



Post Adoption Press

Serving families formed by adoption in Sonoma,
Lake, Mendocino and Napa Counties

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May-June 2010

If You Can't Beat 'em, Join 'em - "Can I Play Too?"

by Angelique Miller

(reprinted with permission from the *Post Vibe*)

It's really just about staying regulated, staying present, and making real connection with my kids. Only then can I truly influence them positively. But sometimes those words sound so lofty and vague, right? "Yeah, but what does that mean? What does that look like?" Here's an example of what that can look like.

Our two kids sometimes get really dysregulated together. It looks like they're playing but it's way too rough. If we leave them alone, it usually escalates to one of them getting hurt and/or something broken, which fans the dysregulation flames when one of them feels like a bad kid. My husband and I usually get scared when we see this rough playing and want to break it up as quickly as possible. There's no way our kids will go sit in a chair or anything else we might ask when they get like that, which is part of why we get so scared. It's a seemingly out-of-control situation and we have zero influence—or at least that's how it feels.

Feeling fairly regulated recently when that happened, I let go of the instant gotta-break-it-up feeling and casually strolled in, waiting for something brilliant to come to me. Although I wasn't consciously planning it, I was attempting to feel present. Well, it worked because I stood there looking at them wrestling in the bunk bed and the kids, expecting me to get upset, were kind of shocked to hear me say, "Hey, can I play, too?" After a half-second pause, in stereo they replied, "SURE!" and their angry demeanor changed instantly to joy. I don't know why, but I just really wasn't expecting that response. I was expecting something with expletives... But anyway, I didn't have to exert myself physically to play, just played a little bit with tickling fingers, pretend, etc. and then within about ninety seconds I could sense that I was able to suggest moving them onto a calmer activity (or maybe one of them spontaneously decided to go somewhere else, can't recall since I've now done this "technique" several times).

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What's Happening at Parents Place

SUPPORT AND SOCIALIZATION GROUPS

Parent Support Group meets on the **3rd Wednesday** of each month from **5:30 to 7:30 pm**. This monthly support group is open to all adoptive parents and offers on-site childcare free of charge. First 30 minutes is family brown bag dinner. Facilitated by Liz Jimenez, MSW.

May 12 meeting: "Handling Anger, Yours and Your Child's " with Amy McIntyre, MA

June 16 meeting: "Sensory Strategies for School and Home" with Kristy Boblitt, OT

Petaluma Parent Support Group This group meets on the **1st Tuesday** of each month from **5:45 to 7:45pm** at B'nai Israel Jewish Center, 740 Western Ave. Facilitated by Liz Jimenez, MSW.

May 4 meeting: group viewing of Barb Lee's documentary *Adopted: When Love is Not Enough*

Socialization Playgroup at the Farm (3-6) **Thursdays 9:45 to 10:45 am June 10-August 5**. In conjunction with Forget Me Not Farm and the Sonoma Humane Society, this 8 session group offers animal assisted and horticultural therapeutic activities that provide a haven for children, plants and animals to bond, learn and heal with one another. **2 spaces left**. Location: 5345 Highway 12, Santa Rosa.

Creating Lifebooks meets one **Thursday** morning per month from **9:30 to 11:30 am** with Barbara Joy. (5/6; 6/3)

RSVP required for all events.

To register or for more information call Liz Jimenez 707/303-1509

NOTE: No groups (except the Farm) meet in July or August. Have a great summer!

New Library Additions: Check 'em out

Becoming Attached: First Relationships and How They Shape Our Capacity to Love by Robert Karen, PhD (1998). Fresh insight into some of the most fundamental issues of emotional life. Karen is a clinical psychologist in private practice and an award-winning author. He is Assistant Clinical Professor at the Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies, Adelphi University.

ATTENTION THERAPISTS

FREE WORKSHOP

Understanding and Repairing
Attachment Trauma
'a relating and containing approach'

With

Vivienne Roseby, PhD

Friday, June 4, 2010

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

**The Volunteer Center
153 Stony Circle, Suite 100
Santa Rosa**

6 CEUs provided for \$25.00

Space is limited

Please call Liz at 303-1509 to RSVP

Please join us for Post Adoption Services'

ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC



May 16, 2010

11 am to 2 pm

Galvin Community Park

3330 Yulupa Ave.

Santa Rosa

*Burgers, hot dogs, drinks & dessert
(all provided by Parents Place)
please bring a side dish to share!*

Jolly jump, face painting, games, prizes . . .

PLEASE RSVP BY MAY 10

lizj@jfccs.org or 303-1509

Community News and Events

HEALING THE HEARTS OF PARENTS:

An Attachment-Focused Group for
Adoptive Families

Facilitated by

Denise Wagner

This group is designed to support adoptive parents to understand issues underlying their child's behavior. By exploring their own attachment story, parents will gain a deeper understanding of their relationship with their child and develop critical parenting tools.

Day and evening times available

Contact **Denise Wagner, PsyD,
LCSW**

527-6000

\$45 per session

8 week commitment required

Dr. Denise Wagner is a highly experienced clinician with nearly 20 years of experience working with foster and adoptive families. She has trained for several years with Daniel Hughes, PdD,



May is National Foster Care Month – a time to make a lasting difference in a child's life. There are 463,000 American youth in foster care. No matter how much time you have to give, you can do something positive that will "**Change a Lifetime**" for a young person in foster care. For more information on how you can help, please visit

www.fostercaremonth.org

THANK YOU

TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE
ADOPTED CHILDREN THROUGH
THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

SAVE THE DATE



North Bay gathering for transracial
families hosted by Kristy Boblitt

JUNE 6, 2010

2-4 pm

Sebastopol Super Park

For information contact Kristy

Kristy@boblitt.com

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Anyway, how happy I am to find this! That old panic is so instant that I sometimes forget this idea, but when I do it, it's a great way to handle their dysregulation. Turns out they've been begging me to help calm them down, but I was so wrapped up in my fear that I couldn't hear what they were really saying.

Angelique lives and works in northern California, has been married 16 years and is mom to two children, ages 8 and 9, adopted from Haiti. She has implemented the Beyond Consequences principles since September 2006.

The Post Vibe is an online free newsletter from The Post Institute. For more information about the newsletter or the institute go to www.postinstitute.com or call (866)848-POST (7678).

Post Adoption Services @ Parents Place (PAS) offers a variety of services for families formed by adoption. From one-to-one crisis intervention and counseling to support groups for children and parents, we have something to support you and your children. We also provide parent and professional trainings on a variety of topics throughout the year to help build skills and knowledge regarding adoption related issues. Our goal is to be here as a resource for you and your family. We have a free lending library filled with informative books on a variety of parenting, adoption and attachment issues. Our staff and clinicians are knowledgeable and caring. Parenthood and adoption can be both a joy and a challenge.

PAS Coordinator Liz Jimenez, MSW can be reached at 707/303-1509

Read *The Post Adoption Press* online at www.parentsplaceonline.org

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