The Adoption Triad...

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ADOPTION ARC

Nice to meet you...

- Laura E Hoffman, MSW, LCSW
- Graduated from Temple University with an MSW in 1994.
- Washington, DC (LICSW) Child Welfare
- Philadelphia, PA (LCSW) Private Practice
- Cherry Hill, NJ (LCSW) Adoption ARC and Private Practice
- Supervises new MSW graduates.

Benji. Most importantly; Mama to



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Adoption Triad

Birth Family

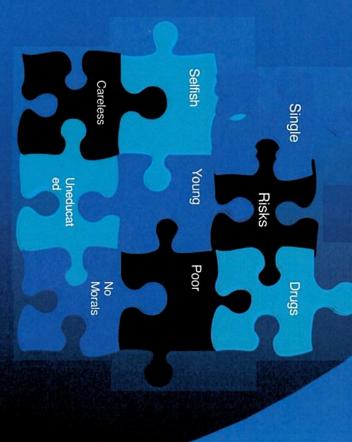
Adoptive Family

Introduction...

- What is the Adoption Triad?
- Why is it important to focus on the welfare of the triad in its entirety?
- What does open adoption mean?
- Why is open adoption an important option Adoptees? for Birth Mothers, Adoptive Parents and

Myths about Birth Mothers...

Society has not always been kind to Birth Mothers.



Benefits of a Healthy Triad.

- First and foremost, all parties are being treated with dignity and respect.
- The Adoptee will know that their Birth and needed; such as options counseling, and thrive during the pregnancy. supportive counseling and resources to live Mother had the support that she deserved
- The Adoptee will know that their adoption was an informed choice.

Benefits of a Healthy Triad (2)

- The Adoptive Parents will not struggle knowing if Birth Mother was fully informed regarding the adoption. with feeling entitled to parent due to not
- The Adoptive Parents will benefit from stability during the pregnancy. being able to contribute to Birth Mother's
- The Adoptive Parents can understand their child through a broader lense.

Benefits to a Healthy Triad (3)

- Birth Mother feels empowered through the process
- Birth Mother is an active participant instead of a victim of circumstance.
- Birth Mother is able to "create a plan" as different manner. opposed to "give up" her child. In turn, healing and grieving are dealt with in a

Who is she?

- A Birth Mother is someone who wants a better life for her child
- A Birth Mother usually thinks long and hard about her choice to create an adoption
- A Birth Mother is involved in choosing the Adoptive Family for her baby.
- A Birth Mother has ongoing updates regarding her baby's life.

Birth Mothers' needs:

- Grief never ends, it morphs, therefore, essential. lifetime counseling for Birth Mothers is
- Grief looks different for different people.
- Each Birth Mother has her own story.
- Don't make assumptions.

The Legal Part...

- Adoption Laws vary state to state.
- New Jersey must wait 72 hours until surrenders are full, final and irrevocable. legal surrenders are signed. Then the legal
- What does this mean for the Birth Mother?
- What she needs before anything legal is signed?
- The post placement process in New Jersey.

Adoptive Parents - Needs and Wants

What is their journey?

Are they childless not by choice?

- Possible infertility, grief and loss.
- Have they healed?
- The importance of healing in order to move forward.
- Home Studies, Clearances and More!

Building an Authentic Dynamic

- A forever connection; Birth Mothers, establish an authentic, boundaried relationship. Adoptive Parents and Adoptees; how to
- Making adoption a positive, non shaming situation.
- What happens to Birth Mothers, and how do they cope?

secure attachment Parenting Goal: To establish a

- Stable.
- No disruption.
- Trust develops.
- Empathic reflection.
- Exploration is encouraged and caregivers remain grounded.

How Adoption Impacts Children...

- Changes in time have made adoption a less shaming issue, but there is more work to do!
- Positive Adoption Language.
- Positive approach to transracial adoption.
- Openness helps eliminate children creating "real parent fantasies."
- Not putting too much responsibility on the child

Attachment and Bonding

- What age is the child when adopted?
- Infant Adoption —
- Let's look at Attachment Theory —
- British psychologist and psychiatrist, John connectedness.) Bowlby (late 1940s was commissioned by WHO to research psychological

4 Facets of Attachment Theory

- 1. Safe Haven the baby has comfort in time of threat by caregiver.
- 2. Secure Base the baby assumes a reliable foundation with the care giver.
- 3. Proximity Maintenance the child caregiver. explores the world, but stays close to the
- 4. Separation Distress the child is caregiver. unhappy when separated from the

Attachment to Caretakers

 Bowlby believed that the child's attachment was built over the first year of mental model of self and others based on its earliest relationship to its caretaker. life as the child forms a representational

Developmental Milestones

- Babies spend different amounts of time at each stage before moving to the next stage.
- Motor
- Language
- Social/Emotional
- Depends upon where the baby is and how stimulated and nurtured they are.

Infant Attachment

- 1-3 months babies become more active and vision changes aware. Recognize familiar voices and
- 4-7 months babies are interested in the human face and strong attachments to primary caretakers are solidified
- Babies are showing displeasure when away from their primary caretaker.

My Child's Adoption Story

- Start sharing their adoption story on day
- Be honest, but age appropriate.
- Use available resources, including other Adoptive Families
- Let your child manage their adoption story.
- Get comfortable with teaching your child how to manage uncertainty.

Questions, Comment or Thoughts

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