

Crossroads of America Adoption Conference

Session Descriptions



Title	Instructor(s)	Description
Dental Issues in Adoption	<u>Luz-Elena Valencia, DDS</u>	Dental care issues are vital for internationally adopted children; as such children often have higher rates of dental problems. Poor prenatal care, untreated cavities, inadequate supply of fluoride and minerals, and malnutrition all contribute to these difficulties. In addition to dental concerns as they relate to adopted children, Dr. Valencia will also discuss dental growth as a means of determining a child's age. Some sending countries for international adoption lack the resources to accurately document birth dates; a dental evaluation may assist parents in determining a more accurate age.
Home Study Round Table	Panel <u>Vicki Allen</u> , of Protect Our Children <u>Brooke Mathis, BSW</u> of Miriam Project <u>Kathy G. Slaughter, LCSW</u> of MLJ Adoptions, Inc.	A panel of Home Study Professionals will discuss the home study process for both domestic and international adoption. This will be an open discussion on the topic of adoption preparation, home visits, and home study assessments. Our panel will offer tips for the adoption professional and prospective adoptive parent.
Working Therapeutically with Adoptive Families	<u>Brooke Randolph, LMHC</u>	Families that adopt face issues and variables uncommon to the general population, and yet, while adoption is a special factor to consider, it is not the only factor. Treatment professionals can unintentionally increase the intensity of the situation if unfamiliar with the factors impacting adoptive families. Brooke will discuss what you need to know, how to approach working with adoptive families, and when to make a referral.
International Adoption 101	<u>Michele L. Jackson, JD</u>	International adoption is a complex process that involves four areas of law: state, federal, foreign and international. Michele will walk you through the entire adoption process giving you an overview of how an orphaned child in a foreign country becomes part of a family in the United States. She will discuss the process from start to finish, from your home study to post-placement.
Social Media Marketing for the Adoption Professional	<u>Erik Deckers</u> , Social Media Consultant and adoptive father	How do you ethically and efficiently market your skills and discuss adoption using blogs, Facebook, LinkedIN, twitter, and web 2.0? Directed toward the adoption professional, expert author and adoptive father Erik Deckers, will outline the basics and help you feel more comfortable in the world wide web.
Managing the Stress of the Adoption Process & Why It Is Essential to Your Children	<u>Bill Frederick, LCSW</u> , Author of children's books	Research has shown that adoptive parents' ability to manage stress is correlated with the psychosocial adjustment to the children they adopt. How well you deal with stress is directly related to how well your children will deal with adoption. This session will include practical tips, resources, and basic technique instruction to help you better manages stress of all kinds, including the adoption process.
Nutrition & Adoption	<u>Bernie Salazar, MA</u> , Author and At-home winner of the Biggest Loser, Season 5	Nutrition or malnutrition can impact your child both before and after the adoption, even impacting attachment and behavioral issues. Practical and healthy tips from children's health advocate, Bernie Salazar on how food can make a difference to your child.

