

# CONCERNED PERSONS FOR ADOPTION



*"Every Child Deserves a Family"*

### A Message from our Co-Presidents



Dana Fried



Carolyn Bosa

#### Hello CPFA Members and Guests!

The last several months have been difficult. Between the COVID-19 pandemic, racial tensions, isolation from family and friends and in-home schooling, let's face it, it has been very challenging. The CPFA board members express support to those who may have lost loved ones, lost their employment or are experiencing emotional challenges during this time.

We balanced work and school, quickly became at-home technology experts and in-home teachers. We felt the loss from our teens and young adults who missed their "rite of passage" events such as final games, prom nights, and in-person graduations. We stood with others in the fight for equality and fair treatment of men, women and children of color.

As with any crisis, let us try to find some good where we can. Perhaps in some way, this crisis has brought our community, state, and country a bit closer. Since we are indeed "all in this together," let us share some of CPFA's thoughts about how we can help support our NJ adoption community during this time.

With the immediate change to connecting and learning electronically, CPFA is responding. Between the cancellation of our yearly "Let's Talk Adoption"<sup>sm</sup> (LTA) Conference in May and many of our social events, our

executive committee is in the process of planning Zoom gatherings for our CPFA parents and children. We are working with selected speakers from the LTA conference to offer periodic virtual gatherings focusing on parenting and adoption topics. We are working on ideas of how to engage our children electronically in a fun, new way. If you have ideas on how to entice our children to join their CPFA buddies virtually, please reach out to us! We would love to hear them. Also, review our column on resources on selected 'good reads' for adults and children.

Remember, CPFA is an organization run solely by volunteers and we encourage you to become involved with us in this new virtual world.

We look forward to "seeing" you at our electronic events and seeing you again later in person, when it is safe to do so.

As always, check out our website at [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org), our Facebook Page at Concerned Persons for Adoption – CPFA-NJ, and our Instagram at CPFA\_NJ for event postings, interesting articles and more.

Stay safe and healthy and enjoy your summer!

Dana Fried and Carolyn Bosa  
CPFA Co-Presidents

## CPFA – Celebrating 48 Years of Service to the NJ Adoption Community!

**Sorry, THIS EVENT IS  
CANCELED**

### SOCIAL EVENTS CANCELLED –

*We Hope To See You Soon*

In the interest of the well-being and safety of our members, CPFA cancelled all regularly-scheduled social events (Heritage Party, Turtle Back Zoo, and annual summer picnic). We will continue to keep abreast of the guidance provided by the state and will follow the state guidelines as we consider and plan future social events for the fall season. The social committee wishes our members a safe and enjoyable summer, and we look forward to getting together with everyone as soon as possible.

### "Let's Talk Adoption"<sup>sm</sup> Conference Update

The 2020 "Let's Talk Adoption"<sup>sm</sup> Conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The coordinator and committee were disappointed, but not discouraged as they look forward to 2021! The team anticipates that in another few months they will begin planning our educational conference for next spring.



Remember to visit our website at [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org), and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for programming updates.

## 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 call one of the board or committee members listed on page 2. 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.

## Self-Care in Trying Times

The last several months have certainly been unprecedented and challenging! An important part of maintaining our mental and physical health is staying grounded. This isn't so easy to do during these trying times! However, in order to be good parents and partners, we need to remember to be good to ourselves! Below are some tips from CPFA members for staying grounded:

- ✓ Self-care is important enough to actually schedule into your calendar as you would an important appointment – and be sure to show up!
- ✓ Exercise and/or go for walks either in your neighborhood or on nature trails. Getting fresh air and spending time outdoors is good for your body and mind.
- ✓ Make time for a hobby or interest. Don't have one? Try something new!
- ✓ Spend some time each day in mindful reflection – take time to relax and distance yourself from the news or chaos that might be in your home.
- ✓ Recognize that you do not have to be perfect, do it all, or achieve more! Sometimes less is more, and you can better enjoy the "less" if you aren't striving for more.
- ✓ Read for 15 minutes outdoors – looking at the scenery and listening to the birds does wonders for anxiety and stress!
- ✓ Breathe! Throughout the day, consciously take ten deep breaths from your abdomen. You can do this anytime and anywhere – at your desk while on a Zoom meeting, in the kitchen when the kids are stressing you, or when you're having a hot flash!
- ✓ Remember that it's okay to lock yourself in the bathroom and have a good cry and/or call a friend while in there to vent! Then compose yourself and head back out to the family!
- ✓ Do something that you have wanted to do, but were too busy to do until now.

