



# Cape Cod Adoption Network

**AUTUMN 2008 EDITION**

FUNDED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE CAPE AND ISLANDS UNITED WAY

## Welcome to the Fifth Newsletter offered by the Cape Cod Adoption Network!

Our goal is to produce this Quarterly newsletter for friends and families associated with adoption. We will welcome comments, suggestions, and recommended articles to include as we move forward with this Newsletter. The Cape Cod Adoption Network was created to fill a need for coordinated information and support for families on the Cape. Through our educational and social programs, we are well on the way to bringing families together & creating an Adoption Community right here on Cape Cod. Please let us hear from you if you would like additional information on the services we offer.

### Spotlight Family: The Woodford Family



Hello! We're David, Donna and Jennifer Woodford from Quincy, Massachusetts, where we've lived for the last six years. David is a health care worker & I have recently retired from my job with the government. Jennifer is nine and will be entering the fourth grade in September.

David and I decided to become parents. While we were very surprised that our biological expectations were not to be, we were very pleased to learn that our family plan could be realized through adoption. We were also relieved of the genetic risk worries of couples who conceive in middle age. After attending several adoption conferences both in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, we decided on China since we wanted to adopt a girl and the odds on adopting a girl were quite high. In January 2000, we traveled to Nanchang, China to adopt our daughter, Jennifer. We were not fortunate enough to visit her orphanage. Instead, Jennifer was brought to our hotel after traveling by van for many hours from Leping. No words can describe the moment that we walked into the hotel room and saw Jennifer for the first time. We scooped her up and fell in love immediately. Jennifer turned one year old while we were in China, and although everyone there went out of their way to make our two week stay comfortable, we were anxious to return home and start our life with our daughter.

Jennifer has adapted well into American culture. She likes music and sports. She plays the piano, sings in our church choir, swims and studies Taekwon-do. She is currently studying for her black belt. She is a great kid.

For parents considering adoption, we know there can be a lot of anxiety, and the wait can be long. But in the end, the gift of a child far out-weighs any of these concerns. Would we do it all over again? In a heartbeat!

### EDUCATION AND ADOPTION

For most parents, September is about re-entry into a new school year. These are typically exciting weeks, but also fraught with unknowns for children and their families. We dedicate this issue to the complex topic of Education and Adoption, with the intention of delving further into subjects that may preclude our children from receiving the academic and social supports to succeed in a classic school environment. Whether our kids are adopted domestically, internationally, or in foster care, their learning needs can be subtle, and often undetected by the best-intentioned school professionals.

In our efforts to work collaboratively and advocate for the right needs of our children, the Cape Cod Adoption Network is once again very fortunate to offer the expertise of our good friends, Dr. Boris and Tatyana Gindis of the BG Center for Cognitive Development, Assessment, and Remediation, ([www.bgcenter.com](http://www.bgcenter.com)), and our agency consulting Child Psychologist, Dr. Anait Azarian. This one-day workshop on Friday, October 17, 2008, will be a hands-on opportunity for families, educators, and advocates to work together. Please see the flyer attached to the back of this newsletter, and sign up soon. Scholarships are available, as well as group rates for school systems.



**The Cape Cod Adoption Network Library offers a wide variety of books and resources to sign out on loan. Call (508) 385-7815 for more information.**

## Adoption and Education:

**Helping to identify the learning needs of your adopted child.**  
**Excerpts from Adoptive Families Magazine, Adoption Medicine**  
**article by Dr. Deborah Borchers, M.D.**

There are many reasons a child might be struggling in school-Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), and learning disabilities (LD) are a few of the potential causes. Although children who were previously institutionalized may be at higher risk for learning disorders, these challenges are common to all children. To take a proactive stance, there are many ways you can work with the school and teachers to make this a successful year for your child.

### **Diagnosing the problem**

When a parent or teacher sees that a child is faltering, the first step is to have the pediatrician conduct a physical and neurological exam, as well as hearing and vision tests.

**SPD:** Children with SPD have nervous systems that either overreact or under-respond to stimuli like sound, light, or movement. As a result, some students with SPD will thrive in a noisy classroom (and will help create that noise), while others can't concentrate when there's too much sound stimulation. Symptoms of SPD resemble those of ADHD, and many children are initially misdiagnosed. Other indicators of SPD may be delays in handwriting, clumsiness, and intolerance to certain room temperatures or textures of clothing.

