



Adoption Connections

Connecting adoptive families across central and downstate Illinois

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3

WINTER, 2013

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Adoption Tax Credit
- Safety Concerns Surrounding Baby's Sleeping Routine.

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Happy New Year

The New Year began in a very positive way for adoptive parents. As many of you know the Adoption Tax Credit was scheduled to end December 30, 2012. However, at the eleventh hour, Congress passed the American Taxpayer Relief Act which included the Adoption Tax Credit. With the President's signature it will become law and will be permanently a part of the IRS Tax Code. This is good news to many of our adoptive families who worried that the credit would sunset before they could take advantage of it's relief.

A new feature of the credit is that it is not refundable which means parents who do not meet the income guidelines for the credit, will not be able to receive the full credit or benefit. The credit is set at \$10,000.00 plus adjustments for inflation, which should bring it near the original amount of \$12, 650.00. Families with incomes over \$150,000.00 will see a reduced credit.

As always, we advise our adoptive parents to talk with their tax accountant to understand exactly how they will be impacted by the credit.



Baby Safety Issues Cause Concern

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services announced in early January that child deaths caused by neglect or abuse skyrocketed in 2012 with suffocation by neglect being the leading cause. DCFS notes most deaths occurred when parents, ignoring the advice of American Academy of Pediatrics and safety experts, slept with a newborn or infant in their bed, rolling over and smothering the child during the night. In other cases, parents ignored safety warnings and allowed a newborn or infant to sleep with a blanket, on an adult mattress or couch or on their stomach suffocating the child.

The American SIDS Institute suggests the following to help reduce the safety risk to newborns and infants:

1. Place infants to sleep on their backs, even though they may sleep more soundly on their stomachs.

2. Place infants to sleep in a baby bed with a firm mattress. There should be nothing in the bed but the baby - no covers, no pillows, no bumper pads, no positioning devices and no toys.

3. Keep your baby's crib in the parents' room until the infant is at least 6 months of age. Studies clearly show that infants are safest when their beds are close to their caregivers.

4. Do not place your baby to sleep in an adult bed. Typical adult beds are not safe for babies. Do not fall asleep with your baby on a couch or in a chair.

5. Do not over-clothe the infant for sleeping. Just use enough clothes to keep the baby warm without having to use cover. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you. Overheating an infant may increase the risk for SIDS.

6. Avoid exposing the infant to tobacco smoke. Don't have your infant in the same house or car with someone who is smoking. The

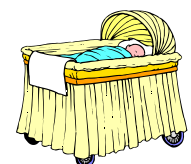
greater the exposure to tobacco smoke, the greater the risk of SIDS.

7. Avoid exposing the infant to people with respiratory infections. Avoid crowds. Carefully clean anything that comes in contact with the baby. Have people wash their hands before holding or playing with your baby.

9. Offer your baby a pacifier. Some studies have shown a lower rate of SIDS among babies who use pacifiers.

10. If your baby has periods of not breathing, going limp or turning blue, tell your pediatrician at once.

For more information on how to keep your newborn or infant safe, talk to your doctor, or visit the American SIDS Institute website.



CYFS Uses Social Media To Spread the Word

When we talk about how we are all responsible for creating and increasing the adoption sense in our local communities, one thing we know cannot be ignored is the impact social media has on our world.

For that very reason, The Center for Youth and Family Solutions has been busy working on ways to utilize social media venues such as Facebook and our website to help increase community awareness of our programs.

Our newly designed website went live in January and already has proven to be a good resource for birth and adoptive parents wanting to learn more about the agency and our programs. The website provides information on each of the CYFS programs as well as upcoming events, a Blog and more. Visit our website at www.cyfsolutions.org.

Our Facebook page has over 500 "likes". Similar to our event calendar on our website, Facebook is a good place to go to learn more about upcoming events and trainings.

We cannot spread the word on our own! We need your help! Visit our Facebook page and "Like" our page then "Share" it with your family and friends. In this way, you can help spread positive and accurate information about adoption and make a difference for adoptive children everywhere.

