



Wide Horizons  
For Children

Winter 2011

## Behavior and Parenting Strategies

Happy New Year and welcome to 2011! We hope you and your family enjoyed the comfort and joy of gatherings with family and friends.

For little ones, the holidays are exciting and stimulating. Truth be told, they are often over-stimulating and may result in "melt downs" like tantrums or other difficult behaviors. Since we are in the post-holiday season we thought that the subject of tantrums and other difficult behaviors might be just the right subject for this edition of Beyond the Horizon.

Tantrums are common in most children at one time or another, but they tend to be particularly common in adopted children. Why should that be?

In their book, *The Connected Child*, Drs. Karyn Purvis and David Cross write:

"Disturbing behaviors- tantrums, hiding, hyperactivity or aggressiveness are often triggered by a child's deep, primal fear. Youngsters can be physically safe in their new adoptive home, but past traumas encoded within their brains are easily reactivated".

All children placed through adoption experience the trauma of separation. For domestically adopted infants the separation from birth parents into the arms of the adoptive parent may be fairly brief. Older domestically adopted children and most children adopted internationally may experience separation from birth family or other care givers after years in their care. Sometimes the trauma experienced by these children also involves abuse, abandonment, starvation or any number of other cruelties.

These traumatic experiences often leave children feeling fearful and unsafe. As a result, these children may have a strong need to try to control their environment. In turn this need to control may trigger aggressive coping behaviors. Tantrums are among the most challenging behaviors that parents report to us. Often these behaviors involve kicking, hitting, spitting and biting. Parents report feeling helpless and when in public, embarrassed as well.

In this edition of *Beyond the Horizon* you will read stories from parents who have met similar challenges, suggestions and interventions from professionals as well as a number of useful resources.

As difficult as it is, could there be a silver lining to tantrums and other aggressive behaviors? Dr. Foster Cline and Jim Fay seem to think so. In their book, *Parenting with Love and Logic*, they state, "Only kids whose spirits have been broken don't fight to get their way". Admittedly, many of us wish our kids were not quit so spirited. We hope you will find the information in this edition of *Beyond the Horizon*, both interesting and informative.

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## Stay Connected!

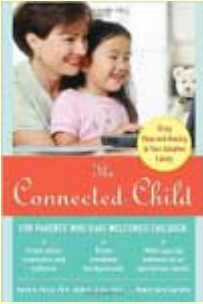
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## BOOK REVIEW: *The Connected Child*

Written by Dr. Karyn Purvis and Dr. David Cross  
Review written by Lisa Lovett, MSW, LICSW

An adoptive parent struggling in post placement to meet the needs of her new five year old son was the first to recommend *The Connected Child* to me. She told me that not only had she read this book and found it helpful, she had referred to it so many times that it was looking worn and tattered. I took her recommendation about the quality of the book seriously and, wanting to avoid the likely tattered pages in my own copy, promptly downloaded it on to an electronic reader. Since my first reading, I have recommended this book many, many times to both pre and post placement adoptive parents. It is a realistic yet hopeful exploration of parenting adopted children which offers insight into the child's experience and practical advice for meeting the daily challenges of parenting.

The book starts with the premise that all adopted children come into their new homes having experienced trauma. The authors provocatively ask parents to imagine that a child that they have raised from birth is kidnapped and then returned to them several years later after suffering mistreatment. What, they ask, would parents be willing to give this child when he was returned to them and what would they expect of behaviorally from this child? The answer of course is that these parents would understand the potential of this child, from their years of parenting him, and that they would have great compassion for the trauma the child had endured and how it might affect behavior. In my work over the past twenty years with adoptive parents, I think the simple acceptance that a child was hurt and may not feel safe is hard for parents. They want desperately to believe that they have chosen a type of adoption, a country, or an adoption agency that was able to take good care of their child before he or she came home. It is too painful to imagine their child hurt whether in the womb, the birth family, the orphanage or simply over the many moves from one place to another. And yet, the very understanding of this hurt is what allows adoptive parents to begin their journey with the compassion they need to help their child.

