



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Oakland County

Bonding With Your Adopted Child

It's perfectly normal for adoptive parents to look at their new child and wonder if he'll ever fit into the family. Just remember that adoptive parents can bond with their children just as successfully as biological families, it may just take a little extra time and effort.

Bonding may be a slow process for both of you, but there are ways to encourage the transition from strangers to adoring family and child.

To make the journey go smoothly, adopt these strategies for bonding with your adopted child:

Don't rush it. If you adopted a baby, how quickly he adapts depends on how old he is. If he's younger than six months, he may fuss more than usual, refuse to feed sometimes, and snooze for too many hours. These behaviors have nothing to do with your parenting skills, and

they'll most likely pass in a few weeks.

If you adopted a toddler, prepare yourself for some tough weeks. He'll probably act out and test limits as he learns to trust you. Nip such behaviors in the bud by setting up routines, so he knows what to expect, and setting a few rules. As often as you can, catch him being good, so he becomes more confident of his abilities to behave. One important routine to establish: Reading together. Not only will that give you a chance to snuggle, but books can also provide the words he needs to identify his emotions.

Talk, talk, and talk some more. Children soak up language from their surroundings. Chatting will help him feel included and worthy of your attention.

Get your older kids involved. If you have other children, they can help speed the bonding process,

so encourage them to pitch in often in as many ways as they want.

Start a few traditions. Rituals make every child feel special and give little ones something to look forward to.

Keep a scrapbook for your newest family member that you all can look through on the anniversary of the day he joined the family.

Create a **P.L.A.C.E.** with your children: **Playfulness, Love, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy!**

Adapted from:

<http://www.whattoexpect.com/family/bonding-with-your-adopted-child.aspx>



Orchards Children's Services

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Special points of interest:

- **Bonding Activities**
- **PARC Parent Retreat/Kids Activity in March! Look for flyer for date!**

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

313-530-9746

Or visit our website at

www.parcokland-orchards.org

www.parcwayne-orchards.org



Orchards

Children's Services

*Strengthening the Community through
Quality Services to Children and Families*

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Bonding activities

Bond with your child through crafts!

You've welcomed a child into your heart and into your family, but how do you create a strong bond with your adopted child?

Many children have a hard time being honest about their feelings. These activities help foster a sense of openness, love and safety while your adopted child learns to be part of the family. Being a family is all about creating new memories, and what better way to do that than by crafting together?

Make time to craft: Your child belongs. But she may forget that. A great way to remind her, spend time and bond is to create a visual family tree. What's important is that she can see herself placed among her family, and making a creative family tree can help her visualize that.

Research her culture and her past together : Research your child's past by gathering items like a hospital bracelet from when she was delivered, photos of her biological family or foster families, as well as any letters written to your child. You can also encourage her to write out her feelings in a journal.

Games to promote bonding: Touch is an important part of attachment; however, some children who are adopted may not want to be held or hugged. You can promote physical attachment in a non-threatening way through fun games. Paint your daughter's fingernails or brush your son's hair while watching a movie together is a great way to promote attachment. There are many ways to foster a strong bond with your child, through daily activities. Trust your instincts and give your relationship with your child time to develop and grow. Adapted from: <http://www.sheknows.com/parenting/articles/813802/helping-your-adopted-child-bond-to-you-1>



Making adoptions work– Building a bond

Even for biological parents, bonding is complex. Bonding with adoptive children is similar. Some parents feel an immediate emotional connection, while others struggle for months or years. Adoptive parents can experience "post-adoption depression" when their expectations about the adoption experience aren't met. The key to successful adoptions is parental expectation. Agencies must be sure that parents really understand the child's needs, and follow up with families who are struggling. Parents must understand that their child may need help, and be willing to delay gratification and reach out for support. Families should understand why they were chosen to care for their child, and

have a tremendous amount of faith that the referral that ends up in their hands was meant to be there.

