



Wisconsin
Adoption &
Permanency
Support



SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

Hello everyone,

Believe it or not, here we are in the middle of our summer season already! With the way our spring went this year, I know some of us (myself included) felt a bit jolted into summer. My hope is that has eased a bit when you read this note at the beginning of July.

I'd like to speak just a bit this quarter to a topic that is prevalent for many involved in adoption & guardianship families – isolation. It is a topic that I closely relate to myself as an adoptive parent who is much more apt to isolate than to reach out for help or support when things get tough. Being an introvert anyways, pulling away from relationships is something I have become quite good at.



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

The Wisconsin Adoption & Permanency Support is funded by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

It makes sense that the times we most need support are also those times when perhaps we feel the most like we have failed to meet our own (or others) expectations for ourselves, and feel that instinct to disengage from the people who do (or could) care about us. It requires a lot of vulnerability and energy to engage in relationships. However, the loneliness of feeling like there is no one else in your shoes, or no one else who might understand, is a painful place to stay. In all of our program's supportive events and online groups, our desire is to provide a safe space for someone who may finally feel they are ready to quietly say "I need help." Whether you are a caregiver, an adoptee, or a birth/first parent, please know that these spaces exist and wait for you to be ready. Those who attend have been in your shoes and are honored to support you. If I can help get you connected to the right group, please reach out to me at christy@wisapsp.org. You can find the list of our online group offerings on page 12 of this newsletter.



Along these same lines of support, I invite you to mark your calendar for a special weekend this fall, our annual "A Place In My Heart" conference. Save the date for Saturday, October 8th (note this is earlier than usual) in Wisconsin Dells as we intentionally take a day to learn together and support one another with some wonderful opportunities for connection with those around us. We are thrilled that Jockey Being Family will again be co-sponsoring the conference, offering a pizza party and scholarships for free hotel stays for the first families to register. Secure your child care person early so they can join you and accompany the kids to the waterpark area while you enjoy the conference! More details and registration will be coming later this summer.

As always, please feel free to reach out to us with your questions, feedback, ideas, and more! Our staff loves hearing from you.

Take care,

Christy Reppe
Adoption & Permanency
Support Coordinator
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save the date!

10/08/2022



20
22

A PLACE IN MY HEART CONFERENCE

WISCONSIN DELLS, WI

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The Wisconsin Adoption & Permanency Support Staff are available to assist you! Please feel free to contact us if you are interested in an event, have a creative event idea, or would love to learn more about local resources. We are here to serve you and your family and would love to connect with you.

Deb Reid

MILWAUKEE OFFICE



the staff behind WISAPSP

I have been a social worker for 44 years and every time I say that I'm shocked! I have enjoyed and been challenged by my work which has included foster care, juvenile justice, chronic mental health care and adoption, and post adoption. I have also worked as a therapist for the past 32 years. It's time to retire! I am looking forward to a slower pace of life (I think). I have a running list in my head of how I'll spend my time, however, I have no idea if any of those ideas will come to fruition. Will I learn to play the ukulele, brush up on my piano playing, reacquaint myself with knitting, learn needle point, paint more furniture, get back into exercise, lose weight, cook again, learn to bake a cake from scratch...the list is endless. What I do know is I'll read more (my family doesn't think that's possible), have more relaxed family dinners (they also don't think that's possible as we are a loud and animated group), enjoy leisure cups of coffee instead of "gulping" it, and just be more present to those I love (I think my kids are also a little worried that I'll start micro-managing their adult lives).

If any family I've worked with is reading this, thank you! Thank you for letting me into your world and trusting me. As an adoptive parent, adoption is deeply personal and I understand all the joys and sadness. You all will forever have my heart. To all the professionals that have mentored me and taught me the ropes, thank you. What a smart, knowledgeable, and kind group of people you all are! I wish you all well.

— HAPPY —
Retirement

We want to wish Deb the happiest of retirements! In her time with us, she has poured her heart into her work with all of our families as well as her co-workers. Our entire staff has benefited from her many years of experience that she has graciously and patiently passed along as so many of us look to her for wisdom and support. Deb, we are going to miss so many things about you - your sense of humor, your empathic support and listening ear, your knowledge and expertise. Thank you for the time and love you have brought to this program and to so many individuals. We wish you many peaceful cups of coffee and a few happy surprises for good measure. You will be greatly missed!

