

Let's Talk Adoption Conference - Workshop Descriptions

March 5, 2022

Keynote, 9:15 am-10:15 am

Keynote Address: Supporting Needs and Strengthening Bonds in Adoption

Today more than ever, we are understanding the psychological and emotional impact of adoption on the adoptee. Jeanette will share her story as an adoptee and psychotherapist working in the field for over 20 years. She will introduce a list of skill-sets for parents and professionals, meant to support and strengthen parenting an adoptee. Because of Jeanette's extensive experience working with adoptive parents, coupled with her lived experiences as an adoptee, she weaves together the rich and comprehensive field of attachment theory and research, as well as techniques rooted in proven therapeutic interventions for working with children and teenagers connected by adoption. Jeanette Yoffe, M.A., M.F.T.

Sessions

Session A (Workshops 1-3) 10:30 am-12:00 pm

Ten Parenting Skills an Adoptee Wants Every Parent to Know (CEH SW-4/1.5 hours) (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) This workshop helps participants understand the basis of attachment and trust that is needed for healthy psychological and emotional development, especially with children who have been adopted. Understand from the inside out the internal "real" struggle for adoptees and why a different parenting approach is needed. Participants will gain knowledge of effective adoption-competent therapeutic interventions as well as effective parenting principals based in Attachment Theory and Trauma Informed Practice. This workshop will provide guidance for families new to foster care and adoption, as well as prepare them for future issues. It will also promote insight for experienced parents and professionals who want to learn new and effective ways to facilitate attachment between parent and child. *Jeanette Yoffe, M.A., M.F.T.*

White Parents who are Parenting Children of Color: Navigating Race and Identity (CEH SW-1/1.5 hours) (AD, AP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) Parenting a child who of a different race than the parent raises particular stresses and responsibilities given the racialized structure of this country. White parents, in particular, are faced with understanding their own racial identity, which often has previously been unexamined, while at the same time equipping their child/teen to integrate how they see themselves as a racial being.

This presentation will focus on developmental differences in how children perceive race, effects of being perceived as a racial minority, microaggressions and also parenting strategies to foster ecological competence. *Margaret O'Donoghue, Ph.D., LCSW*

Introduction to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (SOGIE) (CEH SW-1/1.5 hours) (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, KG, PA) There is mounting evidence regarding the importance of creating an affirming home and school environment for youth. In this workshop, attendees will learn what it means to be affirming, and how knowledge of SOGIE identities is an important step towards creating an affirming environment. SOGIE is an acronym for sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. These three separate, but related constructs will be discussed, and the various terms associated with them will be reviewed. The workshop will conclude by understanding the implications of these identities for youth in school and at home. *Stacy Robustelli, PhD, Director of Education, HiTOPS, Inc.*

Session B (Workshops 4-5) 12:30-2:00 pm

Love Can't Replace Identity (CEH SW-4/1.5 hours) (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) This workshop is focused on identity of adoptees from birth through their lifetime. It is meant to educate adoption professionals and parents. Behavioral health issues that can occur when adopted children and foster children grow and develop their identity will be discussed and explored. Each age interval will be reviewed for the kinds of thinking that children/adults experience around their adoption stories i.e. early childhood, latency, school age, adolescence, young people and adults. There will be illustrations of the developmental stages of adoptee identity. There will be time devoted to questions children, young people and adults have about their identity. *Dr. Jane Aronson*

Adoption: A Life Long Loss | How Adoption Impacts Life Transitions (CEH SW-4/1.5 hours) (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) As adopted children grow, they look at their adoption differently. Whether they were adopted as infants or as older children, they come to understand, process and grieve their adoption during different developmental stages. In this workshop, participants will gain awareness of the losses related to adoption through the seven core issues in adoption and how the experience of adoption impacts their life and relationships. Participants will gain skills to facilitate and assist children through their grieving process and address the complex challenges and feelings children may experience throughout various stages of development. *Rebecca Gallese, LCSW, NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House(NJ ARCH)*

Session C (Workshops 6-8) 2:15-3:15 pm

Incorporating Emotional Intelligence and Maintaining Family Relationships in Chaotic Times (CEH SW-4/1.0 hours) (AD, AP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) The evolution of families by nurturing relationships remains a daunting task in the best of times. This task can be overwhelming during more challenging times such as during the recent pandemic. Reminders of the COVID-19 experience including wearing face masks and social distancing are constant visual signs of our current lives. As we restore and rebuild our lives, how are children and families coping with the emotions this pandemic has brought up for all? As a senior clinician providing counseling services for pre-and post adoptive families, I have witnessed how navigating our world as it changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic presents additional challenges for families. In this workshop, parents, caregivers and professionals will come to understand what emotional intelligence is and how managing emotions can help families to cope with changes, and remain attached as a family in these challenging times. *Jacqueline Adams, LCSW - Children's Aid and Family Services Inc.*

Insight on Effective and Open Communication with your Adopted Child (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, HC, KG, PA) This panel of adult adoptees will provide pre- and post-adoptive parents with insight on ways they can communicate with their child openly and honestly regarding topics such as the circumstances of their adoption, navigating racial differences, relationships, trauma, birth family search and reunion, and more. *Facilitator, Yael Adler, Romanian Adoptee, Advocate, and Author of From Gypsy to Jersey: An Adoption Journey*

Pre- and Post-Adoption Social Media & Cybersecurity Do's & Don'ts (AD, AP, BP, CW, ED, FP, KG, PA) The ethical impact of decisions about social media are long-term and profound. Privacy and cybersecurity ethics is one domain in which clinicians and pre- and post-adoptive parents should become familiar.

Workshop participants will gain an understanding of pragmatic concepts like "data ownership", "ephemeral media", HIPPA's security rule, and "investigative genetic genealogy (IGG)", as well as the softer "finding the right fit" or "what am I signaling?"

As an adoptive stepmom and an adoptee with personal experience of online searching, this workshop will also provide suggestions on crafting an evolving family "social media policy" that takes into account age of child(ren), the relationship with biological relatives, and the scope and ultimate goals of adoptive parent controls. *Michele Kriegman, CISSP, CISM*