**LD:** Children with learning disabilities have normal intelligence, yet they struggle academically. This can be due to difficulty processing information that they read or hear, trouble understanding mathematical concepts, or challenges with writing.

### **Lining up Support**

Most parents find that they achieve the most for their child when they work hand-in-hand with the teacher, both during the diagnostic process and in providing treatment.

For children with mild impairments, schools may offer remedial instruction or a resource teacher. Some children qualify for programming under Section 504. Write to the intervention team-your child's teacher, the principle, and the director of special education- to request an assessment of your child. The school may provide preferential seating, organizational assistance, modified tests, and simplified homework assignments. If your child does not improve academically, ask for a referral for more extensive testing.

Students with significant impairments need an evaluation to qualify for an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Again this request should be made in writing. The school's multidisciplinary team will assess the child's intelligence and level of schoolwork. Services under an IEP are usually more intensive, and might include special education teachers; teacher's aides; and speech, occupational, and/or physical therapy. To ensure that the services your child receives continue to meet their needs, re-evaluate their IEP every year.

Article Source: Adoptive Families Magazine, Sept/Oct 2008  
Volume 41, Number 5

## **A Child's Joy**

2009 calenders are being put together now! If you would like your child to be a part of the calender, please email [alcgoodhope@aol.com](mailto:alcgoodhope@aol.com) with photos of your child, their first name, & birthdate before October 1st. Reserve your copies early!. A donation of \$17.00 will be accepted for each calender. 100% of the profits from your donations will go to Overseas Orphanages to improve the quality of life for the children while they await adoption.



A Child's Joy 2008 Calendar

*The Cape Cod Adoption Network is a collaboration between Good Hope Adoption Services, Friends of the Harwich Early Childhood Advisory Council, The Cape Cod Children's Place, The Upper Cape Family Network, and The Family United Network a program of the Cape Cod Child Development Programs. Agencies committed to providing family support and guidance throughout Cape Cod. Our Mission is to create connections for children, their families, their schools, and their communities; to offer educational and social support, parenting education and therapeutic opportunities through partnerships with adoptive family members, resources on Cape Cod, and the adoption community*

*For More information on these programs, call:*

*The Cape Cod Adoption Network (508)385-7815 ext. 5*

*[www.capecodadoptionnetwork.org](http://www.capecodadoptionnetwork.org)*

*Good Hope Adoption Services Dennis, (508)385-7815 ext. 2*

*Cape Cod Children's Place Eastham, (508) 240-3310*

*Cape Cod Child Development Families United Network Hyannis, (508)775-6240 ext. 512*

*Upper Cape Family Network Falmouth, (508)548-0151*

*Harwich Community Partnership Harwich, (508)430-1692*

Our good friend and  
Lifebooks author,  
Beth O'Mally,  
with daughter  
Polina Bell, age 5.



## Adoption and Foster Care School Awareness Project

Back to School: Hard Lessons for Adopted Children

by Charlotte Simpson

As summer ends and the start of school approaches, parents and kids everywhere get busy, nervous and excited - buying new backpacks, pencils and clothes, wondering if they will like their new teacher. Imagine being a child who was adopted or who lives in a foster family. Your anxiousness and excitement are just like everyone else's. Then the first day of school arrives and your teacher, eager to get to know her new students and help them feel comfortable and interested in each other starts the year by having everyone create and share their family tree. Or maybe it is write a story "all about me". Perhaps you are asked to tell your happiest and saddest memories or share what you did this summer. All of these lessons, planned with the best of intentions and recycled for years without regard for the changing composition of today's family can put an adopted or foster child into a tail spin and set a tone of anxiety and confusion for the new school year. What can you share with your new, unfamiliar classmates if your saddest memory is the death or abuse of a mother? How can you tell all about yourself if you don't know where or when you were born or you spent the summer being uprooted and placed into yet another foster home? How can you make a family tree if you don't know your birth father's name?