In addition to stressing the importance of compassion, *The Connected Child* also asks parents to have curiosity about their new child's behavior, to "solve the puzzle". What are the connections between their child's behavior and what may have happened to them prior to coming home? The obvious yet stark example in their book is a child melting down when denied a snack at close to the dinner hour. Even when this child can see the casserole in the oven, this denial of food may seem like a threat to safety if they have experienced grave hunger and been deprived of food. . In Chapter 4, "Disarming the Fear Response with Felt Safety", Purvis and Cross talk about the importance of what they call "felt safety". Felt safety is "when you arrange the environment and your behavior so your children can feel is a profound and basic way that they are safe".

As important as compassion about the past and curiosity about behavior are to a parent, they are only useful if they lead to insight about how to actually help your child behaviorally. Fortunately, Purvis and Cross go beyond etiology in this book and provide clear strategies for parenting. While they assert that children need "unconditional nurturing" which they contrast with "performance based praise", they also advocate for the parent to firmly and confidently discipline and teach new behavior. In their words, it is very important for the parent to be "the boss". Most of their techniques are not complex. They suggest that parents establish eye contact, get down to the child's level and use a respectful tone. They suggest limiting the amount of words and resisting the temptation to lectures and seeing misbehavior as an opportunity to teach a child new skills. They provide specific examples of behavioral challenges like a trip to the grocery store, a minefield for many parents. They show how to prepare a child for the trip, handle stumbling blocks and teach new behavior and they caution that a parent must be willing, for the sake of learning, to leave a cart of groceries behind. In addition to managing misbehavior, *The Connected Child* has chapters on ways to provide nurturance, handle setbacks and support healthy brain chemistry. It even gives a nod to the ways in which our background and wounds as parents affects our ability to parent our children. Although this is a critically important, the book overreaches a little here, attempting to cover such a broad and important topic in single small chapter.

*The Connected Child* is an excellent book for the pre-adoptive parent, the adoptive parent in their first year with their child or any parent trying to learn new strategies for handling misbehavior and teaching their child new skills. The book focuses primarily on toddler, pre-school and young school aged children and is less useful to parents of infant and teens. If the book has a weakness, it is that it is not grounded in the day to day realities of life outside the behavioral struggles of this particular child. There is little reference in this book to spousal relationships, siblings, work outside of parenting or other life stressors. One could argue, I suppose, that rather than being a weakness, this is simply a reflection of what it takes to parent a child who has been hurt. The rest of life necessarily recedes into the background as parents help a child become truly and deeply connected. This task of establishing connection is incredibly valuable and may be made just a little easier by the guidance provided by Purvis and Cross.

## Additional Resources

### Books:

[Parenting From The Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive](#), by Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzell

[Help For the Hopeless Child: A guide for Families \(With Special Discussion for Assessing and Treating the Post-Institutionalized Child\)](#), by Dr. Ronald S. Federici

[The Connected Child: Bring Hope and Healing to Your Adoptive Family](#), by Karen Purvis, David Cross, and Wendy Sunshine

[How to Get Togetherness: Improving AD/HD and Oppositional Relationships in Families and Classrooms](#), by Albert D. Whetstone, PhD

[What Every Adoptive Parent Needs to Know](#), by Kate Cremer-Vogel and Dan and Cassie Richards

[Parenting Your Older Adopted Child: How to Overcome the Unique Challenges and Raise a Happy and Healthy Child](#), by Brenda McCreight, PhD

[Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child](#), by Trish Maskew

[The Attachment Parenting Book: A Common Sense Guide to Understanding and Nurturing Your Child](#), by William and Martha Sears

[Wounded Children, Healing Homes](#), by Jayne Schooler

[Parenting Your internationally Adopted Child: From Your First Hours Together Through the Teen Years](#), by Patty Cogen

[Rufus the Rapper](#), by Louise Fleischman (for children)

[Adoptive Families magazine](#)

### Websites:

[Love and Logic Institute, Inc.](#)

