

WHAT'S
INSIDE:

What's Goin' On?

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and see locally
and nearby.

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BUSTERS

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APRIL
2016

RESOURCES, NEWS & INFORMATION FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN TEHAMA COUNTY

TOGETHER on purpose

Network & Resource Group

All Adoptive
Families Welcome
Free Childcare
Provided On-Site

April 19 ■ May 17 3:30 - 4:30 PM
345 David Avenue, Red Bluff (North Valley Baptist Church)

Shasta College Foster
& Kinship Care Education
Program Announces
Dates for Spring 2016!

- Adoption Series
- Adoption Through Foster Care
- Options

See inside for descriptions, locations, dates, and registration information.

Visit TOP on the Web and Enter to Win!

The Together on Purpose website is officially up and running! Take a minute to come check it out at www.togetheronpurpose.org - find event details, download past newsletters, get in contact with Together on Purpose or help us test the new online forum for adoptive parents. While you're there, enter the free drawing to win a copy of *Drowning with My Hair on Fire*, an exciting new book by Ce Eshelman, an Attachment Specialist at the Attach Place in Sacramento and adoptive parent.



Drowning with My Hair on Fire Insanity Relief for Adoptive Parents

By Ce Eshelman

Ce Eshelman has more than five hundred blog followers, many of whom plead with her for what is now this book. Her self-help memoir, which includes hundreds of letters to adoptive parents, is seriously messy, way too personal, mostly informative, sometimes disorganized, occasionally ridiculous, irreverent, and often pure crazy town. As a child of trauma herself, she weaves a compelling story of raising her own two adopted children from difficult beginnings, and becoming a therapist with a thriving practice helping other adoptive and foster parents with equally huge challenges.



WHAT'S GOIN' ON? Coming Events & Activities

APRIL 2016

19 Together on Purpose Network & Resource Group

Tuesday, March 15, 3:30 - 4:30PM at 345 David Ave., Red Bluff (North Valley Baptist Church). Come meet with professional therapist Scott Howell, MFTI and other Tehama County adoptive families for support, networking and resource sharing. **Free childcare provided on-site.** All adoptive families welcome. For more information, call Andrea or Tahnee at 530-528-0300 or email acurry@atvr.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

23 28th Annual Children's Fair

Saturday, April 23, 2016; 10AM - 2PM at the Tehama District Fairgrounds. A fun-filled day of activities and entertainment for children of all ages! FREE admission! Featuring a variety of fun activities for children and information on resources for parents. The Children's Fair is a project of the Tehama County Education Foundation. Mark your calendars! **FREE EVENT.**

29 Lifebook Class

Presented by Diane Largent, MSW
Friday, April 29, 9:30 AM - NOON
at Lilliput Children's Services, 289 Rio Lindo Avenue, Chico. Join us and learn a therapeutic tool for adoptive parents and children. Lifebooks can help connect adopted children to their histories and beginnings while creating foundations with their adopted families. Please RSVP by April 15: 530-896-1920 or mcrittenden@lilliput.org

APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS & PREVENTION MONTH!

Visit www.childwelfare.gov for tips on raising awareness in your community!

Shasta College Foster & Kinship Care Education Program Tehama County Classes 2016

Adoption Series:

Training for Adoptive Families

May 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31

6pm-9pm

Parenting from the Inside Out
From Fear to Love: Parenting your Adopted Child
Attachment in Adoption
Attachment Parenting
Grieving the Person Your Child Could Have Been

High Point Assembly Church
625 Luther Road, Red Bluff

To register: Contact Judy Mandolfo at bethelrbjudy@yahoo.com or 530-209-7649.

Adoption through Foster Care

May 5, 12, 19, 26; June 9 & 16

6pm-9pm - ATTEND ALL DATES

Each person interested in adopting a child through Shasta County Adoptions is required to attend all 18 hours of this training. This training examines the adoption process through the foster care system, and through the eyes of the child.

High Point Assembly Church
625 Luther Road, Red Bluff

To register: Contact Judy Mandolfo at bethelrbjudy@yahoo.com or 530-209-7649.

Options Training:

April 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9, 16, 23

June 6, 13, 20

6pm-9pm

30 hour class for Caring for Substance-Exposed Children Ages 0-5 years.

Options trained foster/adoptive parents and relative care providers understand the effects of substance exposure, and are able to meet the many and varied needs of these infants, toddlers and young children.

Shasta College Tehama Campus
770 Diamond Avenue, Red Bluff, Room 7208

To Register: contact Sheri Wiggins at 339-3611 or swiggins@shastacollege.edu

Shasta College is an equal educator and employer.

