



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter

Oakland County

Importance of Lifebooks

What is a lifebook?

A Lifebook tells a child's story from the very beginning- including before their adoption took place. Lifebooks help all children who have been in foster care and/or adopted identify and understand their life experiences . Children can help create Lifebooks and they can be in charge



of who they share it with and when .

A Lifebook should be used to answer questions that your child might have such as:

- Why was I adopted?
- Who is in my birth family?
- What were my birth-parents like?
- Why don't I live with my birth family?
- What was it like when you met me?
- How am I alike/ different from my birth parents?
- Why wasn't I adopted sooner?



A Lifebook is **NOT**:

- A Babybook
- A file of records
- A scrapbook
- A photo album

A Lifebook **IS**:

- A detailed history
- A sacred keep safe
- Your child's life story

Information adapted from Adoption Learning Partners. www.AdoptionLearningPartners.org



Orchards Children's Services

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Special points of interest:

- Lifebook lessons
- Happy National Adoption Month!

For more information on the Post Adoption Resource Center please contact us at

248-410-0727

-Or visit our website at -

www.parcOakland-orchards.org



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What to include in your child's Lifebook

Components of a Lifebook:

- Basic information about child's birth. (birth records/birth certificate)
- Details about the child's birth parents.
- Explaining why the child was adopted.
- Placement information

- School information
- Special event/ memories/awards
- Adoption decrees
- Information on adoptive family

Once these components are included have your child feel free to document likes, experiences

and feelings as well.

Information adapted from Metro Parent Publishing Group



Benefits of creating a Lifebook

Lifebooks allow children to make sense of the past and prepare for the future. They help to recognize the importance of taking into consideration a child's history & origin. The Lifebook relates and preserves your child's history, and makes them feel important and cared for. It can also help them understand and identify their feelings of loss and where they came from. A Lifebook addresses issues

of identity and self-esteem. It connects the child to his or her own culture and traditions. Working on this project with your child will help build trust and attachment, and will help counter misinformation

or fantasy about their beginnings. The Lifebook teaches the child that they are a bridge between two families and proves their existence before they were adopted.

Information adapted from Adoption Learning Partners. www.AdoptionLearningPartners.org



Lifebook Lessons

There is no rush in the creation of a Lifebook, take as long as needed on each page, and alternate difficult pages with easier ones. Don't forget to add new pages as events occur and be sure to add new information to existing pages as it comes available. It is important to change and add to the Lifebook as your child ages to make it more appropriate for them. Do not destroy

any updated pages, just mix new information to make the story more descriptive. Make sure you keep your child's Lifebook available and accessible to them, it's theirs! The Lifebook will contain sensitive information, so explain to your child that they can pull out sensitive information when sharing with others if it may be uncomfortable for them. Stress to your child that once information is

shared it becomes public knowledge, and prepare them for any consequences.

Information adapted from Adoption Learning Partners. www.AdoptionLearningPartners.org



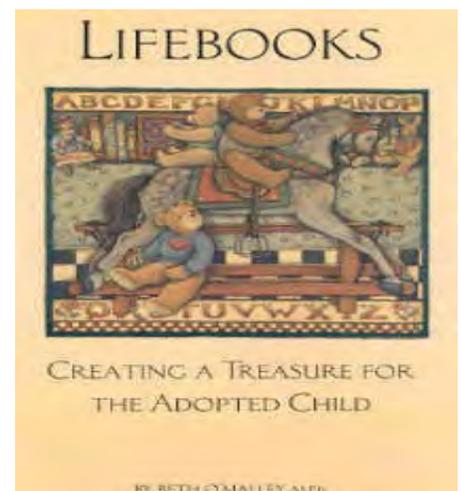
Featured Book

Lifebooks: Creating a Treasure for the Adopted Child Updated and Revised Perfect Paperback - September 21, 2011 by [Beth O'Malley M.Ed](#)

The author (who is both an adoptee and adoptive parent) guides you step-by-step and page-by-page to complete a Lifebook with your child. It is explained

in full detail with a light touch of humor. It contains help for toddlers as well as teens. The Lifebook process prepares you to talk about delicate subjects as well as adoption basics. Best of all, in the end, your child has an unique book that captures their often complicated life story.