[Everything for Adoption](#)

[Lives in the Balance](#)

[Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy](#)

[adoption.com](#)

[Center for Adoption Support and Education \(C.A.S.E.\)](#)

[Adoption Club House \(for kids\)](#)

[Adoption Learning Partners](#)

- [Ain't Misbehavin': Discipline and the Adopted Child](#)

[Heart of the Matter Seminars](#)

[Creative Therapy Store](#)

[BGCenter Online School](#)

- [Adopting older children internationally: making a decision and coping with post-adoption difficulties](#)
- [The first year home: what to expect and how to respond](#)

### Child Trauma Academy

- [Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children](#)

### EMK Press

- [Realistic Expectations: The first year home](#) (free download)

## Good Night ... (please!)

By Kelly A. Wood, Psy. D. & Adoptive Parent

Before our son came home from Russia, I read several articles about how to help my soon-to-be toddler fall asleep at night, everything from the Ferber Method to the Family Bed. By the time we took custody, I felt well prepared for bedtime. Our first night in Russia with our son, Dmitri, proved that the research was worth the time. We had no difficulty with bedtime whatsoever. Night two brought reality and several months of it! Dmitri wouldn't sleep in his own bed. He wanted, rather, *he needed* us there with him. The Family Bed was the only bed in which he would rest peacefully. The problem lay with me. I was so concerned that my husband would roll over on top of him that my mind could not rest. The Family Bed could not be our long term solution.

Upon returning home from Russia, we tried several ways to help Dmitri wind down and prepare for bed. For a few weeks, all he needed was a calming children's book and a few minutes of a children's show to drift off to peaceful slumber on the couch. From there we would move him to his bed. His tolerance increased rapidly and before we knew it, our bedtime ritual was taking close to 40 minutes. Back to the drawing board...

We decided to move book time to his bedroom. We struck out. Dmitri would engage with the story so much that falling asleep was not on his agenda at all. He only wanted more story time. Then we decided that the Russian lullaby CD might be worth a shot. YES! Dmitri took comfort in the familiar sounds of his native language and would find it difficult to keep his eyes from closing. But once again, his tolerance and longing for us to be by his side kicked in after a few nights of success. We tried the Ferber Method but we didn't have what it took to tolerate hearing our son cry out for us in what sounded like agonizing pain. We went back to the Family Bed for a few nights while we tried to figure something out.

**"Life is not about getting through the storm, it's about dancing in the rain"**

*~ WHFC adoptive parent*

My husband (I should mention he's a football coach) thought we should "tire him out." We have several minutes of very comical home video of Dmitri running end to end in our living room. Needless to say, this approach failed miserably, but we have fun watching the tape!

We discovered that gradual withdrawal from us worked best. We incorporated what worked from our not-so-successful attempts along with decreasing our physical presence in his room. For several weeks, following the reading of his favorite bedtime story, both my husband and I lay on the floor next to our son's bed while he fell asleep holding one of our hands, listening to his Russian CD. We stopped holding his hand but maintained all other aspects of the routine. Two more months passed and we were able to have just one of us in the room. Next, we moved from being next to his bed, to sitting by the door...then in the hallway...and finally in a different room. Dmitri would ask if we were there a few times before falling asleep. If we didn't answer, he would climb out of bed to make sure we didn't wonder off too far. By the end of the first year, Dmitri was falling asleep with little effort and remaining asleep through the entire night. We were able to substitute for our physical comfort by hanging family photos close to his bed, a favorite stuffed animal, night light and the song(s) of his choice (I think I can officially put "DJ" on my resume).

March 2011 will mark our third anniversary as a family. Today, our routine is simple: turn on the music, read or tell Dmitri one of his favorite stories, "tuckle" him in (a little tickling while we tuck him in for the night), and then receive our kiss and hug from Dmitri, first for my husband and then for me.

It took some time, but here's what we now know: while the research and expert advice may help, we, as parents, need to figure out what is best for our families while learning from our children. They tell us what they need... all we need to do is pay attention while they teach us.