Adoption Parent Trainings and Support Groups

Support Group Date and Time for:

Bloomington—

Monday, February 18th at 6:00pm

"Placement and Legal Issues"

Location: Wesley United Methodist Church
502 E. Front Street
Bloomington, IL 61701

RSVP to Jen at (309) 829-6307

Monday, April 15th at 6:00pm

"Adoption and Social Media"

Location: Wesley United Methodist Church
502 E. Front Street
Bloomington, IL 61701

RSVP to Jen at (309) 829-6307

Champaign—

"Placement and Legal Issues"

Location and Date: TBA

RSVP to Jen at (309) 829-6307

"Adoption and Social Media"

Location and Date: TBA

RSVP to Jen at (309) 829-6307

LaSalle—

Thursday, February 28th at 6:30pm

"Child Development Stages and Adoption"

Location: 815 Second Street, LaSalle

RSVP to Sara at 815-223-4007

Thursday, April 25th at 6:30pm

"Multi/Minority Adoption Readiness"

Location: 4703 - 44th Street, Rock Island

RSVP to Sara at 815-223-4007

Peoria—

Monday, February 11th at 6:30pm

"Literature Night"

Location: 2610 W. Richwoods Blvd., Peoria
RSVP to Sarah at 309-323-6650

Monday, April 1st at 6:00pm

"Hearing From an Adoptive Family"

Location: 2610 W. Richwoods Blvd., Peoria
RSVP to Sarah at 309-323-6650

Rock Island—

Monday, March 18th at 6:00pm

"The Prenatal Experience and the Impact on the Infant"

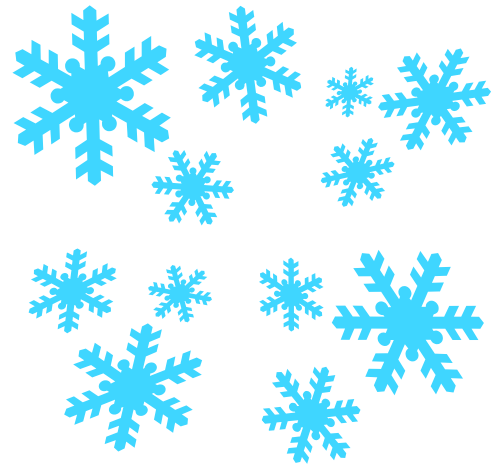
Location: 4703 - 44th Street, Rock Island
RSVP to Sara at 815-223-4007

Springfield—

Wednesday, March 20th at 6:00pm

"Surviving the Wait"

Location: 614 N. 6th Street, Springfield
RSVP to Laura at 217-528-3694



Staff Email Address Update

Below is an updated listing of staff and their email addresses.

Adoption Supervisor

Allison Sparrow—asparrow@cyfsolutions.org

Adoption Specialists:

Jennifer Walls—jwalls@cyfsolutions.org

Lisa Wade—lwade@cyfsolutions.org

Maria Schumacher—mschumacher@cyfsolutions.org

Laura Ratsch—lratsch@cyfsolutions.org

Sara Oelschlager—soelschlager@cyfsolutions.org

Carmen Galvin—cgalvin@cyfsolutions.org

Jennifer Durbin—jdurbin@cyfsolutions.org

Sarah Borop—sborop@cyfsolutions.org

The Adoption Staff is looking for stories from our prospective adoptive parents, adoptive parents or adoptees. Our goal is to help promote accurate and respectful information on adoption to our local communities.

To learn more about how you can help contact our Adoption Supervisor, Allison Sparrow, at asparrow@cyfsolutions.org



Considering Working With An Out of State Adoption Agency?

Many prospective adoptive parents will consider working with an out of state adoption placement agency to shorten their pre adoptive waiting period.

While the CYFS adoption staff supports prospective adoptive parents who wish to network, we must caution you about entering into any contract or agreement without first talking to your adoption worker.

The State of Illinois requires all out of state agencies to be registered with the ICPC (Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children) BEFORE any adoption activity can begin.

For your protection, CYFS requires a Cooperating Agency Agreement be put in place between CYFS and the out of state agency before your homestudy will be released. This is to ensure the agency is legitimate as well as to specifically address expectations and responsibilities.

For more information on working with out of state agencies, contact your Adoption Specialist.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Is there a child in your home that will turn 13 or 17 this year?

If so, contact your adoption worker to find out what you need to do to keep your foster care license in compliance.





CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism,
he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,
he learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule,
he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame,
he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,
he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement,
he learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise,
he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness,
he learns justice.

If a child lives with security,
he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval,
he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
he learns to find love in the world.