

The 2008 Adoptive Family & Youth Training Seminar

Sponsored by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, State Adoption Unit



About the Seminar

With a focus on the lifelong aspects of adoption, this annual training seminar provides information on some of the most important issues and concerns in adoption today. The primary focus of the conference is on supporting and strengthening adoptive families. Through this event, adoptive parents and professionals who work with adoptive families are provided an excellent opportunity to increase their knowledge base and skills concerning adoption issues, services for adoptive families and the parenting of adopted children. The Ties That Bind Training Seminar is truly a family centered event with all ages welcome. In addition to childcare, age-appropriate workshops and fun-filled activities will be provided for all children. There will also be a Youth conference providing preteens and teens with exciting opportunities for personal growth. The youth will be learning valuable life skills that will focus on making positive choices, overcoming obstacles, developing critical thinking, reducing violence, and setting goals.

General Registration Information

It is very important that you review this brochure from cover to cover, complete all the enclosed forms, and forward the information to The Georgia Center for Resources & Support by Thursday, March 13, 2008. Please use the checklist on the registration information page to ensure that you submit a complete package.

Also enclosed is a handout titled Parent Tips for Adoptive Family & Youth Training Seminar 2008 that you are being encouraged to read. It is very important that you understand what will be expected of you and your children at the seminar.

Complete registrations will be processed on a **first-come, first-served basis, and space is limited** so please register on time. Due to the popularity of this event and limited availability, preference will be given to first-time attendees. This year's Children and Youth program is limited to 250 children, and the activities are available only to the children and teens of adoptive families. Confirmation letters will be mailed to participants whose registrations have been accepted.

All attending children and youth **MUST** take part in the scheduled activities of the seminar. It is important that children & youth be supervised at all times. The seminar sponsors will not be responsible for any problems arising from unsupervised children attending the Seminar.

Continuing Education & Foster Parent Training Credit

Requests to provide continuing education credits for social workers and foster parent training hours have been made.. More information about these credits will be provided at the seminar.



Featured Presenters



Keynote Speaker Holly Van Gulden—Saturday, May 17th, 11:00 am

Holly van Gulden is a nationally recognized speaker and adoption counselor. Over the years, she has presented at hundreds of conferences for adoptive parents and for professionals working with adoptive families. Holly, who grew up in an international, multiracial family, has in-depth knowledge about adoption derived from her personal experiences as well as her professional training. Co-Director of the Adoptive Family Counseling Center, in Minneapolis, Minn., Holly is a co-author of "Real Parents, Real Children: Parenting the Adopted Child," and is a columnist for "Adoptive Families" magazine. Don't miss her important keynote, *Remembering To Play: The Gift of Connection*.



Keynote Speaker Dee Paddock—Sunday, May 18th, 12:00 pm

Dee Paddock is a psychotherapist in private practice in Des Moines, Iowa and the mother of three young adults who were adopted from Korea. Dee specializes in issues related to adoption and foster care, infertility, parenting children with special needs, grief and loss and the impact of trauma on family systems. She has master's degrees in counseling psychology and theological studies. Please be sure to join us for this exciting keynote address entitled *Bent But Not Broken: Nurturing Resilience in Adoptive Families*.



Family Concert featuring Peter Alsop—Friday, May 16th, 7:00 pm

PETER ALSOP is a nationally known singer-songwriter, educator and humorist with a Ph.D. in educational psychology. He consistently wins "BEST CHILDREN'S" awards from Parents' Choice and the Association For Independent Music. We encourage everyone to join us for this special evening of family fun as Peter shares valuable family survival strategies through insightful sing-alongs, group discussion, laughter and silliness.

Schedule At-A-Glance

Friday, May 16th

4:00 pm—5:30 pm Early Registration
 5:30 pm—7:00 pm Dinner On Your Own
 7:00 pm—8:00 pm Family Concert
 featuring Peter Alsop

Saturday, May 17th

7:15 am—8:30 am Breakfast
 8:00 am—10:00 am Registration
 8:30 am—9:00 am Children & Teen
 Check-in
 9:00 am—10:30 am Session I Workshops
 10:45 am—12:00 pm General Session
 12:00 pm—1:00 pm Lunch/Exhibits
 1:15 pm—2:45 pm Session II Workshops
 3:00 pm—4:30 pm Session III
 Workshops
 4:30 pm—5:00 pm Exhibits
 4:30 pm—5:15 pm Children & Teen Pick
 -up
 6:30 pm—7:30 pm Family Dinner
 7:30 pm—10:00 pm Family Night
 Activities

Sunday, May 18th

7:30 am—9:00 am Breakfast
 9:00 am—9:30 am Children & Teen
 Check-in
 9:30 am—11:00 am Session IV
 Workshops
 11:30 am—1:15 pm Closing Session
 Luncheon
 1:15 pm Children & Teen Pick
 -up

Session 1: Saturday, May 17th 9:00—10:30

1A—ADHD Doesn't Have To Be Scary.

