



NYS CITIZENS' COALITION FOR CHILDREN

20th Annual Foster Care
and Adoption Conference

Commitment Counts!

FEATURING:

LAURA VELEZ

Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare and Community Services

DENISE GOODMAN

DEBBIE RILEY

May 7-9, 2009 / Albany, NY



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Commitment Counts!, our 20th annual statewide conference, focuses on multiple commitments – from New York State, Counties, agencies, caseworkers, and families – to those that they serve and/or care for, in order that children in foster care or who have been adopted can truly thrive. Although economic commitment is important, the plenary speakers and workshop presenters will also reflect on emotional and professional commitments. Whether as professionals at work or parents at home, maintaining commitment counts! Our plenary speakers and the workshop presenters were selected because their knowledge and expertise can help participants gain perspective, increase skills, and learn to appreciate the positives.

The conference begins with a half-day Institute, *Preparing Adoptive Parents*, on Thursday afternoon presented by Jeanne Howard, PhD. (See page 6 for Institute description.)

The conference features nationally known speakers and 30 workshops delivered by experts in child welfare and related fields. On Friday evening, we will show the film, *A Place Between – The Story of an Adoption*.

All who can benefit from up-to-date information on the most important issues in foster care and adoption today are urged to attend. The conference will provide you with renewed energy!

ACCOMMODATIONS

The conference will be held at the Marriott Hotel in Albany, NY. To make your reservation, use the included reservation form or telephone the hotel. If you call for reservations, be sure to identify yourself as part of the NYSCCC Conference so that you receive the special conference rate of \$104 plus applicable taxes. This rate is available for May 6-10, 2009 only.

The Marriott Hotel is adjacent to Interstate 87 near Exit 4, two minutes from the I-87/I-90 interchange, and six miles from downtown Albany.

We urge you to make reservations immediately! The hotel must receive reservations no later than April 14, 2009. Reservations made after April 14 are subject to availability only.

Albany Marriott Hotel

189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205
518-458-8444 / 800-443-8952

USEFUL INFORMATION

- Extra copies of the conference brochure are available from the Coalition office or online at www.nysccc.org.
- Temperature in conference rooms can vary widely, so be sure to bring a sweater or jacket to ensure your comfort.
- A limited number of exhibit tables are available. There will also be tables available to display free resource materials. Contact NYSCCC for details regarding reservations and fees.
- The conference will feature a large adoption and foster care bookstore plus sales of many popular NYSCCC items. VISA, MasterCard, and American Express credit cards are welcome.
- Children are not permitted to attend workshops and plenary sessions. We appreciate your cooperation with this necessity.
- Please silence all cell phones during conference sessions! We have received many complaints about cell phone disturbances.
- Continuing Education credit is available for \$15. See the Registration Form for details.
- Recordings of conference proceedings will be for sale at the conference and afterwards. The recordings provide an excellent opportunity to “attend” all of the workshops and to share the information with others.
- Door prizes will be awarded at the closing session! You must be present to win.

ABOUT NYSCCC

The New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children provides information, support and advocacy to foster and adoptive parents and professionals. We believe every child has the right to a permanent, loving family. Our activities include:

- adoption and foster care reform
- administrative and legislative advocacy
- parent group development and support
- information and referral services
- education and training



NYSCCC CITIZENS' COALITION FOR CHILDREN

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FEATURED SPEAKERS

LAURA VELEZ has a Masters Degree in Social Work and 25 years of human services experience in a variety of management capacities. Her experience includes work in New York City with runaway and homeless youth, directing an outpatient substance abuse treatment program, and holding local government positions in mental health and child welfare. She spent six and a half years as the Director of Children and Family Services in Schenectady County overseeing child protective, foster care, adoption, and child care services. Her most recent experiences include serving for one year as the Executive Assistant to Commissioner Carrion at the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, and is currently the Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare and Community Services.

DENISE GOODMAN, PhD. conducts workshops and consultations throughout the United States and Canada on topics related to foster care and adoption. In her more than 30 years in the field, she has held positions as a protective services social worker, Residential Treatment Coordinator, Research/Education Specialist and foster parent.

DEBBIE B. RILEY, M.S. is Executive Director of The Center for Adoption Support and Education, Inc. (C.A.S.E.), an independent adoptive family support organization in the Baltimore-Washington area, and author of the newly published book, *Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens*. She is also an adoptive parent.

SAVE THE DATES!