## Cooking Up Some Fun

Enjoy cooking these recipes from different cultures, provided to you by members of the WHFC program staff.

### Stuffed Cabbage with Turkey and Rice From Nataliya Bondarenko, Russia Program Administrative Coordinator

Stuffed cabbage is a favorite Russian comfort food, second only to borscht (beet soup). This recipe takes about 2 hours to make, but it's worth it. It also freezes well and is a one pot meal.

#### Ingredients:

1 head green cabbage  
2 red bell peppers, thinly sliced  
2 large carrots grated  
3 medium yellow onions, finely chopped  
1 medium parsley root, grated  
1½ pounds ground turkey  
½ cup rice  
1 large can diced tomatoes  
8 sprigs fresh parsley  
8 sprigs fresh dill  
1 tablespoon oil  
Salt and pepper to taste  
2 cloves smashed garlic  
2 bay leaves  
½ cup sour cream



1. Microwave the head of cabbage (or can separate the leaves and blanch them in boiling water, but microwaving is faster) until softened- about 8 minutes, but every 5 minutes I would check up on it. Let it cool a bit, and separate the leaves, they should be pliable but not turned to mush.
2. In a skillet heat the oil and add onion to it, saute on medium heat until onion just starts to color. Add carrot and parsley root to the onion saute for about 3 minutes and add pepper and saute for another 3- 5 minutes. cool and drain fat on a paper towel.
3. Mix turkey, rice and 2/3 vegetables together, add salt/ pepper and thyme.
4. By spoonfuls add mixture to the leafs and roll them like a burrito or egg rolls so that they are posed in on all sides. Don't roll tiniest leaves, save them.
5. Heat the skillet and spray some cooking spray on it. Put cabbage rolls on the skillet and lightly brown on both sides, this is an optional and fast process, needed to help the rolls keep together and it adds a roasted taste to them.
6. On a bottom of a large pot put the left over cabbage and on top of that put the sauteed vegetables, can also add some fresh sliced onion. on top of that put the cabbage rolls, diced tomato with liquid and some vegetable stock or water just enough to cover the cabbage by about 1 inch.
7. Bring pot to the boil, take some liquid out add sour cream to it so that it mixed in well and add mixture back to the pot, taste the sauce and season with salt and pepper if needed. Cover the cabbage with a plate and put some weight on top - so that the rolls are submerged. Cook for about 1-1.5 hours on low flame, make sure it simmers and doesn't boil hard.

Serve with sour cream.

### Chinese Angel Hair From Linda Lin, Asia Program Manager

One pound of Angel Hair – cook the noodles in boiling water, but you need to keep an eye on them and control the softness. Take them out and rinse them in cold running water. Then let them sit for a while (say 5 to 10 minutes). Half cup of smashed garlic, half cup of vegetable oil – heat them together, until the oil is really hot (put oil first and then garlic in a wok, if you have one). Dump the garlic oil on top of the noodles, stir and mix. If you like the taste of pepper corn, throw two or three pieces in when you heat the oil (but remember to put the fried pepper corn out before you mix the oil with the noodles). One or two cups of salsa, and half cup of soy bean sauce – also mix them well in the noodles. If you prefer spicy oil, a few drops will enrich the taste (you can find the spicy oil in local oriental grocery stores).

Carrots, celery, or other vegetables of your choice – cut them into slices, lightly cook them if needed, then scatter them in the noodles. Turkey meat (or chicken breast), beef, or shrimps – cook them in a way you'd like and mix them in. Finally, green onions, parsley or cilantro, if you like such “smelly stuff” (cut them into small pieces), will make the whole thing look pretty and enhance your appetite. This dish can be served either warm or cold.

## Doro Wot

From Rahel Birhanu, Asia and Africa Program Administrative Coordinator

Doro wot (chicken sauce) is perhaps the best known food from Ethiopia and is often referred to as that country's national dish. This recipe makes a very tasty version with a deep, rich flavor and tender chicken pieces. Making your own homemade red pepper seasoning (berberé) and is essential to give the dish the proper flavor. Doro wot is traditionally very spicy, but you can adjust the amount of cayenne pepper to your liking.