Presented by Dr. Alcuin Johnson, Ph.D.
Pediatric Neuropsychologist, is one of those rare individuals who understands children and knows how to comfort and guide parents. This workshop will explain Attention Deficit Disorder and Learning Differences that a number of adopted children have so that you understand what it is and what you can do to assist your child, from evaluation/testing to classroom/home.

1B—Turning Problems Into Puzzles.

Presented by Peter Alsop, Educational Psychologist
Viewing difficult situations as a puzzle with a missing piece, rather than seeing it as a problem that keeps us stuck, we remove a major roadblock in our search to find solutions. Humor and creativity help us gain another perspective, reevaluate our resources, and find the missing pieces of our puzzle. Peter models this in his sculpting demonstrations and by using humorous sing-alongs to unlock our creative potential

1C—Learning to Laugh Your Way Through Difficult Behaviors

Presented by Cathy Burks, Resource Advisor with the Georgia Center and Kim Wynn, Resource Advisor with the Georgia Center.
Both of these presenters are also adoptive parents. This workshop is humorously presented from an adoptive mother's perspective and will include creative and innovative ways to deal with children who have difficult behaviors as a result of Reactive Attachment Disorder, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and other conditions.

1D—Ignorance Is No Defense

Presented by J. Tom Morgan, former District Attorney of DeKalb County, Georgia and is currently a trial lawyer in Decatur, GA.
This workshop will serve as a parent's guide to Georgia Law and what it means for teen. Using his expertise, Mr. Morgan explains the law in a manner that is both informative and uses real-life examples that are relevant for teenagers. All Georgia parents and their teens should read his book, *Ignorance Is No Defense: A Teen's Guide to Georgia Law*.

Session 3: Saturday, May 17th 3:00—4:30

3A—Discipline To Strengthen the Bond

Presented by Holly Van Gulden
Children who have experienced loss, neglect and/or abuse can bring emotional pain, unremitting neediness and dysfunctional behaviors to their foster and adoptive families. This workshop will offer parents techniques to aid in managing behaviors in ways that: (1) enhance the child's ability to make healthy connections with their parents; (2) meet the unresolved needs underlying many of the inappropriate behaviors; (3) maintain balance and sanity in daily life; (4) meet the needs of all family members, including decreasing the classical stress between parents that can occur when parenting a child with attachment disorder.

3B—Can We Fix This Child

Presented by Dee Paddock
Transforming "Great Expectations" into "Real Expectations" In Adoptive and Foster Families. Dee Paddock takes a look at how our children's anger, depression, and anxiety may show up and how parents can develop proactive parenting techniques to move past trying to "fix" things and onto dealing with the underlying problems.

3C—Who Is This Child

Presented by Dr. Sunain Rao Jain, PhD.
This workshop will teach participants about a very important aspect of children that is often overlooked in our effort to understand them and their needs – temperament. Parents will see the correlation between the temperament of a child and ways it can influence how he/she reacts to the normal and unusual experience of childhood.

3D—How Nutrition Can Impact Children With Autism & ADHD

Presented by Sonya Bell, R.N., B.S.N., VP of F.A.C.E.S. (Families of Autism/ Asperger's Care, Educate and Support Group). This workshop will help each participant understand the role that neurotoxins, artificial colors and preservatives play in effecting the behavior of children with Autism and ADHD.

Session 2: Saturday, May 17th 1:15 —2:45

2A—ADHD Doesn't Have To Be Scary.

Presented by Dr. Alcuin Johnson, Ph.D.
A Pediatric Neuropsychologist, is one of those rare individuals who understands children and knows how to comfort and guide parents. In this workshop Dr. Johnson will explain Attention Deficit Disorder and Learning Differences that a number of adopted children have so that you understand what it is and what you can do to assist your child, from evaluation/testing to classroom/home. His workshop offers information as well as strategies for the challenges these children present parents with.