Next Year: May 6-8, 2010

21st Annual NYSCCC
Foster Care and
Adoption Conference

Albany, New York



SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2009

- 1:00 p.m. INSTITUTE
Jeanne Howard
Preparing Adoptive Parents
- 7:30 p.m. NYSCCC ANNUAL MEETING
*For Parent Group Representatives
and NYSCCC members*

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2009

- 8:00 a.m. REGISTRATION/EXHIBITS
- 9:00 a.m. OPENING SESSION
WELCOME
Stewart Blechner
President, NYSCCC
KEYNOTE PRESENTATION
Laura Velez
*Deputy Commissioner for Child
Welfare and Community Services*
- 10:00 a.m. BEVERAGE BREAK
- 10:30 a.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 1
- 12:15 p.m. LUNCH
PLENARY ADDRESS
Denise Goodman
- 1:45 p.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 2
- 3:15 p.m. BEVERAGE BREAK
- 3:35 p.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 3
- 5:15 p.m. RECEPTION
- 7:00 p.m. FILM: *A Place Between—
The Story of an Adoption*

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2008

- 8:00 a.m. REGISTRATION / EXHIBITS
- 8:30 a.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 4
- 9:50 a.m. BEVERAGE BREAK
- 10:05 a.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 5
- 11:40 a.m. WORKSHOP PERIOD 6
- 1:00 p.m. LUNCH
CLOSING SESSION
Sarah Gerstenzang
Executive Director, NYSCCC
CLOSING ADDRESS
Debbie Riley

2009

COMMITMENT COUNTS

20th Annual Foster Care and Adoption Conference



Friday, May 8, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 1

10:30 a.m.-12:00 Noon

1. Preparing Children for Adoption

What can we do to help children move psychologically to an adoptive family? —*Denise Goodman*

2. The "Hardest" Children: Post Adoption Support

What is our obligation to families adopting children with histories of loss and trauma? Lessons from an adoption preservation program in a large Midwestern state provides a template for services. —*Jeanne Howard*

3. Ethical Decision-Making in Adoption and Foster Care

How do caseworkers make ethical choices when there are often conflicting interests? Case examples will be used to structure the discussion in this conversation. —*Barbara Holtan*

4. Working with Kinship Families

Daily lifestyle changes that kinship caregivers, children and birth parents experience and suggestions for working with these families. —*Wendy Neilson*

5. The Dollar Value of Adoption

A dollar spent on the adoption of a child from foster care yields about three dollars in benefits. An economic model shows where and how these savings occur. —*Mary Hansen*

Friday, May 8, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 2

1:45-3:15 p.m.

6. Saying Goodbye: Separation and Loss in Foster Parenting

Much attention is paid to the loss children in care experience. However, we often forget that foster parents also grieve when children leave their home. —*Donna Cox*

7. Educational Planning for Children Discharged from Residential Care

Planning steps that should be taken prior to discharge; students' rights with respect to re-enrollment in their previous schools; consent for special education and updated evaluations; placements for children with disabilities; and more! —*Cara Chambers*

8. Current Adoption Research That You Should Know About but Don't Have Time to Read!

Learn about the latest adoption research findings in a fun and interactive workshop. —*Madelyn Freundlich*

9. Wendy's Wonderful Kids: Early Evaluation Results

An innovative model, funded nationally by the Dave Thomas Foundation, for achieving older child adoption and results of this effort. —*Rita Sorenson and Karin Malm*

10. Access to Foster Care and Adoption Records

What does New York State law and policy say about storing foster care and adoption records? Under what circumstances can children who were in foster care or who have been adopted access their records? —*Michael Neff*

Friday, May 8, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 3

3:35-5:05 p.m.

11. Impact of Abuse/Neglect on Child Development

How does a history of trauma affect a child's development? And what can parents do to remediate some of the impact? —*Denise Goodman*

12. Navigating the School-Age Special Education System

The special education referral, evaluation and placement process: relevant timelines; the law regarding consent for evaluations and services; key players and documents; and how to troubleshoot common problems. —*Cara Chambers*

13. Adoption from a Distance

Children are adopted across state lines every day in the United States. How can we make this work cost effectively for children and families? —*Maris Blechner*

14. Bridges to Health (B2H)

B2H is the first Medicaid Waiver Program in the nation to exclusively serve children in foster care with serious emotional disturbances, developmental disabilities and medical fragility. How's it working? —*Mimi Weber and Sherri Romano*

15. Hitting the MARC: Establishing Foster Care Minimum Adequate Rates for Children

An economic model developed to determine adequate payments to foster parents for the children in their care and its implications for federal and state policy and advocacy. —*Julie Farber*

PLEASE JOIN US FRIDAY EVENING!

RECEPTION, 5:15 p.m.

FILM, 7:00 p.m.