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Creating an Orphan Care/ Adoption Ministry	<u>Pastor Mary Ann Randolph, M.Div.</u>	Tips, ideas, and encouragement on how to get an orphan care/adoption ministry started at your church, what can be included in the ministry, and funding ideas for pastors, lay leaders, and adoption advocates ready to make a difference.
Legal Risks for the Adoption Professional	<u>Michele L. Jackson, JD</u>	As an adoption attorney for twelve (12) years, Executive Director of MLJ Adoptions, Inc. and Founder of The Fatherless Foundation, Inc. Ms. Jackson has acquired a wealth of knowledge and experience in understanding and mitigating the legal risks for adoption professionals. She will provide an overview of the risks involved and provide information on how best to mitigate these risks.
Techniques to Strengthen Attachment	<u>Judy M. Miller, MA</u> , author and adoptive mother	Easy suggestions you can work into your daily interactions with your children to build stronger relationships that are more deeply attached.
Networking and the Adoption Professional	<u>Hazel M. Walker</u> , Author, Speaker, Trainer, and birth grandmother	Successful networking is much more than handing out your business card. Learn how contacts, acquaintances, and relationships differ, and how best to market your skills to potential clients, employers, and partners.
Comparing and Contrasting Hague vs. Non-Hague Adoptions	<u>Nicole Skellenger, JD</u>	The Hague Convention has greatly impacted international adoption on a broad scale for both adoption agencies and adoptive parents. Nicole will address the Hague requirements for agencies as well as the pros and cons of adopting from a Hague Country verses a non-Hague Country.
Adoption in Indiana – A Court’s Perspective	<u>Representatives of Marion County Court</u>	Member of the Marion County Probate Court will discuss the adoption process according to the laws of the State of Indiana for domestic adoption, international adoption , and foster care.
Non-profit Fundraising	<u>Fatima Johnson</u> , The Fatherless Foundation Coordinator	Ms. Johnson shares tips on raising funds for non-profit organizations committed to adoption and orphan care.
Medicine & Adoption	<u>Dr. Michele Zormeier</u>	Dr. Zormeier will discuss medical issues as they related to the adoptive child.
Affording Adoption Resources (optional)	<i>Panel of Adoption Grant Issuing Organizations</i> Led by Camie Schuiteman, adoptive mother and orphan advocate	A panel of individuals representing various grant issuing organizations discuss how best to raise funds for an adoption with grants and fundraising. The group will offer tips to make your grant application stand out, strategies for fundraising, and offer encouragement to parents looking to start the adoption process and those fundraising throughout the process.

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Emotional Communication and Children (optional)	Panel <u>Dr. Sheila Kozler,</u> <u>Kristin Kimberlin, MA</u>	Emotions...we all have them. Everything we do and everything we learn is shaped in some way by the way we feel. Feelings are a natural part of who we are. But how do children learn how to deal with sadness, anger or joy? Emotion Coaching is a research-based parenting tool designed to help children understand and manage their feelings. With this approach, children learn how emotions work and how to behave in healthy ways when feelings are strong. Learn the five steps of Emotion Coaching that strengthen parent-child relationships and provide children with skills that will help them be better prepared for the challenges life brings!
Home Study 101 for Adoptive Parents	<u>Kathy G. Slaughter, LCSW</u>	What is a home study? Watch our home study coordinators in this sketch demonstrate what a home study might look like and why you should not be intimidated to invite them into your home.
It's Not Just About the Adoptive Parents!	Panel of Birth Parents and Adoptees	Ask questions and gain the perspective of those from another side of adoption to increase appreciation and be better able to answer questions when needed.
Adoption as a Single Parent	<u>Shalimar Scott</u> , Adoptive Mother	Adopting as a single parent can pose unique issues both during the adoption process and after your child comes home. Ms. Scott has opened her heart and home to children both internationally and domestically as a single parent. Ms. Scott will discuss the difficulties she faced as a single adoptive mother and how she overcame those obstacles. She was selected by U.S. Rep. Mike Pence as one of 180 Congressional Angels in Adoption.
Special Needs & Older Child Adoption	Panel <u>Amy Moore and Lydia Tarr</u> , adoption professionals and adoptive mothers <u>Teresa Gee, MSW</u> , Children's Bureau	Older youth and children with special needs may require more attention or care once adopted. The panel will discuss the difficulties and joys of adopting an older child or a child with special needs both internationally and domestically.
Racism & My Child	<u>Judy M. Miller, MA</u> , author and adoptive mother	Understanding racism in light of history, stereotypes, current events, and more. Judy Miller, MA, will include tools, resources, personal stories, and lots of research in this important session for white parents of a non-white child to be prepared and to prepare your child to deal with racism.
Adoption Risks: Domestic and International	<u>Michele L. Jackson, JD</u>	There are risks involved in every type of adoption. Michele will discuss the risks associated with both international and domestic adoption.
Fathers in Adoption	Panel of Adoptive Fathers	Dads play an important role in adoption and adoptive parenting. Often dads connect more to the adoption process than to a pregnancy because they can be more directly involved. While some may fear that adoption is not "the same," these dads will ease your fears and share about adoption from their perspective.
Adoption v. Normal: Finding the Balance	<u>Judy M. Miller, MA</u> , Author and adoptive mother	When do you need to focus on adoption and how to? When do you need to just focus on being a normal family? Judy Miller, MA explains the importance of finding balance and following your children's lead to know what will be most helpful to them.

