

"Every Child Deserves a Family"

CPFA Celebrates 50 Years in 2022

A Message from our President



Carolyn Bosa

Greetings Members and Friends,

Fall is here and the "school routines" are back! It really is crazy how time flies – CPFA is 50 years old this year, and my son is now in 11th grade! How did that happen? My husband and I joined CPFA in 2003, and shortly after, I decided to become more involved and continue the mission of supporting those interested in adopting as well as those who have already adopted. In order for CPFA to continue its mission, more volunteers are needed!

Over the 50 years, CPFA has seen many changes in adoption and has had to adjust accordingly to support its members. We need your help and inspiration to continue into the next few decades! Please consider volunteering; any amount of time is appreciated. Nearly all of our volunteers work full time but manage to dedicate some of their free time to CPFA. Perhaps you can send emails or make phone calls for the "Let's Talk Adoption" conference, maybe participate in one of the "Can We Talk?" programs which are held via Zoom, help set up at a social event, or take notes and prepare minutes from one of our Executive Committee meetings (held via Zoom). If you are interested in volunteering or hearing more about the various roles, please send an email to info@cpfانj.org. Join a great group of volunteers!

The holidays are quickly approaching! As in past years, CPFA will collect gifts and monetary donations to support the children in New Jersey's foster care system. Each year we receive feedback from the various county DCP&P offices that the children's faces lit up when they received their gifts. Please consider donating to this wonderful and heartwarming holiday tradition! More details will be forthcoming on the CPFA website and social media.

On behalf of all of the CPFA volunteers, I wish you a wonderful fall and happy holidays!

Carolyn Bosa
CPFA President, Executive Committee

Mark Your Calendar!

Visit www.cpfانj.org for details and for information on connecting via Zoom links.
Also follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

Please note that the mini-conference tentatively planned for October has been cancelled.

Saturday, October 22 | 1:00pm Pumpkin Picking for the Whole Family

Join other CPFA families at Ort Farms in Long Valley for pumpkin picking and fall fun! CPFA will pay admission when pre-registered by October 19th.

Thursday, October 27 | 7:30pm – 9:00pm Adoption Book Group

Join us either virtually or in-person for a lively and thought-provoking discussion on ***Bitterroot: A Salish Memoir of Transracial Adoption*** by Susan Devan Harness. The group will meet at Chatham – Summit Quaker Meeting, 158 Southern Boulevard, Chatham.

Friday, November 18 | 8:00pm – 9:30pm "Can We Talk?" (via Zoom)

To help celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month, please join us for a special virtual presentation. Topic TBD.

Saturday, December 3 | Afternoon (time TBD) Family Ice Skating Event

A fun time for all ages! Warinanco Ice Skating Center, 1 Park Drive, Roselle, NJ. More details will be posted on the CPFA website and social media in the coming weeks.

Save the Date **Saturday, March 11, 2023**
40th Annual
"Let's Talk Adoption"™ Conference
To be held virtually!

New Members & Guests Welcome!

To learn more about the history of the organization, detailed information on upcoming events and locations, how you can become a member or volunteer, please visit our website or email info@cpfانj.org. Please do not contact any of the event locations for information or directions.

Mission Statement

CPFA is a non-profit organization in the State of New Jersey dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a family. CPFA is not an adoption agency, but a volunteer organization working to support those who wish to adopt, and to provide educational and networking resources to those who have adopted.

School Success Tips & Strategies for Kids with Sensory Processing Issues

Going back to school is an exciting time, but for kids with sensory processing issues, it can be overwhelming. Below are a few tips & strategies to help your child (and you) feel calm, comfortable, and confident this year.

Stress-Free Clothing – use the 3-S rule: softer, simpler, and seamless. Avoiding irritants like tags or seams will make mornings easier. Clothes that are easy to coordinate and put on will help kids be more independent when getting dressed.

Avoid the New – ward off morning meltdowns by going with comfortable, familiar clothes. If your child insists on wearing new clothes or shoes, be sure they have time to break them in. If kids have to wear a uniform, and they find it uncomfortable, layer soft, familiar t-shirts or leggings underneath.

Hearing Protection – school buses, lunchrooms, halls, and even classrooms can range from buzzing to cacophonous, so making sure kids have the tools to quiet the noise can mean the difference between a great day and a total meltdown. Consider anything from sound-cancelling headphones to foam earplugs.

Eye Protection – it can be overwhelming and painful for kids with sensory processing issues to sit under flickering fluorescent lights. If your child is sensitive to light, equip them with a pair of lightly-tinted sunglasses to help block the glare.

Sensory Kits – to help kids get through the school day's inevitable challenges, arm them with a sensory kit full of things that help them stay calm. The contents of the kit will vary

depending on the individual child's needs.

Signs & Signals – talk with teachers about your child's sensory needs so they will know what to look for and how to support your child during class. Kids can also arrange to have a secret signal to use with their teachers to indicate that they need a break. Putting the child in charge of deciding when they need a break will prevent meltdowns and teach them useful self-advocacy skills.

Give Everything a Test Drive – whether it's a new kind of ear protection, the most comfortable book bag, or new school supplies, be sure to test drive all the new tools ahead of time.

Routines – establishing consistent routines around school – getting up, breakfast, bus or car ride, after school routine – will help them feel more comfortable and less overwhelmed.

Accommodations – kids may need accommodations that are different than what schools are used to granting (e.g. chewing gum, wearing sunglasses). You can also ask to be notified of potentially jarring events such as fire drills or pep rallies so you can prepare your child. Be sure to include these accommodations in your child's IEP so that if any confusion arises, you have the documentation you need to advocate for them.

This article was derived from "School Success Kit for Kids with Sensory Processing Issues" written by Rae Jacobson.