### Ingredients:

Chicken legs and thighs, skinless - about 2 pounds  
2 teaspoons salt  
1 lemon  
Onions, chopped  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tablespoon gingerroot, peeled and chopped  
¼ cup oil or butter  
2 tablespoons paprika  
¼ - ½ cup red pepper seasoning (berberé)  
¾ cup water  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Hard boiled eggs (optional)

"Fruits and vegetables spoil, not children."

~ WHFC adoptive parent

1. Mix together the chicken pieces, lemon juice and salt and in a large, non-reactive bowl and set aside to marinate for about 30 minutes.
2. While the chicken is marinating, puree the onions, garlic and ginger in a food processor or blender. Add a little water if necessary.
3. Heat the chopped onion in a large pot over medium flame. Add the oil or butter for about 10 minutes in Add the paprika and stir in to color the oil and cook the spice through, Do not burn. Stir in the Red pepper Seasoning ( berberé ) and cook .
4. Add the garlic-ginger puree and sauté until most of the moisture evaporates . Do not allow the mixture to burn.
5. Pour in the water and stir in the chicken pieces, cayenne to taste, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Add water as necessary to maintain a sauce-like consistency.
6. Add the whole hard boiled eggs and continue to cook for another 10 to 15 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through and very tender.
7. Adjust seasoning and serve hot with injera or bread. Enjoy!

## MOVIE REVIEW: *Despicable Me* Directed by Pierre Coffin, Chris Renaud

Review written by Barb Drotos, MSW, LICSW

Have you seen this movie? Do your kids want to see this movie and you are not sure about it? This is one of those animated films that seem funny and adorable and a little strange. The appeal is this modern day animated main character that is strangely appealing due to his bizarre personality and dark but somehow adorable mannerisms. This is the type of movie that easily attracts kids with its charm in the movie trailers. It is now available on home video and at your local retail stores. It is also the type of movie that your children may enjoy thoroughly, laughing all the way, or may be triggered into feeling of loss and abandonment. So, be prepared. It is important to know some of the themes and quite literally, some of the details in the plot.

There are many positive elements in this film regarding adoption. The children are a sibling group of three. They care for one another deeply, protect one another, and there are moments of care and playful interaction between them. There are also realistic moments of sibling rivalry and simple sarcasm in their interactions. The oldest is protective of the younger two, and the youngest is endearing and more carefree than her older sisters. This is realistic and brings frequent laughter from the audience. The father is a single parent who adopts these three sisters with naiveté, believing this will be simple. He has no idea that he will need to radically modify his lifestyle as he expands his family from one to four people! There is humor throughout as he becomes charmed by these girls and slowly modifies many, many things in his life to accommodate and nurture the three. They truly capture his heart and he changes, slowly but drastically, as the movie progresses. His character softens to become a caring, nurturing father who understands the needs of the children and puts them first. He puts his role of villain aside for the new role of parent. They change their view of him as well and they accept him and seek out his care. From bedtime stories and spontaneous affection such as hugs and a good night kiss to dropping his "job" as the local villain, this movie is a



lighthearted metaphor for how adoption literally transforms both parent and child as they form an attachment.

On the flip side, there are some serious cautions about this animated film. On the surface, the plot can be offensive and actually frightening to an adoptive parent or child. The main character “adopts” three girls from a local orphanage for the self-serving purpose of actually stealing an invention/machine from his rival, something that will make him very wealthy and famous. He views the children as a means to an end and they are sadly disappointed when they go to his home, a freakish, dark place with strange pets and no affection from their new father. They truly “see” him as a villain and then quickly learn to rely on one another, especially their oldest sister, who naturally plays a caregiver and protector. Children can experience something similar in adoption, as in the beginning of placement everything feels different, unfamiliar and “strange” This can be a negative trigger for children watching this movie. Soon enough, the kids in the story begin to “grow” on the villain and he begins to interact with them in a more nurturing, playful manner. He comes to save them when they are captured by the rival villain in the film. He softens his interactions with them and his house literally begins to morph into a more child friendly place. He begins to play and enjoy time with them in a unique and somewhat silly manner. The children smile and giggle with him and the audience cannot help but to notice the physical and emotional changes taking place in this family.

