

FALL BULLETIN 2016

On the road to forever.



We invite parents and professionals
to contribute to the quarterly bulletin.

Please e-mail

vtadoption@vermont.gov with possible
submissions.

In this issue....

- Update on the VAC
- National Adoption Month Calendar & Happenings in Vermont
- Library Information
- Article/Book Review
- 2016 National Adoption Day
- Learning & Support Galore!
- The Vermont Adoption Proclamation

Updates with the Vermont Adoption Consortium



September of this year saw the end of an era. For 8 years, Leanne LaChance Porter acted as the Coordinator of the Vermont Adoption Consortium (VAC). Her leadership enriched the lives of adoptive families through the building of a resource library, numerous conferences and trainings, and the leadership of Post-Permanency Services in Vermont. New opportunities presented themselves for her this fall, and she has moved on. We wish her well and thank her for her years of dedicated service on behalf of Vermont families formed through adoption. She will be missed. In the interim, Barbara Joyal and Gillie Hopkins at DCF Family Services, as well as the whole VAC Executive Committee,

are working to support the VAC to continue this group's good work, and we look forward to sharing news about your new Coordinator in the next edition of the newsletter. In the meantime, you can continue to email vtadoption@vermont.gov with any question or concerns you may have.

Change is inevitable. Progress is optional – Tony Robbins

There have also been a few recent changes to the Vermont Adoption Consortium Executive Committee. For you information and convenience, and current membership list is found here:

Gillie Hopkins, representing Project Family

Lynn Bessette, representing Post Adoption Services - Easter Seals

Angela Walters, Children's Director North East Kingdom Human Services, representing mental health

Janet Benoit Connor, representing the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership

Lisa Campbell, Parent representative

Ruth D'Angelo, Parent advocacy representative and Howard Center

Ann Clark, Adoption Advocates, representing private adoption agencies

All can be reached via vtadoption@vermont.gov



SAVE THE DATE!

2017 Spring Conference:

April 21

Lake Morey Resort

Fairlee, Vermont

Further Information Forthcoming

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Some Ways to Honor National Adoption Awareness Month:

National Adoption Month



Connect with other adoptive families or hopeful parents-to-be in the groups on adoptivefamiliescircle.com. Chime in with your experiences and support.

Write a thank-you letter to the judge, social worker, or other professional who made your adoption happen.

Talk to someone who is considering adoption. Tell them about the highs, the lows, the unforgettable moments. Tell them why you'd do it all over again!

Make holiday crafts that incorporate imagery or materials from your child's heritage.

Find an adult adoptee or a person of color—a coach, a teacher, or a babysitter—who can serve as a mentor for your child. Arrange for them to get together monthly.

Make a donation in your child's or his birth mother's name to an adoption-related charity or organization.

See full calendar of ideas at: <https://www.adoptivefamilies.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2016-adoption-awareness-calendar.pdf>



National Adoption Month Celebration

With Reading of the Vermont Adoption Proclamation

November 16, 2016

5:30-7:00

Hoehl Family Building

50 Joy Drive South Burlington, VT

COME AND CELEBRATE ADOPTION!

5:00-6:30—Pizza and Salad

5:30-7:00—Family Photos

5:30-7:00—come visit some alternative therapeutic interventions

Please RSVP: Heather Simmons at 864-7467 ext. 2008 or heathers@lundvt.org

I wonder if there is a book about that.

There just might be. With over 700 books and approximately 50 audio-visual materials, there is a good chance the Vermont Adoption Consortium (VAC) Lending Library might be able to help. Browse the entire collection on the web at: <http://www.vtadoption.org>. If you'd like to borrow an item, it will be sent to you at no charge.

Or call ahead to let us know when to expect you (802-223-4744) and come in to browse the shelves to make your choices. (The physical Library is located at the Easter Seals VT offices in Berlin, VT.)

Either way, if you live in Vermont, We are happy to be of service to you.

-Carol MacDougall, Easter Seals



IN REVIEW:

Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

The Language of Flowers is the only novel written by Vanessa Diffenbaugh and it was a New York Times bestseller and is widely available in Vermont libraries and in paperback and Kindle forms.

It is the story of Victoria, an eighteen year old person, who has been in the custody of the state for a number of years and has no meaningful relationship with family. The book starts with Victoria living in a group home and she is about to age out of the state system. She has a contentious relationship with her social worker and basically receives minimal help for being on her own. Victoria has no significant relationships in her life but has a passion and talent for flowers and their meanings.

Victoria has some very difficult times as she navigates her life without the safety net of state custody. However, she forms a relationship with a flower seller and is able to develop her talents with flowers. She still is very wary of relationships. Victoria eventually becomes pregnant and is very reticent to enter into a relationship with the baby or the baby's father because of her past experiences with relationships.

This book speaks well to the experiences of some young people who have been in state custody, have no meaningful relationships with biological family members, and are thus, on their own at age 18. The book conveys the message of loss and often lack of trust that these youngsters experience.

This is a book to be shared with older, mature adolescents and young adults. It will facilitate rich communication between parents and their children.

Book review submitted by Ann Clark, LICSW, Adoption Advocates



2016 National Adoption Day Celebrated All Week in Vermont

Over the course of the week of November 14th, Project Family workers will bear witness to around 50 of Vermont's kids going home as a member of their forever family for the first time. With a major influx of children in Vermont's foster care system, this week is set to be a high point of the year, not just for these kids and their families, but for the citizens of Vermont.

Tremendous thanks go to the children and their families, for toughing it out, to the DCF staff and partner organizations who have worked to keep kids safe, to Project Family staff who set the stage for this final permanency, and to the Court personnel who see this process through and celebrate its end in adoption.