UPCOMING EVENTS



**July 22nd- Parent/Child
Painting Party: Eau Claire**



**July 22nd - Playdates at the Park:
McFarland**



**August 5th -
Adoptive/Guardianship Parents
Paint and Chat Event: La Crosse**



**August 7th -
Parents Night Out: Wausau**



**August 6th - End of Summer
Picnic at South Park: Oshkosh**



**September 7th - Parent/Child Cooking
Class with Chef Pam: Waukesha**

This is a just a sample of all the opportunities for events in your area.
For a full listing of events in your region, visit wisapsp.eventbrite.com.

Adult Adoptee Support Group

"Adoption is a never-ending journey with consistent twists and turns. On the second Wednesday of every month a group of adults (18+) who have been relinquished and/or adopted join together virtually to share experiences, struggle through various topics, and remember we are not alone. This is an open group and we welcome and look forward to meeting new faces. It is truly one of my favorite times each month."

~Tonya Hughes, Virtual group facilitator and adult adoptee

Find out more about the group at
www.wiadoptee.eventbrite.com

Birth Parent Resources

JOIN US!



July 14, 2022

A Night Out for Birth Mothers
at Board & Brush: Green Bay

SAVE THE DATE!

What: Our Annual Birthmother Retreat-A day of connection and support

Who: All birth/first mothers in Wisconsin are invited

When: Saturday, September 24th, 2022

Where: Beyond Blessed Therapies
320 Ross Avenue
Schofield, WI 54476

Time: 11 am-3 pm

More details coming soon!
Questions? Please contact
Jessica@wisapsp.org

EVENTS SPONSORED BY



JOCKEY
BEING FAMILY.

WISAPSP is grateful for the sponsorship of events by Jockey Being Family (JBF) all around the state. Visit wisapsp.eventbrite.com for more events sponsored by JBF in your region!



July 9th - All Aboard! Lumberjack
Steam Train: Laona



July 14th - Family Pizza Night:
Galesville



July 30th - Pizza By The Pool:
Weston



July 30th - Train Ride:
North Freedom



August 13th - Wilderness Walk Zoo
Event: Hayward



August 17th - Pool Party at Springs
Water Park: Pewaukee

upcoming live webinars

July 12, 2022

"The Healing Benefits of Nature-Based Play"



AUGUST 23, 2022

"Trauma Informed Approach to OT for Professionals & Parents"

September 22, 2022

"Strategies to Enjoy the Teen Years"



FEATURED RECORDED WEBINAR

Creating Healthy Sleep Patterns in Children

In this webinar, Jen Bluske discusses developmental, relational and environmental factors that support healthy sleep patterns in children. Using this framework, she discusses strategies to not only help your child fall asleep, but have lifelong sleep hygiene skills. This is only one of many recorded webinars we have available. Register for this one and more on [Eventbrite](#).

CHECK OUT ALL THE FUN!

In Milwaukee, WISAPSP families enjoyed a beautiful morning fishing on the Williams Bay Pier with the Geneva Lake Conservancy! They took excellent care of our families and showed us all the tips and tricks to a good catch. We caught several fish, and the kids became quite the fishermen in just a short amount of time!



In Madison, families enjoyed A Night at the Ballpark sponsored by Jockey Being Family event. Over 100 people attended and one of the WISAPSP families threw out the first pitch. One family sent this comment to WISAPSP about Jockey: *"Please let Jockey know how much we appreciate them doing events like this. The on-going support for our family with events that build fun memories like this is priceless. A big thank you to Jockey for your support."*



Jumping into summer with WISAPSP! In La Crosse, families enjoyed a fun open gym event at Performance Elite Gymnastics where the kids could run and jump all afternoon!



Thanks to the families who helped kick off summer by hanging out at JoJos Jungle earlier in June. It was nice to see all the kiddos playing while the adults could hang out and catch up!

In Milwaukee, adoptive parents met at Colectivo Coffee in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin to enjoy a beautiful spring weather on the outdoor patio and coffee drinks. Concerns and joys were shared. A lovely time was had by all. If you are in the area, join them next time for a cup of coffee and good conversation. One lucky parent will win a year-long family membership to the Urban Ecology center in Milwaukee.

We have more to give away at our coffee meet-ups, so please consider joining us at the next event at 10:00 am on Thursday, July 14th, 2022. [Register here!](#)



PARENT/CHILD ACTIVITY

BACK-TO-SCHOOL TIME CAPSULE

Start a fun tradition with your kids by making these back-to-school time capsules! Here's how!

