



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter

Making This Season Bright

Nicole Nicholls

As adults, we often find ourselves stressed out during the holiday season, having to deal with financial stress and overloaded schedules, along with many other things. Imagine adding feelings of anxiety, loss, grief, guilt, anger, and despair into the mix. Many of these emotions can surface around the holidays for children that have been adopted, with all of the smells, sounds, and tastes, triggering old memories.

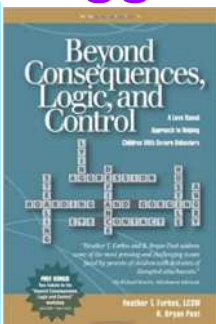
Children who spent many years with their birth family and many years in foster care may have happy or sad memories of birth families and old traditions left behind. Internationally adopted children are likely to feel disconnected from their cultural roots, and may have many questions about their birth culture. Those children from open adoptions can experience stress and conflicting feelings about their birth parents and adopted parents. And finally, children who know little or nothing about their birth parents may spend more time reflecting on the birth families they have no memories of.



Be mindful of your child's body language, shifts in mood, and subtle expressions. Taking the time to learn and understand what your child is going through and understanding that all adopted children experience the holidays

(continued on pg. 3)

Suggested Read



Beyond Consequences, Logic & Control

Author: Heather T Forbes, B. Bryan Post

Heather T. Forbes and B. Bryan Post address some of the most pressing and challenging issues faced by parents of children with histories of disrupted attachments.

The authors have the ability to strip away the fog surrounding these troubled relationships, exposing the reality of children's reactions and dysregulated responses to the past traumatic experiences that so often underlie their difficulty in

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

313-530-9746

Or visit our website at



THE EMOTIONAL CUP

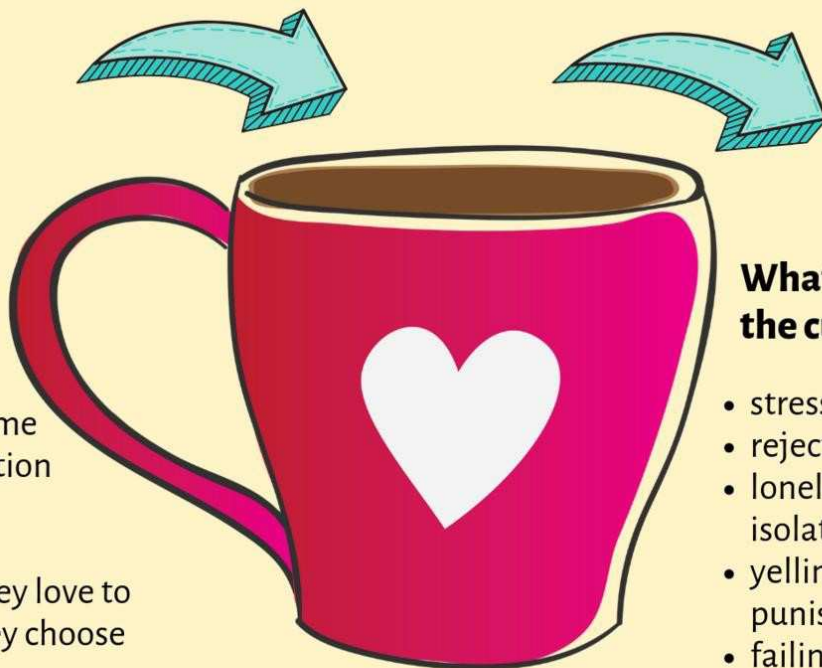
Imagine that every child has a cup that needs to be filled -- with affection, love, security, and attention. Some seem to have a full cup most of the time, or know good ways to get a refill. But most children get a little nervous when their cup gets near empty.