However, there is a time in the movie when the villain chooses between his project, which will lead him to fame and fortune, and the children. He sadly chooses his original mission, not the children. His assistant phones the orphanage director, who comes to the house and brings the children back to the orphanage. Although the audience witnesses his sadness and hesitation, the children still leave, while the youngest child literally clings to his leg and begs not to go. Even someone not connected to adoption would be saddened and disappointed by this scene. Several scenes later, the family is reunited when the villain gives in to his struggle and realizes the importance of the children in his life. He takes drastic measures, only possible with the help of computer animation, to seek and bring the girls back to him. In one scene, he promises the oldest child that he will never, ever let her go again. He asks her to trust him and following some obvious hesitance, she does and makes a physical leap out of an airplane, believe it or not, into his arms and they are reunited.

In the end, this is a very strange, but endearing story of adoption. This new family ends up enjoying life together. They blend traditional family moments such as bedtime stories, completing school work and going to amusement parks while living in a bizarre house that now easily accommodates three sisters who like princesses and a bedroom decorated with pink and purple. As well, moments that can trigger grief and loss for an adopted child stream throughout the animated film. The traditional “not so nice” orphanage director, commonly characterized in the movies, is present in the film twice. The father, a single parent in the film, is a character who is literally a villain and quite non-traditional and in the beginning of the film. He may be a bit frightening for young children. He is apt to be hysterically funny to older children who can enjoy his bizarre mannerisms and physical features.

Bottom line: As an adoptive parent, review this movie before watching with your children. You know your children best and will be able to anticipate their responses. It will also be important to debrief with your child after the film. Discuss what is “real” and typical of adoption and what is unrealistic. They are likely to see adoption themes in films throughout their lives, animated and otherwise. Help your children to enjoy films but also understand reality from fantasy.

## ASK THE SOCIAL WORKER

Dear Social Worker,

Our son is 11 years old and was adopted from Guatemala when he was 15 months old. He is having outbursts and difficult behavior. He gets angry easily and it is starting to scare my husband and me. We are not sure what to do and we do not know if some of it could be related to adoption. How do we know what is developmental and what is related to adoption? He does not seem to have an interest in his birth culture. People say to “follow the child’s lead” and he has not really expressed an interest in learning about Guatemala or talking about adoption, so we don’t really talk about it much. How do we know if this is related to adoption and if it is, how do we handle it? Thank you for any suggestions you have.

Sincerely,  
Lisa from FL

Dear Lisa,

This is one of the most common questions that adoptive parents have about their children: What is normal development and what is related to adoption? I want you and your husband to know that you are **not** alone. It is often very difficult to determine what is what.

Let’s start with what is developmental. Age 11, if your son is developmentally on target, is a confusing time. It is a time of rapid physical growth and hormonal changes are becoming obvious. Children develop physically at different rates, but hormonal changes occur long before we notice them physically and that is important to keep in mind. Every child reacts differently to these changes, emotionally. Some become moody and unpredictable; others have changes that are less obvious, such as becoming more shy and introverted. At this age, children are able to understand the complexities of the world in a more

abstract manner. Prior to age ten or so, children think concretely and in many ways that is simpler - things are "black and white." Now, at age 11, children see that there are more "layers" and what they understood as simple before may be confusing and may unleash more emotion for them. Socially at age 11, children are noticing their sexuality and their feelings toward other children. This in itself can occupy a child's mind much of the time and many pre-teens do not quite know what to do with their thoughts and feelings when they first start to change. Needless to say, the pre-teen years of 10-12 are complex.