How to succeed as an adoptive family

- **Advocate for your child:** Secure resources and answers.
- **Be resourceful:** Seek and accept help, allow others in your family system to offer assistance.
- **Flexibility in family roles:** Share responsibility of parenting and nurturing.
- **Tolerance for rejection:** Develop ability to withstand testing behaviors do not take it personally.
- **Flexible expectations:** Have realistic, flexible expectations of you and your children
- **Comfortable in parental role:** Be comfortable giving directions and



providing structure. Interrupt negative behaviors and provide praise and affection.

Adapted from "Being an adoptive family"

Adapted from: <http://www.livescience.com/11007-dark-side-adoptions-parents-kids-bond.html>

Spring Break Family Fun

As the end of winter draws near, anxious students count down the days until the most glorious week -- SPRING BREAK! But while the kiddos are ready for freedom, parents everywhere wonder, "What will I do with the them for a whole week?" Not to worry, we have you (and your wallet) covered with spring break ideas that won't break the bank! This spring, fun is in full bloom with our exciting spring-break ideas and activities for your family. Use this opportunity to plan an exhilarating outdoor day with your kids. Most towns and cities offer tons of free activities— the trick is knowing where to look. Check out this list of springtime activity ideas that will get your kids out of the house, but won't cost you a dime.

- 1) Camp it out - Create your own campground in the backyard.
- 2) Pamper Party - Turn your home into a spa with mini mani/pedis for all.
- 3) Feeling Crafty - Check Pinterest for project ideas galore.
- 4) Hit the books - See what tall tales your local library has to offer.
- 5) Splish Splash- Bust out the hose and turn your backyard into a splash zone.
- 6) Strike a pose - Grab that camera and let your mini models show off their stuff.
- 7) Pillow fight - Host a family slumber party in the living room.
- 8) The main attraction - Pop some popcorn and enjoy family movie night.
- 9) Sweet sensations - Grab the measuring spoons and bake something sweet.
- 10) Catch some rays - Nothing says spring break like a trip to the beach.
- 11) Puzzle it - Start with the edges first and together the family can create a masterpiece!
- 12) Yahtzee - Dust off the board games; it's game night.
- 13) Gather the gang - Invite the neighborhood crew over for some play time.
- 14) Top it off - Make your own pizza night (tacos are fun, too).
- 15) Take a bow - Let your little thespians wow you with their singing/dancing/acting
- 16) When life gives you lemons - Have a lemonade stand.
- 17) Get fresh - Check out the local farmers' market. <http://www.michigan.org/farm-markets/>
- 18) Make room for spring - Clean out those closets (not the most fun task, we know).
- 19) Flower power - Plant a little garden.
- 20) Row, row, row your boat - Rent a canoe or go tubing.
- 21) Visit a Local Animal Farm - Learn with your children all about the wonders of new life.
- 22) Take a Hike - Head over to a state park or local hiking trails and spend the afternoon exploring nature
- 23) Free Concerts - Keep your eyes open for free concert series <http://detroit.about.com/od/summerinmetrodetroit/a/City-of-Detroit-and-Wayne-County-Michigan-Free-Summer-Concerts-And-Outdoor-Movies.htm>
- 24) Get Lost in a Museum - Find participating attractions and museums, visit the Michigan Activity Pass website <http://www.eventkeeper.com/prmaps/code/index.cfm?mn=628322>
- 25) Ride the Bike Path - Get some exercise and head out for a family bike ride on your local bike path.



For more fun ideas in your community visit the calendar on our websites:
<http://parcoakland-orchards.org> and <http://parcwayne-orchards.org>

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES



*Oakland County & Wayne County
Post Adoption Resources Center (PARC)*

Presents...

Parents Retreat

March 21, 2015 10am-2pm

Space is limited for this special event!

Parent Training 10am-12pm

12pm-2pm Parent alone time!

leave for lunch / shopping / relaxation



Let us take care of the kids!

PARC staff will provide lunch and fun activities for the children

RSVP for your spot to Jenny @ 248-530-7590