(A Place Between—The Story of an Adoption)

Saturday, May 9, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 4

8:30-9:50 a.m.

16. Beneath the Mask: Adoption Through the Eyes of Adolescents

How adoption influences the normal tasks of adolescence: separation from parents, identity formation, and sexuality. Emotional and behavioral issues at home and at school will be addressed. —*Debbie Riley*

17. Psychiatric Issues in Children

Children who enter a family after birth often have psychological scars. And some children are born with a predisposition to mental illness. When should families seek treatment when a child seems depressed or explosive?

—*Dr. Anthony Malone*

18. Understanding Child Sexual Abuse

Explore some of the myths and facts surrounding child sexual abuse and get an introduction to this topic. —*Ron Robinson*

19. Foster Care to Adoption

Most children adopted from foster care are adopted by their foster parents – a significant emotional and legal shift for parents and children. How can we give this transition the attention it deserves? —*Maris Blechner*

20. Foster Parent Rights – a Review!

What is the impact of a NYS law that assures the right of foster parents to attend permanency hearings? What other rights do foster parents have?

—*Margaret Burt*

Saturday, May 9, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 5

10:05-11:25 a.m.

21. Helping Parents Deal with the Tough Questions

What do children understand about adoption at different developmental stages? And how can parents use this information to share what they perceive to be difficult, negative, or painful? —*Debbie Riley*

22. Developmental Issues in Children

Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Mental Retardation – what are developmental issues and how do they impact a child's ability to learn and function? How are developmental issues diagnosed and what supports are available for families? —*Dr. Anthony Malone*

23. Different Times, Different Places: A Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspective on Adoption and Foster Care

We can learn from adoption/foster care practices through the ages and in cultures throughout the world. Implications for more sensible, improved practices today. —*John Sobraske*

24. Parent and Child Groups: Learning to Have Fun!

A unique post-adoption support group works on building parent-child relationships through fun... and addresses issues at the same time!

—*Priscillia Gore and Michael Jefferson*

25. New Placement Options for Children

Several new statutes create different legal placement options for children, particularly with relatives. —*Margaret Burt*

Saturday, May 9, 2009

WORKSHOP PERIOD 6

11:40-1:00 p.m.

26. ADHD: Understand and Celebrate Your Energetically-Gifted Child

An overview including key symptoms, possible causes, and common diagnostic and treatment methods with practical parenting strategies that build on the strengths of children with ADHD. —*Helen Shin*

27. Healthy Transitions for Youth with Developmental Disabilities

The Healthy Transitions curriculum helps youth transition from pediatric to adult health care. Learn from our statewide and national discussions with youth, families and physicians. —*Jeffrey Tamburo*

28. Allegations Happen!

Foster and adoptive parents are vulnerable to allegations of maltreatment. Come learn some tips to preventing and surviving this stressful experience.

—*Don Bowersox and Susie Collins*

29. Keeping Your Commitment

Can we predict whether commitment to a child from a prospective parent will be shallow, conditional, or real? How? What is the impact on our kids when we don't or when we are wrong? —*Jack Brennan*

30. Legal Rights of Fathers

Terminations, Adoptions and Surrenders – a review of father's rights. —*Margaret Burt*

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and the NYS Office of Children and Family Services for their support!





INSTITUTE

Preparing Adoptive Parents

Thursday, May 7, 2009 • 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Presented by Jeanne Howard, PhD, Co-Director of the Center for Adoption Studies at Illinois State University and Policy and Research Director for the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, a leading research and policy group in the adoption field.

A common finding in research with parents who have adopted is the insufficiency of their preparation for the challenges of adoptive parenthood, especially when their children come from backgrounds of trauma and deprivation. A common report from those preparing parents for adoption is that parents often don't understand the significance of what they have been told or believe that their skill and love is enough to conquer any problems that might emerge. This workshop, based on a paper developed by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, explores the reality in between. This workshop emphasizes the critical importance of preparation, guidelines for what preparation should include, the need for preparation to extend beyond placement and even finalization, and how to help parents accept "hard truths".

SPECIAL EVENT

A Place Between – The Story of an Adoption

Friday, May 8, 2009 • 7:00 p.m.

A dramatic story of the reconciliation between biological and adoptive families: this film documents the journey of a cross-cultural adoptee who struggles to find balance between his families' different ethnicities and traditions and to discover how and where he fits into each world.

