bousquet Mountain for an afternoon of snow tubing. Enjoy the carpet lift to help you up the mountain and two hours of tubing for your whole family. Note that you must be at least 42” tall to participate (for safety reasons) and only one person per tube. Even if there is no snow in your backyard, they will have it at Bousquet Mountain!

We must receive your registration by Friday January 29th to hold your spot and space is limited. Four lanes for snow tubes will be reserved just for Adoption Journeys families!

To learn more about Bousquet Mountain: www.bousquetmountain.com, 101 Dan Fox Dr., Pittsfield.

Per local Covid-19 safety guidelines, participants will all be screened for symptoms, travel, or recent exposures before entry to the event. Masks and social distancing will be required at all times. There will be no indoor services at the lodge. Outdoor concessions and outdoor restrooms will be available.

Family Snow Day at Bousquet Mountain — Snow Tubing Registration

Please fill out and return this registration with payment by mail to
Adoption Journeys, PO Box 60006, Florence, MA 01062
We must receive your registration by Friday, January 29th.

Please check which date(s) you will attend. (Attending both? Send $10/pp.)
___We will attend on Thursday, Feb 18th 1-3 pm. (school vacation week)
___We will attend on Saturday, Feb 27th, 1-3 pm

| Names of adults attending: ____________________________________________ |
| Names and ages of youth attending: ____________________________________ |
|____________________________________________________________________|

Please send $5 per family member per day, and make check out to Child & Family Services Inc.
Enclosed is a check for $________________ Best daytime phone: __________________________
Total # of family members attending: __________
Adoption Journeys Support Groups

All support groups will continue to meet online at this time.

If you are interested in participating in any of our programming below, please email us to register and to receive reminders and event links.

Groups for Parents

Adoption Journeys Online Parent Group: Open Parent Support Group for parents raising children of any age. Find laughter, connection and support. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Starts January 27th. We sometimes invite guest speakers for parenting-related presentations. Contact Maya to sign up: mrcolt@cfservices.org.

Single Parent Group — Connection and support just for adoptive parents who are parenting solo. This group welcomes single caregivers parenting children of any age. Meets alternating Tuesday evenings from 8:00-9:00 p.m., starting January 12th. Join anytime. Please email Lisa to register: lmintz@cfservices.org.

Transracial Parent Group — Open to all adoptive parents in transracial families. This group starts in February and meets on the 1st and 3rd Friday mornings of each month, 8:30-10:00 a.m. Please email Maya to register: mrcolt@cfservices.org.

Adoptive Parents of Global Majority Support Group — Open to any adoptive parent identifying as a person of color, this ongoing statewide group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings of the month from 7:30-9:00 p.m. Please contact Maya for more info or to register: mrcolt@cfservices.org.

Groups for Youth

Youth Adoption Group—An online activity group designed for youth ages 10-12 with fun games, crafts and relaxed discussions about identity, family and adoption. Contact Micki for more details and to register for the next series which starts February 10th and runs on alternate Wednesdays. Pre-registration required. Space is limited. Email Micki by Feb. 1st: mmcinnis@cfservices.org.

Creative Online Teen Project — Teens are invited to get together to create a book in their own voices, and find ways to express what it’s like to be a teen and to be adopted. See page 7 of newsletter for more info. March/April dates TBD. Contact Micki to let us know you are interested or to sign up mcinnis@cfservices.org.

We welcome your participation in our groups especially during this time of physical separation. Please note that we require pre-registration with our program in order to attend, and abide by the same confidentiality guidelines to assure privacy and safety. We hope you can join us.
Adoption Journeys is and remains a program that is anti-racist. Among our ongoing efforts to combat racism, we are offering the following programs this winter and spring.

Adoptive Parents of Global Majority (PGM) Support Group

**A state-wide online group: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of the month 7:30-9:00 p.m.**

We hope you can join us in this safe space of telling your stories, speaking your truths, and making your voices heard. There’s no doubt that this year has been extremely challenging, and we know as parents of color, you have the unique added layer of combating your own experiences while being present for your children. This support group aims to offer insights into the difficulties and rewards for families built by adoption and led by parents of color.

Join these meetings to build connection, community and network. We hope this support group will be a place where we can offer encouragement and brainstorm solutions that relieve feelings of chaos and loneliness.

To attend this group, please RSVP to Maya at mrcolt@cfservices.org

Facilitated by:
Maya Rege-Colt, LICSW;
Susan Botzko, BS; and
Taisha Alexis, MPH

Transracial Parent Support Group

**Meets Friday mornings 8:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m.**
**Starts February 5th, and continues on 1st and 3rd Fridays.**

When and how do we talk to our children about race & racism? How does white privilege affect my relationship with my child? What to do with the pain of raising a child of color at a time of racial divisions and violence? Let’s face these complex issues together and celebrate the strength of our families! This group is open to all parents in transracial families.

To participate please email Maya: mrcolt@cfservices.org.

Raising Children in Transracial Adoptive Families

**A 2-part parent meeting: Mondays Jan. 25th and Feb. 8th, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

You are invited to join us for a 2-part online meeting to connect with other parents in transracial families. We will explore: how the complexities and pain of race and racism in society affects our families; how we foster resilience and positive identity in raising our adopted children of color; and how opening up the conversations about racism for ourselves supports our children and family.

For continuity, you are strongly encouraged to join both dates, if you can! Contact Maya with questions or to register: mrcolt@cfservices.org.
You are invited!
Adult Adoptee Panel & Discussions
One for parents, and one for teens

Adoption Journeys is hosting two online Adult Adoptee Panel & Discussion events in February: once for parents and once for teens. On each of the February dates below, our panel of 4 adult adoptees will share their histories, experiences of adoption, and how that changed in adolescence and adulthood. This will include insights into navigating adulthood with strength and resilience.

Each presentation will be followed by a facilitated Q & A discussion with the panel.

**Save these dates!**

**Thursday, February 11th from 7:00-9:00 p.m.**
A panel and discussion just for parents

**Thursday, February 25th from 7:00-9:00 p.m.**
A panel and discussion just for teens (age 13-19)

Families are encouraged to sign up for both events.

Register by emailing mmcinnis@cfservices.org by Friday, February 5th.

Let us know if you will plan to join us!
Save the Date for a Family Painting Event

Sunday, March 21st 🎨

Yup, we are going to have fun painting together, online! An event designed for all ages.

We will deliver all the materials for a super-fun guided painting project for the whole family. Let’s get a little messy together with a unique family hand-print project!

If you already know you are interested, please let us know by emailing Lisa at lmintz@cfservices.org.

Stay tuned for more details this winter.

Upcoming Creative Teen Project

Calling All Teens! Get together with other teens and create a book with your voices, and raise awareness about adoption, identity, and being a teen today.

The project will be led by two adult adoptees- our staff member Micki McInnis and her male co-leader, Nilson Maloney. Micki and Nilson have much combined experience in working with youth. We intend this project to be a fun way to connect with others, share experiences of being teens and being adopted, and create an cool finished project. It will involve a commitment of 3-4 virtual meetings during March and April to co-create the book’s content and design. It will then be printed and bound and everyone will get copies! More information coming soon.

If you are interested in this project, please let us know by contacting Micki McInnis directly at mcinnis@cfservices.org, and keep your eye out for our upcoming flyer.
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We continue to provide a full range of parent support and resources for adoptive families. Stay connected and join us for an upcoming event this winter.

® Baking for Wellness Event
® Story-Reading Series for young families
® Adult adoptee panel and discussion
® Snow Tubing Family Snow Days in the Berkshires
® Parent Support Groups
® Youth Activity Group
® Book-making group project for teens