2B—Kinship Adoption

Presented by Toni Oliver, Social Worker, Director of Roots Adoption Agency
The Kinship Adoption: Challenges and Triumphs! ROOTS understands Kinship Adoption. Ms. Oliver will present information that will increase awareness and understanding. Kinship adoption is the first choice for children. Find out why.

2C—How To Talk To With Your Child About Adoption and Searching

Presented by Peggy Rothschild, LCSW, Families First Inc., Project Coordinator for The Georgia Reunion Registry
This workshop will address how and when to talk to your child about adoption. The presenter will also address questions about Search and Reunion. Participants will discuss fears about talking about adoption/search/reunion with their child and learn how to help their child understand his/her adoption at age appropriate stages.

2D—Nurturing New Growth: Building Solid Attachments

Presented by Dr Sunaina Rao Jain, PhD,
As a Clinical Psychologist Dr. Jain is asked time and time again to present her workshop on *Nurturing New Growth: Building Solid Attachments*. She is an adoptive mother who guides the listener on a gentle journey of building a solid healthy parent-child relationship.

Session 4: Sunday, May 18th 9:30—11:00

4A—Behavioral Issues in Adoption and Foster Care.

Presented by Dee Paddock
There is an adoption myth that holds many adoptive parents hostage: "love is all this child needs." In the real world of adoption, love may not be enough to heal a child's emotional wounds. This workshop focuses on parenting survival skills: understanding trauma; grieving with children; creating a healing home; setting new expectations, limits, and goals; and baby-stepping to success.

4B—Life Books: A Link to the Past, a Bridge to the Future.

Presented by Danny Stevens, DHR Adoption Unit, Program Manager
Every child in adoption is entitled to a Life book. A life book is a story of the child's life including significant events, moves and birth family memories. Here is how this can be a useful tool in helping your child make sense of his or her past, present, and move into the future.

4C—Siblings: Building Healthy Relationships

Presented by Karen Swenson, Adoptive Parent
As your family grows through birth and adoption you will encounter many challenges. One of them being the relationships the children develop as siblings. This workshop will address many of the challenges and joys faced by parents as children develop their relationships with one another. The Presenters are adoptive parents as well as biological parents who have experienced assisting their children in developing these lifelong relationships. You will be inspired by this couple. They have experienced many challenges as well as joys that they will share with the audience in an engaging manner.

4D—Relationship Enhancement for Adoptive Parents (REAP)

Presented by Tracy Hall, MFT, REAP Family Support Advocate, Bethany Christian Services.
From Rattled to Rejuvenated: Nurturing the Soul of Your Marriage ", Ms. Hall will explain how to sow into your marriage to reap a great family. Come enjoy real and effective ways to enhance and protect your relationship.

Children & Teen Programs

These programs are for children and teens of adoptive families ONLY

For many adoptive families with children, making arrangements to attend a training seminar may be difficult. For this reason The Adoptive Family and Youth Training Seminar provides quality infant care and age appropriate activities for children of all ages, which is included in your registration fee. In addition, both teens and pre teens will enjoy their own Youth Training Seminar designed specifically for their age group. By providing these services parents may attend valuable training sessions while still being able to check in on their children. All youth participants will enjoy an exciting opportunity for personal growth. Planned activities will take into consideration the ages and developmental levels of those registered to attend.

Some of the highlights of this year's children and teen program will include:

- A special presentation by **Laughing Matters** an improvisational acting group that moves audiences with their creative minds, flexible brains and bodies, and ability to adapt to any situation and find humor in it. The group's members come from backgrounds ranging from teaching high school to acting on stage and television to serving as director of improvisation at a local theatre. This program will help teens learn important conflict resolution techniques that solve problems without hurting anyone involved. Teen participants suggest problems for the actors to resolve and even role-play characters from their own lives to explore how and why conflicts begin.
- **Leadership Development Workshops** where teens will be led through challenges and initiatives to help them develop leadership skills and learn how to work together as a team. Workshops will use cooperative games and experiential learning activities that will teach basic leadership principles. This will be designed to help youth identify their individual strengths, develop trust in their own abilities, and the abilities of others, and build effective interpersonal communication skills and creative problem-solving skills.
- **Outdoor Fun Festival** As in the past we will be providing another special event for our children and teens. Everyone will enjoy outdoor fun time on a variety of large inflatable games including the Giant Slide, Obstacle Course, Giant Maze, Bungee Run, Fire Truck and Radar Pitch.