Following the tragic death of their younger brother in 1980, Curtis Kaltenbaugh, 7, and his brother Ashok, 4, were removed from their birth mother's care in Manitoba and adopted into a white, middle-class family in Pennsylvania. This film follows Curtis' struggle with his biological family's turbulent history and observes what happens when his biological and adoptive families finally meet.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEES INCLUDE all instructional materials and refreshment break for the Institute. For the two-day conference (Friday and Saturday), registration fees include all instructional materials, refreshment breaks, two lunches, reception, Friday evening special event, and any other scheduled conference activities.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT is available for an additional fee of \$15. A certificate granting 1 continuing education credit (10 contact hours equal 1 CEU) will be awarded by Tompkins Cortland Community College to those attending the full 2-day conference on Friday and Saturday. For those attending the Institute, an additional .4 credit will be awarded. A Certificate of Attendance will be available after the conference, at no charge, upon request only.

CANCELLATION POLICY: A \$40 administrative fee will be charged on all cancellations. The balance of the registration fee will be refunded if written cancellation is received by April 24, 2009. Refunds will be issued after the conference. Any registration may be transferred to another person with advance notice to NYSCCC. No refunds will be given for cancellations after April 24, 2009. No-shows will be billed! Agencies are responsible for paying purchase orders for any no-shows.

NYSCCC MEMBERS ARE THOSE WHO currently hold a 2009 membership or those who join NYSCCC when registering for the conference. Important: Parent groups and agencies that are 2009 members are entitled to send three representatives at the NYSCCC member price. All other representatives from the same parent group or agency must either join as individuals or pay the non-member rate. Do not use the member rate unless you are certain you are a paid-up member for 2009. To verify membership status, contact the NYSCCC office, office@nysccc.org or 607-272-0034.

PLEASE CALCULATE REGISTRATION FEES CAREFULLY! Any overpayment will be considered a donation to NYSCCC.

SUBMIT A SEPARATE REGISTRATION FORM, INCLUDING WORKSHOP SELECTIONS, FOR EACH ATTENDEE. Feel free to make copies of the Registration Form.

DO NOT FAX OR MAIL ANY REGISTRATIONS AFTER MAY 1. After May 1, registrations are accepted at the door only.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Registration for the conference should be made on this form. Use a separate form for each registrant. Feel free to copy the form as needed. Written confirmation will be emailed to all registrants. Full payment, authorized purchase order/voucher, or credit card information must accompany all registrations. All purchase orders/vouchers are payable within 30 days.

No faxed registrations will be processed unless accompanied by full payment.

Please type or print clearly:

Name _____

Parent Group or Agency Affiliation (if applicable) _____

Address (parents: home address) _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Daytime Telephone _____

Email Address _____

CIRCLE the appropriate dollar amount for each option selected.

Event Registration	NYSCCC Member		Non-Member	
	Before 4/17/09	After 4/17/09	Before 4/17/09	After 4/17/09
Institute (Thursday)	\$40.00	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$60.00
2-Day Conference (Friday & Saturday)	\$135.00	\$160.00	\$170.00	\$195.00
Friday Only	\$110.00	\$135.00	\$140.00	\$165.00
Saturday Only	\$90.00	\$115.00	\$120.00	\$145.00
Registration Subtotal	\$	\$	\$	\$

Individual Membership	add \$25.00	\$
Group/Organization	add \$50.00	\$
Continuing Education Credit	add \$15.00	\$
Add Registration Subtotal (from above)	\$	
Total Amount Enclosed	\$	

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

- Check** Make checks payable to:
NYS Citizens' Coalition for Children
- Purchase Order/Voucher – Payable within 30 days**
NYSCCC Federal ID #51-0194916

Visa **MasterCard** **American Express**

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Be sure to indicate workshop choices on reverse.

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

MAIL HOTEL RESERVATION FORM TO:

Albany Marriott Hotel, 189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205 • Telephone: 518-458-8444 • 800-443-8952



**NYS Citizens'
Coalition for Children**

Reservations MUST be received by the hotel by April 17, 2009 to guarantee availability at the special conference rate.

Name _____ Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Room rate \$101: Single Double Triple Quad Sharing room with _____

To guarantee reservation past 6:00 p.m., send deposit equal to one night's stay or credit card name and number.

Credit Card Name _____ Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

WORKSHOP CHOICES

Using the chart below, please circle the number of the workshop you plan to attend in each Workshop Period. (*See inside for descriptions of workshops.*)


FRIDAY			SATURDAY		
Workshop Period 1	Workshop Period 2	Workshop Period 3	Workshop Period 4	Workshop Period 5	Workshop Period 6
1	6	11	16	21	26
2	7	12	17	22	27
3	8	13	18	23	28
4	9	14	19	24	29
5	10	15	20	25	30

Mail or fax Conference Registration Form, including Workshop Choices and full payment or authorized purchase order or voucher to:
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