



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Wayne County

Parent Workshop Was A Huge Success!



On August 13, 2016 the Post Adoption Resource Center was fortunate enough to have Rhonda Roorda a presentation on transracial adoption. This was our largest event to date, with approximately 25 families taking advantage of this opportunity. The event was held right here in our local office, with breakfast, lunch, and childcare being provided to accommodate as many families as possible.

The morning started with Ms. Roorda sharing her personal experience with being adopted cross culturally. The conference continued with Ms. Roorda utilizing her vast knowledge to assist parents in understanding the different experiences their

children and family will have, how to embrace the differences and encourage confidence within the lives of both the children and family as a whole.

Throughout the session, Ms. Roorda stressed the love that was shared within her

adoptive family, but also disclosed that love wasn't always enough and that her family needed to be very intentional about making connections with African Americans that would embrace their family and assist Ms.

Roorda in being connected to her culture. Ms.

Roorda also shared about her experiences as they related to moving outside of the very Caucasian community that she was raised in and how once she left the safety of her parent's home and

community, she missed the white privilege that she had experienced throughout her life. Ms. Roorda utilized group work to allow attendees to share about their personal experiences raising children of different races. The groups discussed common issues they've

experienced with their children inclusive of issues with hair/skin care and racism that has been experienced and how've they've been able to overcome and/ or work through these issues as a family.

At the conclusion of the session, families were provided with copies of Rhonda's books: "*In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories,*" and "*In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption.*" to utilize as a reference guide for the future.

The response to Ms. Roorda's presentation was overwhelmingly positive with attendees describing the event as, "excellent," stating that they, "loved this one," and that it was "a wonderful program, I really enjoyed myself!" We are so thankful to Ms. Roorda for sharing her day with us!



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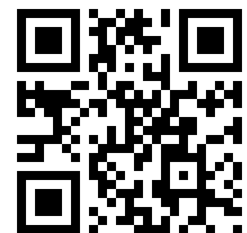
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For more information on the Post Adoption Resource Center please contact us at

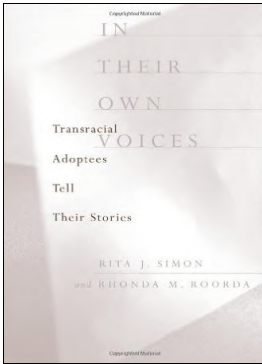
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Or visit our website at
PARC-orchards.org



MDHHS Michigan Department of Health & Human Services
The Post Adoption Resource Center
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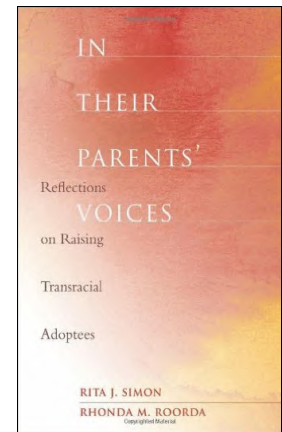
Suggested Reads



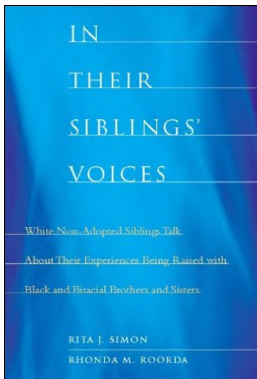
Nearly 40 years after researchers first sought to determine the effects, if any, on children adopted by families whose racial or ethnic background differed from their own, the debate over transracial adoption continues. In this collection of interviews conducted with black and biracial young adults who were adopted by white parents, the authors present the personal stories of two dozen individuals who hail from a wide range of religious, economic, political, and professional backgrounds. How does the experience affect their racial and social identities, their choice of friends and marital partners, and their lifestyles? In addition to interviews, the book includes overviews of both the history and current legal status of transracial adoption.

Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda's *In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories* shared the experiences of 24 black and

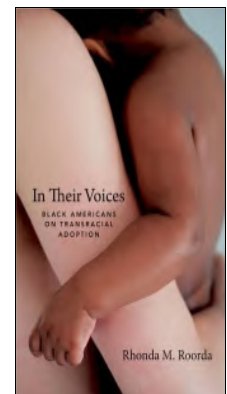
biracial children who had been adopted into white families in the late 1960s and 70s. The book has since become a standard resource for families and practitioners, and now, in this sequel, we hear from the parents of these remarkable families and learn what it was like for them to raise children across racial and cultural lines. These candid interviews shed light on the issues these parents encountered, what part race played during thirty plus years of parenting, what they learned about themselves, and whether they would recommend transracial adoption to others. Combining trenchant historical and political data with absorbing firsthand accounts, Simon and Roorda once more bring an academic and human dimension to the literature on transracial adoption.



In Their Siblings' Voices shares the stories of 20 white non-adopted siblings who grew up with black or biracial brothers and sisters in the late 1960s and 1970s. Belonging to the same families profiled in Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda's *In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories* and *In Their Parents' Voices: Reflections on Raising Transracial Adoptees*, these siblings offer their perspectives on the multiracial adoption experience, which, for them, played out against the backdrop of two tumultuous, politically charged decades. Simon and Roorda question whether professionals and adoption agencies adequately trained these children in the challenges presented by blended families, and they ask if, after more than 30 years, race still matters. Few books cover both the academic and the human dimensions of this issue. *In Their Siblings' Voices* helps readers fully grasp the dynamic of living in a multiracial household and its effect on friends, school, and community.