- **The Mad Science Group** is the world's leading fun science provider that delivers exciting, hands-on and educational science experiences. These exciting presentations are carefully focused to make science a blast for kids of all ages.
- The dancers of **Manga African Dance** will take your children by storm as they dance onto the stage to live music played by Sunu drummers. The group will take your children on a trip through time, demonstrating the evolution of the dances and explaining the influence of the cultures of Congo, the Caribbean and finally Charleston, South Carolina. Children participate by clapping along and helping to demonstrate the similarities between Sunu dance and the modern moves of hip hop. The drummers also explain the name and origin of each of their instruments as well as the relation between the rhythm of the drumbeat and the dances.
- **Atlanta Puppets presents Animalympics.** This hands on puppet workshop will be offered to enhance character building and values. The animal characters portray examples of teamwork, self-determination, good sportsmanship, respect for others, good attitude, conflict resolution and more as they compete in hilarious, original sport activities.



Family Night

After a stimulating day of learning and networking on Saturday, participants will want to attend the Family Night Celebration. This year our theme will be **Hooray For Hollywood**, as we will roll out the red carpet to show all adoptive families what "Super Stars" they really are. We encourage all family members, both young and old, to join us for a very special dinner theater with **Creative Edge**. Following the dinner there will be fun for everyone with arts and crafts, a caricature artist, clowns, inflatable games, family challenges, cooperative games, music and dancing, and much, much more!



Parent Guidelines

(Please review entire document)

We are delighted to be working with your child(ren) and youth while you enjoy the seminar. We have many exciting events planned for the Children and Youth portion of this seminar. Much planning and thought has gone into preparation of the program activities, as well as finding experienced staff to take care of your child's/youth's needs during the conference.

In order to meet your child's/ youth's needs the following tips may be helpful:

- Please be aware that **all registered children and teens will be required to participate in the children's program and the youth training seminar**. Minors must be chaperoned at all times while you are attending the adult seminar workshops. If you have children or youth onsite that will not be participating in the Children and Youth portion of the conference then you will be responsible for providing proper supervision at all times.
- All children and youth who are registered to attend the seminar will be assigned to an age appropriate classroom. Placement will be based on your child/teen's current grade level. Your child's name will be posted outside of their assigned room. This includes those teens in middle school and high school.
- Depending on the age breakdowns of those attending, siblings may be separated. However, they will have access to one another for short periods of time if a child needs comforting. If you have any concerns regarding this policy please note this on your child's information form.
- To insure the safety of all children and teens attending the seminar they **MUST BE ESCORTED BY THEIR PARENTS to and from assigned classrooms**. Each Room Coordinator will have a **Sign In/Out Sheet** outside of each classroom. You must sign your name, your child's/teen's name and the time you leave your child/youth. When you pick your child/teen up, please sign-out by putting the time that you take your child/youth. This includes those youth in middle school and high school who will be participating in the youth conference.
- **ONLY PARENTS** may sign children/youth out -- not siblings. Once your child/youth has been signed in they must remain with the childcare staff and youth leaders until a parent has signed them out.
- Please make sure that your child/youth is dressed in appropriate and **comfortable play clothing**. You may wish to provide an extra set of clothing for younger children.
- Please make sure that all infants/toddlers have diapers, wipes, bottles, food, formula, etc. (snacks/meals will be provided for older toddlers)
- Youth will **not be allowed to return to your hotel room** during planned activities unless signed out by parent.
- Please **allow enough time before morning workshops to feed your child/youth and then escort them to their assigned classroom**. All children/youth must be signed out following the last workshop each day.

Parent Guidelines (continued)

(Please review entire document)

- Please let us know if your child has any food allergies or has any other special needs (i.e., disabilities, medical conditions, behavior issues) that the staff needs to be made aware of. Attached an additional sheet if necessary.
- If you have concerns regarding the placement of your child/teen in a certain grade level or issues relating to your child/youth's functioning level please let us know. Children and Youth will not be grouped or labeled based on their disability and/or specific diagnosis; however, we will have a separate VSP (Very Special People) room available for those families who may prefer that their children/youth received more individualized care.
- In order to meet your child's/teen's needs every parent must complete the **Child/Youth Information form (one for each child/teen)** which gives us specific information about your child/teen. Parents must also complete the **Consent Form for Participation** in the Children and Youth Programs for the Ties that Bind Training Seminar. Please make sure that all required forms are completely filled out with all pertinent information. Verify that your contact information is legible in case we have any questions regarding your child/youth needs.
- If your child requires medication, you must complete a Prescription Medicine Administration Form. **All medications must be in original prescription bottle with the child's name, doctor, dosage and times to be dispensed. All prescription drugs must be turned in to the nurse on staff.**
- When you turn in your Child Information form, each child/youth will be given a number. We are asking that you write the number(s) down for each of your children and keep them with you during your workshops. If we need to come and get you during a workshop we will go to the session that you have indicated you will be attending and hold up the number assigned to your child. This is to avoid interrupting the speaker for that session. Please go to your child's room as quickly as possible. We will come and get you immediately if your child/youth is ill, injured, or if a situation arises in which your child's needs are such that we are unable to meet them adequately.
- Plenty of toys, activities and entertainment will be provided for your children and youth. Please do not allow them to bring personal items/toys/electronics into childcare area unless it is absolutely necessary to comfort your child. Staff will not be responsible for any personal items.
- Parents will be responsible for the supervision of their children/youth during breaks and Family Night activities. Please dress appropriately for outside activities.
- During the Family Night Dance no children or youth will be allowed to leave the designated area without being accompanied by their parents.

**YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL THE APPLICABLE REGISTRATION FORMS FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN IN ORDER FOR YOUR REGISTRATION FOR THE SEMINAR TO BE COMPLETE.
INCOMPLETE PACKAGES WILL NOT BE PROCESSED.**

Registration Information

PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY!!

Registration procedures for this seminar have changed from previous years.

Registration Forms are due no later than Thursday, March 13, 2008

Complete ALL forms included in this brochure according to the instructions given. Please use the following as a checklist to ensure that you submit a complete registration packet:

- Parent Registration Form** (*Be sure to indicate your first, second and third session choices as well as days of attendance*)
- Child/Teen Information Form** (*Children of Adoptive families only, complete one form for **each** child*)
- Consent for Participation** (*Children of Adoptive families only, complete one form for **each** child*)
- Prescription Medication Administration** (*Children of Adoptive families only, complete one form for **each** child*)
- Check or money order for Seminar Registration** (*See list of fees below*)

CONFERENCE PLANNING SERVICES: The Georgia Center for Resources and Support and Family Matters Consulting, Inc. are providing coordination and planning of this seminar as a service of the Georgia Department of Human Resources State Adoption Unit. If you have questions about the seminar please contact:

Toll Free 1.866.A.PARENT
Atlanta telephone: 404-929-0401

Return all information to:
Georgia Center for Resources and Support
2250 North Druid Hills Road, Suite 145
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Registration will be incomplete until all forms are completed, returned and payments made.

Conference registration MUST be completed on the registration form. The hotel will **NOT** take individual reservations for this seminar until registration confirmations have been sent out! **Preference will be given to families who have never attended this conference before and registration is based on a first come first serve basis.** You will be notified when your registration has been accepted and once you receive this confirmation you must contact the hotel by April 10th to make your hotel reservations.

SEMINAR REGISTRATION FEES:

Adoptive Families\$35.00
Prospective Adoptive Families per couple or individual if single parent.....\$35.00

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY will be accepted for payment.

They should be made payable to: Families First

REFUND POLICY: Families First will gladly issue full refunds for cancellations made in writing by 5pm on Friday, May 1st, 2008.

HOTEL REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

- ◆ Hotel rooms are \$89.00 plus 11% tax and incidentals per night per room.
- ◆ Please make your hotel reservations **after you have received a confirmation letter from Families First** stating that your registration has been accepted to attend. Reservations must be made before April 11th
- ◆ Upon Check-In, the hotel will require you to present a credit card or deposit to insure payment of any incidental charges.

DIRECTIONS TO WYNDHAM PEACHTREE CONFERENCE CENTER

The Conference Center is located at:
2443 Highway 54 West, Peachtree City, GA 30269
(770) 487-2000 or 1-800-PEACH-11.

FROM THE NORTH: I-85 South to Exit 61 (Peachtree City/Fairburn). Left onto Hwy 74 South. 12 Miles to Hwy. 54, turn left, drive one mile to property, entrance on the left.

FROM THE SOUTH: I-85 North to Exit 47 (Peachtree City/Newnan). Right on Hwy. 34. 10 miles to merger of Hwy. 34 into Hwy 54. Drive 2 1/4 miles just across lake bridge to property, entrance on the left.

Wynndham Peachtree Conference Center
Peachtree City, Georgia
May 17-18, 2008



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An Invitation to Attend

Georgia Center for Resources and Support
2250 North Druid Hills Road, Suite 145
Atlanta, Georgia 30329

DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE OPEN IMMEDIATELY
Registration Deadline Date: Thursday, March 13, 2008