Placing children from "non-traditional" families in uncomfortable and sometimes impossible situations can seriously undermine their self esteem, peer relations and academic success. And yet, lessons like the "family tree" and studying genetics through personal information that most adopted children do not have not only persist in today's classrooms, they are part of our State Education Framework. In kindergarten, my daughter, who was adopted from Russia when she was 2 1/2 years old, was asked to bring in a baby photo - she doesn't have one. When first grade arrived, family trees hit the first week of school. This time I was better prepared. I shared my feelings about the impact of this assignment on my daughter and our lack of information. Her teacher developed a creative and sensitive lesson on "Who Lives in My House" which enabled all the children in her class - one whose parents were getting divorced, one who lived with her grandmother, and my daughter, to feel included and successful.

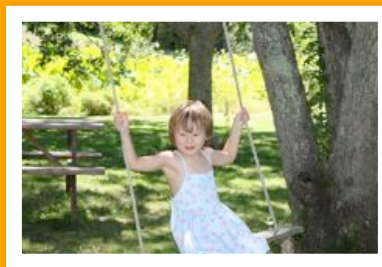
There are many excellent resources available for parents and professionals on the impact of adoption in the schools. All parents (not just adoptive ones) need to be pro-active in asking teachers and administrators to set a tone of inclusion and respect for all types of families. Teachers need to be creative and open to alternative lessons that meet their academic objectives without unfairly jeopardizing the success of some of their students. **ASAP (Adoption & Foster Care School Awareness Project)** is working actively on the South Shore to educate educators on the effects of adoption and foster care on their students' social and emotional development and academic achievement by establishing up to date, parent and professional resource collections through the public libraries and providing adoption information binders for teachers. We are committed to increasing awareness in the schools and in our communities of the special needs of our children and families; supporting adoptive and foster families; and, advocating for positive change. They are located in Pembroke, Massachusetts.

ASAP meets the first Tuesday of each month in beginning in October. For more information please visit [www.asapmass.org](http://www.asapmass.org)



## Welcome Home!

Good Hope and  
The Dwane family  
welcomes home their  
son, Aran, and daughter,  
Anya, from Kazakhstan,  
July 2008



## Adoption Information

*Info Sessions on Adoptions will be held the first  
Wednesdays of the month at 4:00 at Good Hope  
Adoption Services, Inc.*

*To learn more about domestic and international  
adoptions*

*join us: October 1, November 5, & December 3,  
2008*

*708 Route 134, South Dennis, MA*

**Tapestry Books**  
**offers a large assortment of books on adoption.**  
**Check out their website:**  
**[www.tapestrybooks.com](http://www.tapestrybooks.com)**

## Cape Cod Adoption Network's Calendar of Events ~ Fall 2008

### Toddler Play-Group (for ages 1-5)

West Dennis Community Center

School St., W. Dennis, MA

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month

Time: 11:00-12:30

### Kindermusik Classes

available with Norma Atwood.

The Cape Cod Adoption Network will help toddlers enroll!

Call Andi at 508-385-7815 x5

### Fall Play Group Host Mom:

Halloween Party!

~**October 29th**~ Jane Barrett~

9 Gray Lane, Hyannis, MA

Time: 11:00-12:30

phone: 415-726-7495

\*please RSVP (and get directions if needed) to Jane or Andi

### **Springtime at Justin's!**



Toddler Play Group met at Christine and Justin Sontag's house last May. What a great time everyone had! Thanks goes out to Christine and her family for having everyone there!

\*If you are interested in hosting a play group at your home, please call Andi at the Cape Cod Adoption Network to sign up! 508-385-7815

### **Sunday Kid's Activity Groups (For ages 5-13):**

**When? The last Sunday of every month.**

**Time? 2:00-4:00 pm**

**Bike Riding Sept. 28**

**Old Town House Park, South Yarmouth, MA**

**Swimming Oct 26**

**YMCA, Route 132, Barnstable, MA**

**Bowling Nov 30**

**Ryan's Family Amusements, South Yarmouth, MA**

### **Upcoming events:**

**look for another "Willy's Party" this winter!!**

**\*Please RSVP for the activities and/or directions to:**

**[alcgoodhope@aol.com](mailto:alcgoodhope@aol.com)**

### **Family Support Groups:**

**Waiting Family Meetings:** For Singles and Couples.

Place: Good Hope Adoption Services Office

708 Route 134, South Dennis, MA

Dates: Third Saturday of Each Month

Time: 5:30-7:00PM \*Pizza and Coffee served

Bring Desserts!