While many proponents of transracial adoption claim that American society is increasingly becoming "color-blind," a growing body of research reveals that for transracial adoptees of all backgrounds, racial identity does matter. Rhonda M. Roorda elaborates significantly on that finding, specifically studying the effects of the adoption of black and biracial children by white parents. She incorporates diverse perspectives on transracial adoption by concerned black Americans of various ages, including those who lived through Jim Crow and the Civil Rights era. All her interviewees have been involved either personally or professionally in the lives of transracial adoptees, and they offer strategies for navigating systemic racial inequalities while affirming the importance of black communities in the lives of transracial adoptive families. *In Their Voices* is for parents, child-welfare providers, social workers, psychologists, educators, therapists, and adoptees from all backgrounds who seek clarity about this phenomenon. The author examines how social attitudes and federal policies concerning transracial adoption have changed over the last several decades. She also includes suggestions on how to revise transracial adoption policy to better reflect the needs of transracial adoptive families. Perhaps most important, *In Their Voices* is packed with advice for parents who are invested in nurturing a positive self-image in their adopted children of color and the crucial perspectives those parents should consider when raising their children. It offers adoptees of color encouragement in overcoming discrimination and explains why a "race-neutral" environment, maintained by so many white parents, is not ideal for adoptees or their families.



Summer Wrap Up

Orchards Children’s Services prides itself on giving our children as “normal” of a childhood as possible, and the Post Adoption Resource Center embraces this ideology and ensures that our children have as many opportunities for fun and family connectivity as possible.

The summer of 2016 flew by as it was full of events and exciting opportunities. In addition to hosting two all day conferences for our parents, children from a variety of families were able to attend day camp at Camp Super Summer in Birmingham. In June, a large number of our PARC children were provided with brand new bikes, helmets, and bike locks– because what kid doesn’t love the freedom of his or her own bike?

In July, families were provided with the opportunity to attend a Detroit Tigers game and several of our children were given an opportunity to attend Watson Horse Camp in Milford where they were able to groom, train, and ride horses. The kids all described the camp as “awesome,” and shared that in addition to being with the horses, they felt like they had an amazing opportunity to make new friends and be around others who “got” what they have experienced.

August continued to be busy. During our conference on Transracial Adoption, Greenfield Village tickets were raffled off and given to a number of families. Additionally, August brought more camping opportunities. PARC staff partnered up with the agency as a whole and sent a large number of our children to overnight camp. Some of the children stayed in cabins at Camp Tanuga in Kalkaska and a couple of brave young souls bared the wilderness; tent camping in the woods along Lake Michigan. One of our kids stated, “it was so cool, every second of it was fun!”

The summer quietly wrapped up with 30 back packs being donated to families to ensure that children had needed school supplies...and then Labor Day came and off to school they went!

The Post Adoption Resource Center is proud of all of the services and opportunities we are able to provide our children and families. We look forward to next summer, but are eagerly awaiting the more pressing events such as Hallowest and our Holiday Party! Stay tuned for more details so that you can take advantage of these wonderful events!



Upcoming Parent Workshops

Saturday, September 24, 2016, from 9:30 AM—3:30 PM: Jeff Lusko –Understanding Your Child’s Uniqueness: What Is Normal? What Is Not?

Jeff Lusko holds a Masters degree in clinical psychology from the University of Detroit-Mercy and is licensed in Michigan as a Master’s level psychologist. In his role as a master’s level psychologist, Mr. Lusko has gained valuable expertise in the areas of psychological diagnostics, clinical treatment of children and families, childhood psychiatric conditions, as well as issues affecting infant, child, and adolescent development. Mr. Lusko has been on staff at Orchards Children’s Services for the past 27 years and continues to enjoy the challenges of working within the child welfare system.



On September 24, 2016, Mr. Lusko will be conducting an all day training on

understanding your child’s uniqueness, as parents can have difficulty telling the difference between variations in normal behavior and true behavioral problems. In truth, the difference between normal and abnormal behavior is not always very clear. This workshop will explore the aspects of normal versus abnormal behavior in children and teens. The primary goal is to open up a caregiver’s understanding of their child’s unique developmental progress which is vital in order to better

interpret, accept, and even adapt to their behavior.

November 4 and 5, 2016: Kim Seidel, back by popular demand! Topic- Supporting Adoptive Families / 1000 Miracles.



Kim Seidel first presented to our PARC families in March, and families had so much positive feedback that we decided to bring her back, for two days, allowing her to share even more of her knowledge and expertise with us. Ms. Seidel specializes in attachment and bonding issues, specifically as they relate to the behaviors in children that have been affected by the foster care and adoption systems. The focus of the parenting / treatment model Ms. Seidel teaches is on supporting parents in their own healing process as they learn to understand and support their child in his / her experiences. The ultimate outcome and focus is on building connections with peaceful and loving parent / child bond.

As noted this event is scheduled for two days, with the training on November 4th occurring from 10:00 AM—3:00 PM, and the training on Saturday occurring from 9:30 AM—3:30 PM. More information to come!

2016 Trainings and Support Group Dates

October:

Training: 10/4/16

Support Group: 10/18/16

November:

Training: 11/1/16

Support Group: 11/15/16

December:

Training: 12/6/16

Support Group: N/A

Fliers will be mailed out prior to each event as a reminder and invitation to attend the various trainings and support group meetings. **Childcare and dinner are provided at each meeting.** Trainings are held at our Southfield Office (24901 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, MI 48075, suite 500) from 5:30-7:30pm unless otherwise noted. **Wayne County Support groups** are held at Wayne HYPE Recreation Center (4635 Howe Rd, Wayne, MI 48184). If you do not currently receive notification of the PARC events, please contact us at 313-530-9746 so that your name and address can be added to our roster!