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- steal from other people's cups
- misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- think they have to fight or compete for every refill

What fills a child's cup:

- play
- friendship
- one-on-one time
- love and affection
- connection
- succeeding
- doing what they love to do or what they choose to do



What empties the cup:

- stress and strain
- rejection by peers
- loneliness and isolation
- yelling and punishment
- failing
- fatigue
- doing what they're forced to do or they hate to do

**Information expanded from: Upbility*

Making This Season Bright (continued from pg. 1)

Help your child identify their emotions and validate their feelings by pointing out your observations in a non-judgmental way. Invite your adopted child to openly communicate with you, by saying things such as “you seem sad/frustrated/upset”. If your child is having a hard time coping with his or her emotions, you could make or give them a journal to write or draw their feelings in a private, non-destructive way. You could also go over your adopted child’s life book or memory book with them, if they have one. While doing this, talk openly about the memories and explore the different thoughts and emotions that have been surfacing.

Integrate your child’s holiday traditions into your own family traditions, whether they be cultural or from their memory. These roots should not be lost or forgotten but rather brought into the open and celebrated when possible. Your adopted children should be taught that their memories of the holidays are okay to have. To strengthen your personal bond with your child, develop some new family traditions together. This will help your child dismiss feelings of being an outsider in a family where traditions may already have been established long ago. For example, create a new holiday ornament as a family, pick a holiday movie to watch together, introduce a new food, or light a candle for the joys and sadness you and your child may be feeling at the holidays and discuss both openly.

Build up to the holidays gradually. Start talking about holiday plans and traditions early, making your holiday plans clear, so that your child knows what to expect. Stick to your regular daily routines as much as possible, and don’t change plans at the last minute if possible. For a child who is new in your family, practice giving and receiving gifts. This is important because expectations may have been different in your child’s previous homes. By practicing, you can avoid embarrassing or aggravating situations and your child will know what to expect.

In order to avoid unnecessary, additional stress, remind yourself to pick your battles and let the little things slide. Keep your expectations realistic, maintain a sense of humor, and don’t try to discipline every single wrong behavior that comes up; only tackle the

**Information expanded from: Professors House*

What has Been Going on in PARC?!

In November, the PARC program celebrated National Adoption Month with a small reception after each county’s training/support group. We enjoyed cake together while sharing stories and laughs and there was also a photographer available to take family photos. Trainer, Rachel Rowe spoke at each meeting, about human trafficking, the Vulnerabilities and prevention efforts. PARC was also fortunate enough this season to be able to provide some of our families with a thanksgiving meal. Keep an eye out for future trainings and events by going to our website: PARC-Orchards.org,



Adoption Read. Meet. Eat

Starting January 7, 2020, we will be hosting a monthly book club in place of our Oakland County Support Group (1st Tuesday of the month).

The book will be provided to you and a discussion of the designated chapters will ensue monthly.

The first book discussion will be *Beyond Consequences, Logic & Control: A Love-Based Approach to Helping Attachment–Challenged Children With Severe Behaviors, Volume 1*.

Dinner and childcare will be provided. Let's start something sweet and bring a dessert to pass!

Please remember to RSVP to 248-530-5381 by December 30th to ensure that we have enough copies of the book to provide to everyone in attendance on January 7. We hope to see you there!

**Oakland County Book Club &
Teen Support Group**
6:00-8:00pm
24901 Northwestern Hwy.
Southfield, MI 48075 #500

- ◆ December 3, 2019
- ◆ January 7, 2020
- ◆ February 4, 2020
- ◆ March 3, 2020 (training)
- ◆ April 7, 2020
- ◆ May 7, 2020
- ◆ June 4, 2020
- ◆ July - No Group
- ◆ August - No Group
- ◆ September 1, 2020
- ◆ October 1, 2020
- ◆ November 5, 2020

Macomb County Support Group
6:00-8:00pm
New Life Presbyterian Church
11300 19 Mile Road
Sterling Hts, MI 48314

- ◆ December 10, 2019
- ◆ January 14, 2020
- ◆ February 11, 2020
- ◆ March 10, 2020
- ◆ April 14, 2020 (training)
- ◆ May 12, 2020
- ◆ June 9, 2020
- ◆ July 14, 2020
- ◆ August 11, 2020
- ◆ September 8, 2020
- ◆ October 13, 2020
- ◆ November 10, 2020

**Dinner and childcare provided.*

**For more details and to RSVP for any of our events,*

Please Note: The Oakland County Support Group that occurred on the third Monday of each month has been discontinued. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions / concerns related to this. Thank you!