### **Adoptive Moms Support Group:**

The Northside United Methodist Church

701 Airline Road, Dennis, MA

Dates: 4th Saturday of each month (Sept. 27th, Oct. 25th, Nov. 22)

Time: 10:00AM-11:30AM

Child Care Available with notice email [alcgoodhope@aol.com](mailto:alcgoodhope@aol.com)

\*Coffee and Refreshments served

### **Educational Workshops:**

#### **More Than Love**

A program for the Pre-Adoptive Parent:

Practical information to help families bond.

**presented by Barbara Braun-McDonald, RNCS**

Place: Good Hope Adoption Services Office

708 Route 134, South Dennis, MA

Date: September 20 (during the Waiting Families Meeting)

Time: 5:30-7:00PM

\*call to reserve a seat, seating is limited

#### **Parent/Professional Work Group**

A workshop designed to help sort out the educational process, identify the gaps and to help parents become better advocates for their adopted children in our school systems.

**Facilitated by Dr. Boris Gindis, with Dr. Anait Azarian**

Place: Northside United Methodist Church

701 Airline Road, Dennis, MA

Date: October 17th

Time 9:00-3:00

\*\*See Flyer on back page and register now!!

### **Family Social Events:**

#### **Fall Gathering/Family Social**

Adoptive Families and Friends Annual Fall Party

Featuring "Marcus and Magician" and "Creative Face Painting"

Date: October 18, 2008

Time 1:00-4:00

Where: West Parish of Barnstable Congregational Church

Route 149, West Barnstable, MA (exit 5 off the midcape hwy)

#### **National Adoption Day Celebration**

November is National Adoption and Foster Care Month

Join us for an afternoon of family fun and celebration!

**Games, Prizes, Entertainment, and Face Painting**

**Date: November 15, 2008**

**Time: 1:00-4:00**

**Where: West Dennis Community Center**

**School Street, West Dennis, MA**

For more information on any of our programs, please contact Andi Lunden at the Cape Cod Adoption Network: 508-385-7815 ext. 5 \*Sign up to be on the mailing list!

Published by Good Hope Adoption Services of Cape Cod

### Current Status In International Adoption

**Uzbekistan:** The Republic of Uzbekistan offers unique adoption possibilities for families. A neighbor to Kazakhstan, this central Asian country cares for children within an orphanage system, controlled by local jurisdiction. Adoptions are processed with approval of the regional mayor. Like most former Soviet Republics, two trips are required, with an exit VISA interview at the US Embassy in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Good Hope has just received word that our approval to operate as an Adoption Agency in the country of Uzbekistan is forthcoming in the month of September. This accreditation will allow us to begin accepting families into this country program, with the hopes that this process will move along at a reasonable pace. Please call the Good Hope office to receive information.

**Kazakhstan:** The Republic of Kazakhstan has again been processing dossiers at the Embassy in Washington, DC since the middle of July, 2008. During the long months of January through June 2008, the amount of factual information available to adoption agencies was extremely limited. Through the intervention of the United States Department of State, Children's Services Division, and the Joint Council of International Children's Services, the slowdown impacting many adoption agencies has been rectified. There are new procedures in place, and we have seen positive progress made. This has enabled many agencies, including Good Hope, to once again proactively offer adoptions in Kazakhstan as a viable choice for families. At this time, the wait may be shortened somewhat by a faster moving process within the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, in Astana, Kazakhstan. The in-country process remains the same, at two trips, and the children, of course, are simply beautiful! If you have interest in knowing more, please call the office anytime between the hours of 8:30 and 4:00.

**China:** International Adoptions in the Republic of China have slowed down to a very slow pace, with the wait period being estimated at three to five years for a referral at this time. There are many speculations about the reasoning for this, however, suffice it to say that this may not be the best choice for most families at this time. Good Hope continues to partner with Homeland Adoptions in New York, which has been a good choice for some families interested in China. The wait for a referral can be 4-12 months following approved dossier submission to China. Most children have a medical diagnosis, either treatable or repaired, such as a cleft plate, clubfoot, or correctable heart condition. Medical information is readily available, and families are asked to identify health conditions that they are confident can be managed within their family system.