Supplies Needed:

- Mason jar (or any container for the items)
- Construction paper
- Glue or tape
- String
- Pencil/Markers
- Scissors
- First Day of School questionnaire
- Photo of child
- Any other mementos
- Optional: Confetti, ribbon



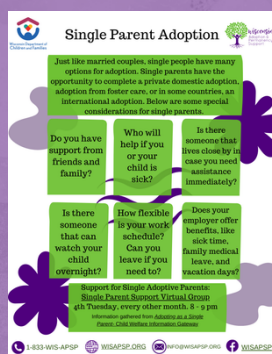
Instructions:

Have your child fill out the First Day of School Questionnaire. You can create your own or find a downloadable example [HERE](#). Measure your child with the string to show their height at the start of school. Print a photo of your child. Allow your child to create a fun label for the time capsule jar. Gather any other items you'd like in the time capsule (examples are: trace their handprint, child can write about dreams or goals this year, list of current events, etc). Place all of the items in your time capsule. Glue or tape the label on the jar. You can add confetti and a ribbon if you'd like!

At the end of the year, have your child fill out an end-of-school interview to compare! You can find one [HERE](#).

WHAT ARE
FAMILIES SAYING
ABOUT WISAPSP?

“
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ORGANIZING SUCH A FUN EVENT FOR OUR FAMILY! WE ALL HAD A GREAT TIME. THE GIFT BAG WAS ALSO FULL OF HELPFUL AND USEFUL THINGS AND THE RAFFLE SUMMER FUN GIFT BAG WAS ALSO PERFECT! WE NEEDED AND WILL USE ALL THE GOODIES-I HAD JUST COMMENTED WE NEEDED A NEW FAMILY BEACH BAG JUST EARLIER THAT DAY! THANK YOU AGAIN FOR A GREAT FAMILY OUTING!



CHECK OUT OUR NEWEST PRINTABLE RESOURCES!
FIND THIS ONE AND MORE AT WISAPSP.ORG.

CHOCOLATE TOWN

▲ SEE YOU IN ▲

FAMILY HIGHLIGHT



In this summer newsletter, we are delighted to feature the Owen family! Mark, Rita, and Logan (9) reside in Washington County, WI. Mark and Rita, also have an adult son, daughter, daughter-in-law, and two other grandchildren in addition to Logan. If Mark and Rita could describe their experience as guardianship parents in 3 words they would be: Love, Hope, and Commitment.

The Owen family loves to spend their time outdoors camping, fishing, hiking, and catching critters. They especially love camping at Pike Lake State Park in the Kettle Moraine Forest.

When asked about a memorable moment they have experienced together as a family, it was clear that they have been busy making the most of their time together. "We constantly focus on making memorable moments with Logan. They are things as simple as Saturday morning trips to Cream City Skatepark, where Logan enjoys developing his skateboarding skills, to wonderful family vacations. Recently, in March, we traveled to Hershey, PA, Gettysburg, PA and

Washington D.C. This was a fantastic vacation, as we toured Hershey Chocolate World and visited several monuments, memorials and museums in Gettysburg and DC, learning about our Nation's history."



When asked how the Owen family has evolved, they discussed how they worked through all of the uncertainties that come with raising Logan. "Without a doubt, we began with enormous stress and anxiety because of all the unknowns attached to our situation. However, as we worked through the unknowns, each and every day has been a blessing, bringing us to where we are today. It's our mission and pleasure to provide Logan with everything he, as a child, should be entitled to. Watching him grow and seeing the results of our efforts through the good choices he makes, his educational progress and his all-around development, gives us great pride. He, as well as us, know he's in a safe, healthy, and happy environment, which everyone deserves."

The advice they would give to other guardianship and adoptive families is to be actively involved in your child's life and spend quality time with them, and to take advantage of the great programs available through WISAPSP or other outlets in your community. "We've done so many fun things, such as attending an Admirals game, going to a glass fusing class and geocaching. Children need to know they are cared for and loved." If there were any other words of wisdom they would like to share it would be to be patient, take your time, and listen to your child. "We found what started out as a crisis in our lives, has turned out to be one of the best things that ever happened to us. And now, we can't imagine our life without him in it."

Thank you, Owen family, for sharing a piece of your lives and insight with us!