Let's look at adoption and put that layer on top of all this. Physical growth during this time and the ability to see things in a more abstract manner are evolving simultaneously. Well, if your child never thought frequently about adoption before, he may be thinking about it now. He is growing, may or may not look like you and your husband, and certainly may look racially different than others in the community, depending on the level of diversity where you live. His looks are changing and he may be noticing his race more than ever. This can lead to complex feelings about identity and how is connected to you. He may wonder about birth family. If he is not typically extroverted and open about his emotions, now is the time to encourage that. He is about to embark on adolescence, when identity development is full force and adoption issues frequently bubble to the surface.

Allowing the child to take the lead in terms of talking about adoption: let's look at that. It is frequently the advice that adoptive parents hear from others. This approach has its disadvantages. I would modify it by saying "provide your child with the opportunity to talk about adoption related issues regularly and see how they respond." With an 11 year old, find a variety of ways to create the opportunity on a regular basis. Children of all ages need to get the message that it is emotionally safe to discuss adoption. Get creative with this if they are not openly talking about adoption with you, but obviously do not force the conversation. You can let your son know directly that he can talk about it and ask if he has questions or thoughts to share with you. Leave age appropriate books related to adoption in the house. Subscribe to an adoption magazine and leave it in an obvious place - on the coffee table for example. Socialize occasionally with other adoptive families and those with children from the same country. Your son may take the opportunity to connect with other children rather than with you directly. Provide the opportunity. Send the message that you are comfortable talking about any feelings he may have. If he does not take the opportunity now, he may in the future and you are laying the groundwork for him to be able to approach you. This is vitally important as he embarks on adolescence.

Is your son's behavior related to adoption? It may or may not be. It is very possible that it is a combination of factors, adoption being one of them. Consulting with a local therapist who specializes in adoption is always a good idea if your child has significant changes in mood or behavior. In your situation, ask for help before anger turns into aggression. A therapist with experience in adoption will work with you to determine what is developmental and what may be related to adoption in your particular family. They will recommend parenting strategies that are sensitive to adoption related issues and are developmentally appropriate. Some of the references listed in this edition of the e-newsletter may also be helpful for you and your husband to review.

Wishing you the best as you work closely with your son.

Barb Drotos, MSW, LICSW  
Manager of Post Adoption Support and Education

## SLIDING INTO HOME

Daz Greenpete



## EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL EVENTS

WHFC workshops and family events - Register Today!

Date	Event	Location
2/9/2011	<a href="#">Talking With Your Child About Adoption</a>	Online
2/26/2011	<a href="#">Western MA &amp; Greater Albany Mid-Winter Family Party</a>	Pittsfield, MA
4/9/2011	<a href="#">Korea Family Day</a>	Waltham, MA
4/30/2011	<a href="#">China Family Day</a>	Waltham, MA
5/2/2011	<a href="#">Transracial Adoption: What Your Kids Wish You Knew</a>	Online
5/23/2011	<a href="#">Theraplay: Creating the Family of Your Dreams Using Attachment-Based Play</a>	Online
6/25/2011	<a href="#">Aggieman Triathlon - proceeds to benefit WHFC Humanitarian Aid</a>	Eliot, ME

Additional events are added frequently. View the [complete schedule and register online](#).

You may also be interested in this...

### Connecting Your Family Inside and Out:

Helpful advice on how to develop a stronger connection with your child

From Adoption Learning Partners

**Date:** March 8, 2011

**Time:** 7:00 - 8:00 Central Time

**Presenter:** Dr. Dan Hughes, Ph.D.

Join world renowned attachment expert Dr. Dan Hughes as he shares family centered strategies on how to connect to your child as a toddler, tween and teen. Dr. Hughes will be joined by Lynn Wetterberg, Executive Director of ATTACH. Lynn will discuss finding attachment related resources and adoption competent professional support. For more information and to register, visit

[www.adoptionlearningpartners.org](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org).

### Heart of the Matter Online Course

Help your child transition into your home and family and learn how to sort out "just regular kid stuff" from adoption related concerns

Purchase [Transitions, Developmental Challenges or Just Regular Kid Stuff?](#) to become better informed!