What are you doing? Remember that these are difficult times for everyone and you are not alone! Taking time for yourself and staying positive are beneficial for maintaining your mental and physical health. If you are still stressed and/or anxious after trying these tips (or others), reach out for professional help. Knowing when to seek counseling is a strength, not a weakness!

### HELPFUL RESOURCES:

- CPFA board and committee members are always available to talk or email.
- NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJARCH): visit [www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org) or call the warm line at 877-427-2465 to speak to someone about adoption, foster care or kinship care.
- Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris: [www.mhaessexmorris.org/](http://www.mhaessexmorris.org/)

## CPFA Book Group Zoom

CPFA will hold its next Book Group discussion on **Thursday, October 22nd** from 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm via a Zoom Meeting online. A CPFA Listserve email reminder will be sent out with instructions on how to attend. Information will also be posted on [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org).

Join us for a lively and thought-provoking discussion on the book ***Finding Fernanda: Two Mothers, One Child, and a Cross-Border Search for Truth*** (2012) by Erin Siegal (Non-Fiction). Reading the book is encouraged, but not required.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

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Newsletter Editor	Janet Pollio
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Mini Conference Coordinator	Carolyn Bosa
Membership	Miriam Frolow
Publicity	Carolyn Bosa
Ways and Means	Hugh O'Neill
Website	Stuart Turnbull

**To contact a board or committee member, please email [info@cpfanjanj.org](mailto:info@cpfanjanj.org)**



**CONTACT  
INFORMATION**

**WEBSITE:**  
[www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org)

**FACEBOOK:**  
Concerned Persons  
for Adoption-CPFA NJ

**MAILING ADDRESS:**  
PO Box 179  
Whippany, NJ 07981

## Transracial Adoption: Elevating and Stretching with Love

by April Dinwoodie | [www.aprildinwoodie.com](http://www.aprildinwoodie.com)

As a transracially adopted person, adopted in the closed era of the 70's, the sharp intersection of secrecy, shame, and "we don't see color" meant that neither adoption nor differences of race, culture, and class were proactively or openly discussed in my family of experience. It was a time when many, including my parents, were hopeful that the civil rights movement that unofficially ended in 1968 would usher in more equity, justice, and safety for persons of color in America. It was in this spirit and channeling the "love is enough" advice from the adoption professionals, that my parents went about raising me and my three older siblings.

Although my parents were equitable with their love, care, and support for all of us, I needed and wanted something different than my white siblings. I did not want a different family; I wanted my family to be more in tune with the very real and complicated dynamics of race that impacted me and our family in a predominately white community.

As a child I realized that my challenges of being a different race than my family were mine and mine alone. The inability of my family and community to navigate complex racial dynamics made it difficult for them to recognize what I needed, and left me to build my racial identity on my own without their scaffolding and holding.

Today, as I reflect on my efforts to build my healthy racial identity as a Black/Bi-Racial, Trans-racially adopted person, there are a few things that today's white adoptive parents need to know as a basic starting place in terms of the physical, emotional, and psychological protection of the Black and Brown children entrusted to them.

- Recognize that as a white person you have a racial identity and it likely needs attention in terms of reflecting on the privileges afforded to you simply because of the color of your skin. An important starting place is to understand that your healthy identity development is critical in order for you to help your children build theirs. Sit with the things that you can do in terms of moving around the world without a worry of being profiled, over-policed, and targeted.
- Educate yourself about racial disproportionality and gather important data from the community in which you reside. Check out the local and state school system; review the data for in- and out-of-school suspensions and compare it to national averages that show more Black and Brown children being exited from the classroom or the school. By educating yourself, you are better equipped to ask the professionals the pertinent questions and better prepared to advocate for your children.
- Celebrate Black and Brown excellence on your own and with your children by authentically diving into history, music, art, and literature, and supporting Black- and Brown-owned businesses. It may take a little research and extra effort, but the rewards for the emotional well-being of your children are immeasurable!