ONGOING VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS



[Open Mic Teen Support Group](#)



[Coffee Talk for Adoptive and Guardianship Parents](#)



[Trauma Informed Parenting](#)



[Birth Parent Support](#)



[KINnect Relative Caregivers of Children](#)



[Single Adoptive Parent Support](#)



[Adult Adoptees](#)



[Waiting to Adopt](#)

New attendees are always welcome at these free online groups, but we do ask you to pre-register.
Attendees must reside in the state of Wisconsin.



~~Positive~~ Adverse Childhood Experiences

We have probably all heard about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – things like emotional or physical neglect or abuse, household substance abuse, mental illness, violence, divorce, incarceration and how these experiences can negatively impact health and well-being in adulthood (Felitti et al., 1998). Maybe you've even completed the ACEs questionnaire to see what your own ACEs score is or tried to determine what your child's score might be. As parents, it may be easy to feel discouraged when thinking about the long-term effects of ACEs. The **good news** is that there are certain Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) that can act as a buffer to Adverse Childhood Experiences (Bethell, et al., 2019). As part of a 2019 study, Christina Bethell and colleagues developed a **Positive Childhood Experiences** Score. To determine the PCEs score, the researchers asked respondents to report how often or how much as a child they:

- (1) felt able to talk to their family about feelings
- (2) felt their family stood by them during difficult times
- (3) enjoyed participating in community traditions
- (4) felt a sense of belonging in high school
- (5) felt supported by friends
- (6) had at least 2 nonparent adults who took genuine interest in them
- (7) felt safe and protected by an adult in their home

Key Finding:

The researchers found that adults who had higher Positive Childhood Experience (PCE) scores were less likely to have depression and/or poor mental health and had greater adult-reported social and emotional support, after accounting for ACEs.

The Take-Away:

Keeping in mind the importance of these 7 Positive Childhood Experiences as we parent may help us create an environment that generates resilience and allows children to flourish despite having experienced early adversities.

References

Bethell C., Jones J., Gombojav N., Linkenbach J., Sege R. Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels. JAMA Pediatr. 2019: e193007

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). About the CDC-Kaiser ACE study: Major findings. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>

Vincent J Felitti MD, FACP, Robert F Anda MD, MS, Dale Nordenberg MD, David F Williamson MS, PhD, Alison M Spitz MS, MPH, Valerie Edwards BA, Mary P Koss PhD, James S Marks MD, MPH Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, American Journal of Preventive Medicine Vol. 14, Issue 4, P245-258, MAY 01, 1998; DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-3797\(98\)00017-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-3797(98)00017-8)

GIFTS PROGRAM

The GIFTS Program is our short-term support program for post-adoptive or guardianship families with a higher level of need to support permanency. It is a strengths-focused, trauma-informed program. If a family is determined to be eligible for the program, our GIFTS Case Manager will work closely with that family to assist in:

- Finding resources
- Navigating cross-system needs
- Identifying family strengths and goals
- Offering consistent support and advocacy

To find out more about the program or determine eligibility, give us a call at our toll-free number or fill out our First Step Form.

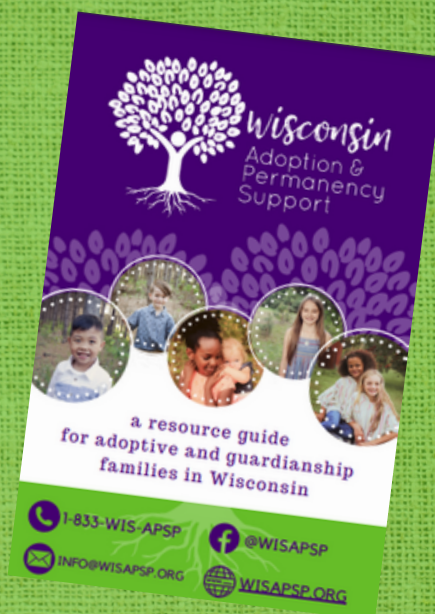
Allison Kunkel
GIFTS Case Manager



[WISAPSP.ORG/GIFTS-PROGRAM](https://www.wisapsp.org/gifts-program)

further resources

**FIND MORE RESOURCES
BY READING OUR
RESOURCE GUIDE.
FIND IT BY SCROLLING
DOWN ON THE HOME
PAGE OF WISAPSP.ORG**



Contact Us!



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Where is the closest office to you?

Office locations for the program
are shown on the map.

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can find at your local library.