**Poland:** Although adoptions from Poland are not widely known, this country typically places children that are in sibling groups of 2-4 children, usually over the age of four. Because of this, most pre-adoptive families may be initially hesitant, until learning more about the beautiful children and their sound, in-country care. Huminska's Angels, our partner in Polish adoptions, has been very successful over the past eighteen years, matching over one thousand children with US families. Good Hope is very fortunate to have this partnership arrangement, and confident that families open to adopting a sibling group will find Poland a very good fit.

**Russia:** The country of Russia is open to international adoption. Although many US agencies are not yet accredited by the Russian government, our New York partner, Happy Families International Center, was among the first agencies to receive this designation. Their Russian program is both operational and very successful. Happy Families typically completes their adoptions within 12-14 months, and works in several different regions throughout Russia. We are happy to recommend this country option, and encourage families to consider Russia as a viable option for international adoptions at this time.

**Closed Countries:** The following countries remain closed to International Adoption: Guatemala, Vietnam, Romania and Ukraine. Other countries may open on a limited basis, such as Nepal, Taiwan, and Peru, but these adoptions typically take a very long time to complete, and are not recommended to families at this time.

**Domestic Adoption:** Adoptions with US children, is still a very real possibility for families to pursue. Although an entirely different adoption process, pre-adoptive parents can locate agencies that specialize in working with birthmothers, coordinating this adoption through the family matching procedure and final adoption. It is necessary to have a Massachusetts adoption agency act on the behalf of local families, if the Birthmother's,(sending),state is not Massachusetts. Good Hope has acted in this capacity for several local families and is in a position to offer recommendations to families, based on recent experience. Interested families are encouraged to speak to Mary Ellen McGowan in our office.

**DSS Foster Care/ Child Placement:** Through our partnership, the Cape Cod Adoption Network continues to support foster families, their children and individuals considering becoming foster parents through the DSS Foster Care system. For additional information, please contact Nancy Kinder at 508-894-3815, at the Brockton regional DSS office.



### Resources and Websites

- Happy Family International Center, Inc.  
3 Stone Street, Cold Spring, NY 10516  
[www.happyfamilies.org](http://www.happyfamilies.org) phone:845-265-4731
- Homeland Adoptions  
99 Main St. Suite114, Nyack, NY 10960  
Phone: 413-253-3592, email: [NRelffsin@hotmail.com](mailto:NRelffsin@hotmail.com)
- Huminska's Anioly, Inc.  
<http://www.adoptionspolish.com>
- Adoption Community of New England  
45 Lyman Street, #2, Westborough, MA 01581  
[www.AdoptionCommunityofNE.org](http://www.AdoptionCommunityofNE.org) phone: 508-366-6812
- The Asian Culture Society of Cape Cod  
152 Henry's Road, Brewster, MA 02631  
<http://www.asiancamp.org>
- Families for Russian & Ukrainian Adoption  
P.O. Box 2944, Merrifield, VA 22116  
phone: 703-560-6184
- Families with Children from China  
<http://www.fwcc.org/welcome.html>
- Kazakh Aul of the United States  
Association for American & Kazakh Families  
247 Cypress Street, Inc., Providence, RI 02906  
phone: 401-486-4023

# Adoption & Education

A workshop for  
Parents and Professionals

*Facilitated By*

**Dr. Boris Gindis**

**& Tatyana Gindis**

*Of the BG Center School*

**with Dr. Anait Azarian**

Center for Cognitive Development Assessment and Remediation

*This workshop will focus on the unique educational issues faced by adopted children who have resided in overseas orphanages and foster-care. This workshop will present how parents and educators can identify the gaps in traditional school settings so they can become better advocates for the adopted child.*

**Where:** Northside United Methodist Church

701 Airline Road, Dennis, Massachusetts

**When:** Friday, October 17th 2008

**Schedule:** 8:30-9:00- Registration

9:00-12:00 ~Parent's Workshop

12:30-3:00 ~ Educator's Work

**Pre-Registration Required.**

**Please fill in the bottom portion of this form and mail with your checks payable to: Cape Cod Adoption Network. c/o Good Hope Adoption Services, 708 Route 134, South Dennis MA 02660**

**\$35.00 registration fee/Group Rates available/ Scholarships for families.**

**For additional information, please contact: The Cape Cod Adoption Network**

508-385-7815// [www.capecodadoptionnetwork.org](http://www.capecodadoptionnetwork.org).

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**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **# of people** \_\_\_\_\_

**School District/Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information: Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

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