At the date of publishing for this newsletter, the week of November 14 had 37 adoptions scheduled:

2 Adoptions in Caledonia County, 9 Adoptions in Chittenden County, 7 Adoptions in Franklin County, 3 Adoptions in Orange County, 6 Adoptions in Rutland County, 1 Adoption in Washington County, and 9 Adoptions in Windsor County

Gillie Hopkins & Wanda Audette
Project Family

LEARNING OPPORTUNITY:

Foundations Certificate in Adoption Competency with Children and Families
Thanks to the Placement Stability Project at UVM's Department of Social Work, there are Online Training Modules now available:

Two separate Certificates are available through the Vermont Child Welfare Training Partnership's E-learning site: One in Trauma Informed Practice with children and families (with a total of 11 modules) **and one in Adoption Competency with children and families (with a total of 4 modules)**. These trainings provides the foundational knowledge necessary to effectively work with children and families through a trauma informed and adoption competent lens, while providing concrete skills that will improve a provider's capacity to effectively implement evidence informed treatments. Participants can complete individual modules and receive certificates of completion for each module or complete all modules for the Foundations Certificate.

This is an E-learning site with open access to view archived webinars on each module: <http://training.vermontcwtp.org/>

For more information contact: Jessica Strolin at jstrolin@uvm.edu or Jennifer Jorgenson jjorgens@uvm.edu



SUPPORT GROUPS FOR FAMILIES

The following Support Groups are provided by the Vermont Adoption Consortium in collaboration with Post permanence Services (From Lund, Easter Seals, NFI or NEKHS). Some groups are also co-sponsored by community partners.

Addison County

Support Group for Adoptive Families held the 4th Tuesday of the month. Held in Middlebury.

Contact Donna Provin (below) for where it will be held this month.

Please call Donna Provin at (802) 343-0565 or email donnap@lundvt.org for more information.

Brattleboro

Support Group for Adoptive Parents the second Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30 pm. Brattleboro Savings and Loan Community Room

Please contact Danna Bare for more information: Danna Bare, M.Ed, (802) 258-0308

Chittenden County

Chittenden County Circle of Parents Support Group for Adoptive and Guardianship Families

This group is held the LAST Tuesday of every month from 5:00-6:30pm in South Burlington.

Pre-registration is required.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Melis-

sa Appleton, MSW, or Katherine Boise, BSW, M.Ed at Lund at (802) 864-7467.

Franklin County

1st Tuesday of every month at the Senior Center, 75 Messenger Street, St. Albans from 5:30-7:30 pm. Dinner and childcare provided at no cost.

Please contact Nina Kempf-Miller (802) 524-1700 or Monica Darrah (802) 578-2702 to RSVP or for more information.

Morrisville

2nd Thursday of the month, the Morrisville DCF office - 5:30 - 7pm

For information contact: Karen Langdell, Easter Seals of Vermont, (802) 730-6667

Shaftsbury

3rd Thursday of the month from 7 - 9 p.m at the Shaftsbury Methodist Church.

For more information contact: Lund at (802) 864-7467 or Jill C. Bouton at (802) 223-4744

Upper Valley- KINSHIP CARE SUPPORT GROUP

Meeting the first Thursday of each month, 1-2:30 pm 2458 Christian Street, Wilder, VT (next to Dothan Brook School on Route 5)

For more information contact: Judith Bush, ACSW (802) 356-9393 x 2 or jbush@together.net

POST-PERMANENCE SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

Post Permanence Services are available to families that have adopted. If you can use assistance please contact the following supervisors:

EASTER SEALS

BARRE, BENNINGTON, BURLINGTON, HARTFORD, MORRISVILLE, RUTLAND

641 Comstock Road, Suite 1, Berlin, VT 05602
PPSP Manager, Lynn Bessette, Program Manager (802) 279-4241 lbessette@eastersealsvt.org

LUND

BRATTLEBORO, BURLINGTON, MIDDLEBURY, SPRINGFIELD

P.O. Box 4009, Burlington, VT 05401

Melissa Appleton, Supervisor (802) 864-7467
X2019 C: 782-3311 melissaa@lundvt.org

NFI

ST ALBANS, GRAND ISLE

12 Fairfield Hill Road, St. Albans, VT 05478

Kriss Lococo, Regional Manager, (802) 524-1700

Kristenlococo@nafi.com

**NKHS Northeast Kingdom Human Services
NEWPORT, ST. JOHNSBURY**

P.O. Box 724, Newport, VT 05855

Karen Hack, Supervisor, (802) 334-6744 x2140
khack@nkhs.net

**State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation**

WHEREAS, the State of Vermont recognizes the importance of giving children permanent, safe and loving families through adoption, recognizes the selflessness of adoptive parents, and the bravery of families formed through adoption; and

WHEREAS, Vermont's future depends on today's children; and

WHEREAS, more than 107,000 in the United States foster care system are awaiting to be adopted; and

WHEREAS, approximately 80 children in Vermont are waiting for permanent families; and

WHEREAS, to help these children find permanent, nurturing families, courts and agencies across the nation will strive to raise awareness surrounding adoption in the month of November; and

WHEREAS, Vermont Courts will open their doors throughout the month of November in honor of National Adoption Day to finalize the adoptions of local children and to join other organizations to celebrate all adoptions; and

WHEREAS, this effort, along with similar celebrations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, will offer children the chance to live with stable and loving families and encourage other dedicated individuals to make a powerful difference in the lives of a child through adoption; and

WHEREAS, Vermont honors the crucial needs of these children and all of those who work tirelessly to place them in loving families;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Peter Shumlin, Governor, do hereby proclaim November 2016 as

ADOPTION MONTH

and November 18, 2016 as

ADOPTION DAY

in the State of Vermont.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of
Vermont on this 27th day of October, A.D. 2016



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'P' followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor