



November is National Adoption Awareness Month!

CONCERNED PERSONS FOR ADOPTION (CPFA)
12th ANNUAL FAMILY CONFERENCE

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2026; 9:00 – 2:00 pm

For Pre-and Post-Adoptive, Foster, Kinship Families and their Children ages 8-17

New Conference Location!

**Immaculate Conception School – Elementary School
41 Mountain Avenue, Somerville, NJ 08876**

<https://fs17.formsite.com/cpfanjs/Family/index>

WWW.CPFANJ.ORG

WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS:

Adoption 101 – Pathways to Adopting in New Jersey

Thinking about adoption and not sure where to begin? Join the Director of the NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH- www.njarch.org) for a conversation about the different pathways to adoption, including domestic private adoption, adoption from foster care, and international adoption. We'll talk about what to expect along the way, including the home study process, openness in adoption, timelines, questions to consider, and resources available to prospective adoptive families. Bring your questions, as this is a chance to learn, ask, and explore what adoption may look like for your family.

Arts and Crafts for Adults

Enjoy some down time by creating something special with our guest Art Teacher. Work with your kids or on your own!

"Can We Talk?" Parents-Only Open Discussion

Feeling overwhelmed by parenting? Are you facing challenging behavior from your child? Don't know where to turn? How to deal with the problems? Embarrassed to mention anything to your social worker? Come listen, ask, and share your thoughts, concerns and more with experienced adoptive parents during this "for parents only- no professionals invited" chat. Facilitated by experienced adoptive parents.

Leaving Home Is Hard to Do

Leaving home can be especially challenging for adopted individuals and their families, often bringing up feelings of loss, separation, and questions about birth family connections. This workshop explores these unique challenges and provides supportive strategies for older adolescents, young adults, and their parents. Presented by Cindy Lapidus, Director, NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH- www.njarch.org), a Program of Children's Aid and Family Services.

The Nurtured Heart Approach

Parents, caregivers, and other supportive adults play a powerful role in shaping how young people see themselves and navigate life's challenges. The Nurtured Heart Approach® (NHA), offers a practical, strengths-based framework that helps adults build stronger relationships, reduce conflict, and foster confidence, resilience, and self-worth in the young people they support. Come explore core principles and learn simple, effective strategies for recognizing success, setting clear expectations, and creating meaningful connections. Presented by Stephanie Drag, MA, LAC, CPS, Associate VP, Prevention, The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources, A Division of Children's Aid and Family Services www.cafsnj.org.

Building Bridges: Strengthening Trust and Communication with Teens

What helps teens feel safe enough to talk – and what can unintentionally shut communication down? In this interactive workshop, caregivers will explore practical, trauma-informed strategies for listening, responding, and communicating in ways that build trust and connection with teens. This workshop will be facilitated by the Children (and Families) Healing After Trauma (CHAT) Clinic professionals from the Rutgers University Center for Psychological Services.

WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH AGE GROUPS, Ages 8-12 and Ages 13-17

SESSIONS FOR AGES 8-12:

Creature Comfort Pet Therapy

Join Creature Comfort Pets from Morris Plains in learning to interact and communicate safely with their animal(s). This hands-on session will allow attendees to interact with the pups, give them commands, and have cuddle time. The handler will share the benefits of animals in our lives as well as future opportunities to work with our furry friends. The pups will be visiting from about 11 am to 1 pm.

Interactive Arts and Crafts

In this fun and creative arts and crafts session led by art teacher, Ms. Lauren Webster, children will explore self-expression by creating a special "treasure chest" to hold memories and more. During this session kids will be shown how to be creative with paint, stickers, and other media. Other crafts will also be offered and all supplies are provided.

Let's Learn Some Yoga! For Kids and Teens

Feeling stressed? Need some down time? Join our guest Yoga Instructor, who is also an adoptive parent, to learn introductory yoga stretches and breathing exercises. Find out the benefits of yoga for kids and teens. Learn some tools that can help you feel better physically and emotionally. Sangeeta Benbow, Registered Yoga Teacher (RYT) 500 Hour, will be leading this group session. Please bring a yoga mat or a beach-sized towel and enjoy this session together.

Reset, Recharge, and Be Your Best!

Have you ever had a day when you felt angry, worried, frustrated, or just "off"? Everyone does! The good news is that we can all learn ways to reset and get back on track. In this fun, hands-on workshop, you'll learn what a reset is and explore ways to calm down, handle big feelings, and feel more confident when things get tough. Through games, you'll discover your strengths, celebrate your successes, and help see the

greatness that's already inside you. Come ready to play, create, learn, and shine! Presented by Stephanie Drag, MA, LAC, CPS, Children's Aid and Family Services, www.cafsnj.org.

SESSIONS FOR AGES 13-17:

Adoptee to Adoptee – “Let’s Talk!” for Teens

This session will be facilitated by two adult adoptees for teens at the conference. Come for an informal, open, candid conversation on thoughts, personal experiences and more as adoptees.

Communicating When It’s Hard

What makes it easier – or harder – to talk to the people we trust? In this interactive workshop for teens, participants will explore what helps them feel heard, and practice strategies for expressing themselves and navigating difficult conversations. This workshop will be facilitated by the Children (and Families) Healing After Trauma (CHAT) Clinic professionals from the Rutgers University Center for Psychological Services.

Creature Comfort Pet Therapy

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Express Yourself through Creative Art

Looking to express yourself in a different way? Join our guest art therapist for a 3-D Art Making Experience! Teens will create a piece of art to take home that focuses on exploring feelings, personal identity and our environment. This interactive session will be led by Karen Rosen, MA, LPAT, ATR-BC. For more information on her work, please visit www.sunrayarttherapy.com.

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To Register visit: <https://fs17.formsite.com/cpfani/Family/index>