*Information adapted from Amazon.com
This book is available at Amazon.com*



One Families Example Of How To Keep A Lifebook

It is important to give kids free reign of what is included in their own personal Lifebook, because these are important facts and feelings for them to share.

Nancy Lambert; adoptive mother of children of various ages from elementary age through teens opened up about how her family keeps up on their Lifebooks:

Q: When did you start on Lifebooks for each of your children?

A: Soon after they came to our family, some started in therapy.

Q: Are there any differences in type?

A: We use the same basic idea for each child, they choose what to include and draw pictures, as photos we keep in a separate album. We started with the original Lifebook and adapted it over time

Q: What's included in their books?

A: Some children are not ready for bad memories so they are given a journal and work on a timeline of memories. They include things they've seen, people they have met along the

way and places they have gone to.

Q: Are all the kids engaged in this?

A: Some more than others, it's not always important to them at times.

Q: How do you engage them?

A: We start with ideas, use their history, if they are upset have them write down feelings, this helps deal with issues.

Thanks for all of your input Nancy, we truly appreciate you sharing your families experiences!

Save the Date: 2/19/15 Join our Online Match Party!

Adoption Resource Consultants (ARC) is hosting an Online Match Party. Orchards Children's Services' Adoption Resource Consultants (ARC) is hosting an Online Match Party **February 19, 2015.**

Join us as we showcase youth available for adoption with a video presentation and live chat session.

For more information or to register please contact 855-694-7301 or ARC@orchards.org.

View our youth video gallery at <http://vimeo.com/channels/orchardsarc>



Happy Adoption Month!



November was National Adoption month!!!

PARC helped our families celebrate by providing a cake and helping the children to make "I Am Boards."

National Adoption Month was founded in 1990 when North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) decided to expand opportunities for raising awareness, and began advertising Adoption Week, which began in 1976, as National Adoption Awareness Month.

2014 marks the 19th year that November has been celebrated as National Adoption Month!



2015 Trainings and Support Group Dates

January

Training: 1-13-15

Support Group (O):

1-26-15

Support Group (W):

1-27-15

February

Training: 2-10-15

Support Group (O):

2-23-15

Support Group (W):

2-24-15

March

Training: 3-10-15

Support Group (O):

3-30-15

Support Group (W):

3-31-15

April

Training: 4-14-15

Support Group (O):

4-27-15

Support Group (W):

4-28-15

May

Training: 5-12-15

Support Group (O):

5-18-15

Support Group (W):

5-26-15

June

Training: 6-9-15

Support Group (O):

6-29-15

Support Group (W):

6-30-15

July

Training: 7-14-15

Support Group (O):

7-27-15

Support Group (W):

7-28-15

August

Training: 8-11-15

Support Group (O):

8-24-15

Support Group (W):

8-25-15

September

Training: 9-8-15

Support Group (O):

9-28-15

Support Group (W):

9-29-15

October

Training: 10-13-15

Support Group (O):

10-26-15

Support Group (W):

10-27-15

November

Training: 11-10-15

Support Group (O): N/A

Support Group (W): N/A

December

Training: 12-8-15

Support Group (O): N/A

Support Group (W): N/A

- Key: (O) stands for Oakland County and (W) stands for Wayne County.
- Training topics are pending as they are determined with input from families throughout the year to ensure that family's questions are answered and applicable information is shared.
- As usual at every training and support group event childcare and dinner is provided. Our training opportunities and Oakland County Support Groups will continue to be held in our central office, located at: 24901 Northwestern Hwy. STE 500, Southfield, MI 48075. Our Wayne County Support Groups will continue to be held at the Taylor Sportsplex located at: 13333 Telegraph Rd., Taylor, MI 48180. We hope you see you there!