Visit: childmind.org/article/school-success-kit-kids-sensory-processing-issues

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) Foster Youth Internship Summary

In the CPFA summer newsletter, there was an article about April Barcus preparing to participate in the CCAI Foster Youth Internship. April was kind enough to provide us with some highlights of their experience.

April stayed at George Washington University for nine weeks, and interned with House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer in his Longworth office. For the more official meetings, they were able to present their policy recommendations to the offices of Senator Booker and Congressman Payne. April was also able to do briefings with Congress, the Biden Administration, and Health and Human Services. Besides Senators and Congressmembers, they also met many cool people including staffers, fellow interns, and professionals from many different organizations. April especially thanks the Programming and Resident Assistant, Isabelle, who went above and beyond to make them feel included and welcomed.

April's research focused on the gaps that exist for disabled and chronically ill foster youth and how to better ensure that they get their complex healthcare needs met, both while in care and after. They made several policy recommendations based on their research as well as their lived experience in care.

The most exciting moment for April was when they attended the Luncheon for the National Foster Youth Institute Shadow Day and reconnected with some of the advocates they previously worked with in California. Majority Leader Hoyer spoke at the luncheon and gave a shout out to April, and later tweeted about the event and included them on his Twitter account! April also attended a soiree that day for the CCAI Angels in Adoption program where they met Senator Amy Klobuchar and Senator Roy Blunt.

Overall, the internship was fantastic and a great learning experience. To view April's report, visit www.ccaainstitute.org/programs/view/foster-youth-internship-congressional-report and click on the 2022 Foster Youth Internship Program® Congressional Reports.



Older Child Adoption

by Anna Marie O'Loughlin

Recently I went to the 50th anniversary celebration of CPFA, and while I talked with several people, it reminded me of my journey to parenthood. Thirty-two years ago, I joined CPFA thinking I would let fate determine my path. We started classes with the NJ State Adoption Resource Center and simultaneously applied to an agency for a newborn. Well, the state called us with an opportunity for a boy needing an immediate home, and our life as pre-adoptive/foster care parents began.

Over the next 11 years, we adopted four children through the state foster care system, and then became a Special Response Unit (SPRU) family. At the time, SPRU families were those who fostered children who needed temporary housing until the state could find a more permanent placement. We continued as a SPRU family for a couple of years until a 15-year-old boy came into our lives and stayed until he was 18. He was not adopted as he had a vision of reuniting with his birth mother and saving her from a life of drugs and alcohol, despite us explaining to him that that wasn't his job. Unfortunately, the year he was graduating high school, he found out that she had already gotten herself clean and sober, but hadn't tried to pull him out

of the system and be a part of his life. As you can imagine, that created many issues for him as he became an adult. He is currently doing well, but over the years he has struggled with the same issues as his birth mother. I love him, and I am always grateful when he contacts me to tell me how he is doing or when he comes for a visit.

Would the path my foster son traveled be different had he been given a chance earlier in his life? There is no way of knowing. The rules have since changed, and the children in the foster care system move to adoption placements sooner. If you are considering fostering or adopting an older child, I am proof that it can have a happy outcome. I can't say that it was always smooth sailing, as it was a lot of work and often a rollercoaster ride, but it was so worth it! Two of my children, adopted at ages four and ten, are now married with children, and I am the proud grandmother of four. Today we are close and do many things together. I am always advocating for people to consider older-child adoption because they can bring so much love and joy into your lives.

National Adoption Month is held each year in November. The mission is to spread awareness about adoption, celebrate the families who have grown through adoption, and to recognize the many children still waiting for forever families. Organizations, businesses, families, and communities across the country participate in and host events and activities to promote National Adoption Month. If you can't find any local events, simply celebrate at home by reading adoption-related books; watching positive, adoption-related movies; re-telling your child their adoption story; creating a memory book; or baking a cake!

It's the perfect time to get involved with CPFA! Please consider volunteering your time to help CPFA accomplish its mission to support those who wish to adopt, and to provide educational and networking resources to those who have adopted.

NOVEMBER IS  NATIONAL
ADOPTION
MONTH

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To contact a board or committee member, please email info@cpfanj.org



Social Update

The summer picnic/celebration of the 50th anniversary of CPFA was very successful, with 45 members enjoying fun in the sun! As an added bonus, guests received CPFA beach towels.

Please join us for our upcoming events. Families will gather on Saturday, October 22nd for fall fun and pumpkin picking! This event was postponed from earlier in October due to inclement weather. If you enjoy ice skating, be sure to attend the Saturday, December 3rd event at Warinanco Ice Skating Center. More details will be announced on our website and social media in the coming weeks.

CPFA will continue its holiday tradition of providing gifts for youth in foster care. With your support over the years, thousands of children within the Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P) have had their holidays made a little brighter with special gifts. Please consider participating this year and donating any amount to this holiday drive. All of the money collected is used to purchase gifts or gift cards for the children. It's easy and safe to donate through the CPFA website! The link will be live in mid-November through early December. Thank you!



Membership & Renewal Form

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email: _____

Make Payable to: CPFA

Mail To: Miriam Frolow

48 Oak Crest Rd., West Orange, NJ 07052

Please Check off the Appropriate Box Below:

- ☐ \$25 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter
☐ \$45 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter for 2 years

Social events are free to all members & their families! | Membership dues are tax-deductible.

**CONCERNED
PERSONS
FOR
ADOPTION**
CPFANJ.ORG

**PO BOX 179
WHIPPANY, NJ 07981**

*"Every Child
Deserves a Family"*

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**The expiration date of your
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your address label.**

**You can become a member or
renew your membership by
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on our website.**

TO CHANGE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS, PLEASE CALL 973-243-2621 OR CONTACT US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE



www.cpfanjanj.org



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