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Adoption from Bulgaria	<i>Representatives of VESTA</i>	VESTA is a non-governmental organization located in Bulgaria, accredited by the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Bulgaria in accordance with the Hague Convention. VESTA is committed to the finding permanent and loving home for the abandoned children in their country. VESTA will speak about the plight of orphans in their country, children available for adoption, and the adoption process from the country. This is a great opportunity for those adopting from Bulgaria, interested in adopting from Bulgaria, or looking to adopt from a Hague Country.
Family & Friends Session	<i>Panel</i>	Tips and tools to provide support to friends and family going through the adoption process and after they come home.
Balancing Profession & Family During and After Adoption	<u>Wayne DeVeydt, CPA</u> WellPoint CFO & adoptive father	The adoption process is incredible, but it can also be time consuming and stressful. With a career and children at home, balancing your priorities can become overwhelming. Mr. DeVeydt, CFO of WellPoint and father of five (two adopted from Democratic Republic of Congo) gives tips and ideas on how to balance it all.
Preparing Your Child's Lifebook	<u>Elizabeth Nelson</u>	Lifebooks are created to help adopted children to tell their own story, before and after the adoption. Lifebooks help children place adoption within the proper context of their total life experience. This class will help you understand the need for a Lifebook, learn the difference between scrap books and lifebooks, understand the importance of lifebooks as a lifelong process, and identify the major components of a lifebook.
Adoption and the School-age Child: Navigating School-based Services	<u>Bonnie Kulenkamp and Amy Schuler</u> , teachers and adoptive mothers	What your child's school needs to know and what they do not need to know. How to talk about adoption and adoption related issues with teachers, principals, caregivers, and others. Ideas on how assignments that can cause stress for children that are adopted can be adapted to include everyone. An insider's look at how to obtain special services for your child.
Sensory/Neurological Issues	<u>Candice Thompson, OT</u>	How to differentiate various disorders that can affect your kids, and an introduction to techniques that an Occupational Therapist may utilize to treat, including techniques that you can use at home.
HIV/AIDS & Adoption	<u>Carolyn Twietmeyer</u> , Founder & Director of Project HOPEFUL	Carolyn and her husband Kiel are parents to 13 children, six of whom were adopted from Ethiopia. One of their children is HIV+ and another is diagnosed with stage 4 AIDS. She is the Founder/Executive Director of Project HOPEFUL an organization dedicated to educating, encouraging, and enabling families and individuals to advocate for and adopt children with HIV/AIDS. Carolyn has been seen on the Today Show, CBS News, and People Magazine, among other national and international publications.
Afro-Caribbean Hair/Skin Care	<u>Uzuri Asad</u> , b.Fly Consulting	Discuss what natural hair is. Learn about natural vs. commercial products in children's hair care, including simple home hair recipes and product suggestions for both natural and commercial products suggestions for children).

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Parenting & Adoption	<u>Brooke Randolph, LMHC</u>	Parenting is the most difficult, most important job you will ever have, and it can be even more so when you adopt a child. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: information about the impact on a child of leaving familiar ties and surroundings, as appropriate to the expected age of the child; information on the long-term implications for a family that has become multicultural through inter-country adoption.
Affording Adoption	Camie Schuiteman, adoptive mother & orphan advocate	Seminar addressing the costs of adoption and the opportunities for funding that exist, including grants, loans, tax credits, HR benefits, fund-raising, and more. Led by our Financial Resource Coordinator who raised more than \$50,000 for her own adoption.