More Resources for Adoptive Families:

Support Groups:

Yuba, Sutter, Colusa, Glenn Counties

For Support Groups held in Yreka, Mt. Shasta, Orland or Sacramento contact Leslie Damschoder at 530.879.3861

Butte County Post Adoptive Services

Support Group, Drop in Assistance, WRAP Family Support Group ... For info, call Miko: 530-209-0817, Heather: 916-475-7198 or Deborah: 530-896-1920

Education:

Sierra Forever Families

Seminars on topics like Attachment, Understanding Poverty, Understanding Trauma, and more. Leslie Damschoder 530.879.3861

The Attach Place

Center for Strengthening Relationships
3406 American River Drive, Suite D
Sacramento, CA 95864
ce@attachplace.com (916) 403-0588

Healing from Food Insecurity: Beyond the STASH

by Katya Rowell, M.D.

Whether a child is 15 days or 15 years old, feeding and nurturing through shared meals is a critical way to deepen attachment. Dr. Bruce Perry, of the Child Trauma Academy, refers to ideal bonding opportunities as repetitive, relationship-building, patternbased, and involving the senses—which describes the family meal experience perfectly. But the family table is not always an easy place for adopted and foster children. Indeed, one mom said that her fantasies of pleasant family meals were met “with a slap in the face” when her two children, adopted from Russia, struggled with food anxieties and sensory issues. Unfortunately, conflict around food and eating habits are more common for foster and adopted children due to their past experiences. When conflict defines interactions around food, those bonding opportunities are lost, and trust and attachment can suffer as well.

“We had a 15-year-old boy in foster care with a history of runaway episodes,” Amy recalls. “He was gone for about 30 hours. When he came back, I decided there was no point being upset, so just told him we’d been scared, made sure he was safe and healthy, and quickly threw a box of mac-n-cheese on the stove to get him some comfort food. That floored him, because it turns out that he’d been denied food in his home after his running. I think it ended up bonding him to us much more than anything else could have.”

Parents want to raise children who are healthy and happy. Many try to instill healthy eating habits by enforcing

nutrition rules or portion control. But when raising children who have experienced food insecurity, healing the anxiety around food is key to helping children grow up to be competent eaters who can self-regulate and learn to eat a variety of foods.

Food Insecurity Leads to Survival Behaviors

When children are not fed reliably, do not get enough food, or have to compete for enough, they become anxious. When food-insecure children do have access to food, they often don’t understand or trust that it is coming again in adequate amounts. Food insecurity and unsupportive feeding deeply color the initial relationship a child has with food. It can take weeks, months, and even years of reliable feeding for that trust to build and for children to believe they will be fed.

Some children who have been food insecure demonstrate hoarding behaviors. These survival strategies may manifest themselves in the following:

- Eating quickly
- Gobbling or stuffing food
- Stealing or hiding food
- Eating large quantities, even to the point of vomiting
- Becoming upset if someone eats off their plate
- Getting upset if food is limited or taken away

- Getting upset or eating faster if asked to slow down
- Eating only familiar and “safe” foods
- Keeping food in the mouth for hours, known as “pocketing,” which may be behavioral or a sign of an oral-motor problem (or both)

Healing Food Anxieties

Deciding whether to stash or not to stash. Many resources on hoarding advise allowing the child to have snacks in his backpack or carry food in a pocket, or even have containers of food in the bedroom. Anneliese, mother of two boys, one adopted, one biological, recalls that the main feeding advice she got from her social worker was to let her son carry around baggies of carrots all day: “I just didn’t think that was going to help.” Other experts advise parents to avoid the stash and serve regular meals and snacks. The reality is, it is not an either-or or one-size-fits-all answer.

Parents may decide to offer a stash, or not, and see how things go. The stash may help at first, and the child simply loses interest with time. Consider 18-month-old Marcus, who did not want to let go of his biscuit. He certainly can be allowed to hang on to the biscuit for a while, and maybe even have one in his pocket. Follow his lead. If he throws a tantrum when it’s taken away, allow him to carry it. But the parent also has to be absolutely reliable about regularly providing food. Parents may need to offer food more frequently at first, perhaps every hour or so.

(Continued on page 4)

Three-year-old Arielle, adopted at 11 months, was on calorie restriction and was experiencing intense food anxiety and preoccupation. Mom let her carry food in an attempt to address her anxiety, but Arielle gobbled it up and begged for more. In this scenario, Arielle's actions were not the hoarding behaviors seen when a child first arrives from a place of food insecurity, but were actually symptoms of a feeding relationship disruption due to her food restriction (more below). Letting her have her own stash of food to carry around didn't work in this situation.