- And last but certainly not least, show authentic love for Black and Brown people – this can and should start with your child's family of origin (if safe for your child). There are no better persons to love than those connected to the children you love.

If some of this is hard to imagine, consider how hard it might be for your Black or Brown child to face the complexity of differences of race on a daily basis. For those of you in the thick of it, keep pressing on, elevating, and stretching in the name of love and protection!

## CPFA's Adoptive Book Group - Books and Resources for CHILDREN

The CPFA Adoptive Book Group has put together a list of some books and resources for children during this time of increasing racial awareness as well as coping with stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the books listed below, parents can also check out **Common Sense Media**, **Notable Children's Books**, and **Adoptive Families** websites for more ideas.

### Children's books about racism, diversity and tolerance

**A Kid's Book about Racism** by Jelani Memory

**What Do You Do With a Problem?** by Kobi Yamada, illustrated by Mae Besom

The **Diverse BookFinder** is a comprehensive collection of children's picture books featuring Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). **EmbraceRace** is a multiracial community of parents, teachers, experts, and other caring adults who support one another to meet the challenges that race poses to our children, families, and communities.

### Children's books about Coronavirus and the COVID-19 Pandemic

**My Hero is You: How Kids Can Fight Covid-19!** by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which is part of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

### Children's books about dealing with stress and anxiety, and the importance of kindness and friendship

For the top 10 Children's Books to help kids with stress and anxiety, visit the **Fit Sanford Health** website.

**The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse** by Charlie Mackesy is about love, friendship and kindness.

**Listening with My Heart: A Story of Kindness and Self-Compassion** by Gabi Garcia, illustrated by Ying Hui Tan, reminds us of the importance of being friends to ourselves. It also touches on the universal themes of friendship, empathy, and kindness.

**The Lion and the Bird** by Marianne Dubuc is a story about loneliness, loyalty, and the gift of friendship. During this pandemic and difficult time of social distancing, this book reminds our children that friends are still there.

**Zen Pig: The Art of Gratitude** by Mark Brown. There has never been a more important time to teach your child about gratitude, mindfulness, and happiness. Through simple yet impactful artwork, Zen Pig teaches us the importance of being grateful and open to the world around us.

## 2020 Lynne Witkin/CPFA Scholarship



Each year at the "Let's Talk Adoption"<sup>sm</sup> Conference, CPFA presents a scholarship to a student pursuing a degree in Social Work. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 conference was cancelled; however, the CPFA board unanimously agreed to present the 2020 scholarship.

The winner of the 2020 Lynne Witkin/CPFA Scholarship is Melissa Santana.

Melissa is a BSW student at Georgian Court University who will be graduating in August 2020. She intends to obtain an MSW concentrating on Law and Social Work, with the goal

of becoming an LCSW. Melissa was a foster parent prior to becoming a social work student; she experienced the child welfare process from beginning to end from a foster parent's perspective. After 11 years, Melissa was able to adopt her foster daughter. In her own words she looks "forward to being part of the solution in making a reality the pursuit of the advancement and implementation of laws and policies which uphold and secure the protection, education and health, and when needed, the adoption of children in our state."

The CPFA board members and conference committee congratulate Melissa Santana on receiving the 2020 Lynne Witkin/CPFA Scholarship!

### Membership & Renewal Form

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Make Payable to: CPFA

Mail To: Miriam Frolov

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.



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PO BOX 179

WHIPPANY, NJ 07981

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### IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

The expiration date of your membership is shown on your address label.

You can become a member or renew your membership by mail or by following the link on our website.

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

Website: [www.cpfanjan.org](http://www.cpfanjan.org) ~ Facebook: Concerned Persons for Adoption-CPFA NJ