To facilitate bonding and food security, food should come from the parents whenever possible. When a child is allowed to get food whenever he wants, he may still feel responsible for getting his own food. It is a missed opportunity to nurture and deepen the attachment with the child. Feeding a child directly shows him that he will be taken care of and builds trust. Meeting his needs, over and over again, is the basis for attachment.

Reassuring the child with words and actions. One foster mom had a little boy she couldn't keep out of the fridge. He would occasionally eat to the point of making himself sick. Mom didn't want to lock the fridge to restrict his food access. Instead, she assigned him a refrigerator drawer. She stocked it with familiar food and told him that the drawer would always be full, and while he could not take food at random, this drawer was his. He checked the drawer often, with Mom's reassurance that it was his food, and he could help choose from it for meals and snack times. Mom made certain it was never empty, and gradually he forgot about it, mostly because Mom reassured him with regularly scheduled meals and snacks.

Another preschool boy, adopted from Eastern Europe, loved cereal. He would frantically gobble as much as he could and cry when limited. His parents finally realized that when he saw an

empty box, he thought there would be no more cereal, ever. They were able to reassure him, and for a while overstocked the pantry with his favorite cereals. At breakfast, he was allowed to eat as much as he wanted, but simple reassurances and a trip to look at the pantry helped him realize he would get enough. Soon he was eating about the same as his brother and was no longer anxious at meals.

Being reliable about feeding. While parents can allow a stash if it works for their child, the best way to lessen hoarding behaviors is to lessen anxiety around food.

"Sam had some hoarding issues, but it didn't last long. We let it run its course. We chose not to have food available to the boys all day and night. I didn't think it would reassure them. I fed them regularly and sat and ate with them. They pretty quickly learned to trust they would get fed." — Mia, mother of two boys adopted at age five and seven

Deborah Gray, in *Attaching and Adoption*, wrote about "high nurture, high structure" parenting. This dovetails nicely with feeding in the Trust Model, pioneered by therapist and nutritionist Ellyn Satter. Parents provide regular meals and snacks with balanced and tasty foods, and the child decides how much to eat from what is provided.

Keeping initial hoarding from becoming entrenched food obsession. Even if a child is labeled as obese or overweight, she can still feel food insecure, and attempts to limit her intake will make her more anxious and prone to overeat. Many children who experienced food insecurity have initial behaviors that scare parents, especially if the child is bigger than average. A foster child may be obese and not regulating food intake due to food insecurity or other factors.

Research tells us that restrictive feeding tends to lead to higher weight and increased eating in the absence of hunger. I believe food restriction

and efforts to control weight lead to more entrenched food obsession, with food-seeking behaviors worsening, not improving.

It is critical to address a child's initial food anxiety with nurturing, reliable feeding, and allow the child to "overeat" while she learns to trust her cues of hunger and fullness. I believe these children's food regulation skills are simply buried, and they can learn to tune in to hunger and fullness cues. What it boils down to is this: with reliable, pleasant, and satisfying meals and snacks, even the food insecure child will learn over time that he doesn't have to worry about when or how much he will get to eat. Parents get to worry or think about the food, so the child doesn't have to.

From *Adoptalk*, published by the North American Council on Adoptable Children, 970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55114; 651-644-3036; www.nacac.org

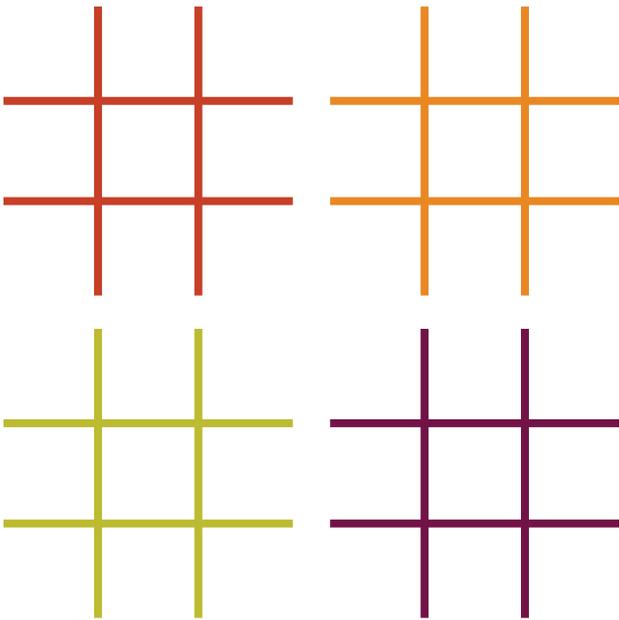
Katja Rowell, M.D. is a graduate of the University of Michigan medical school and served as a family physician in urban, rural, and university student health settings. During her time in practice, she was struck by the prevalence of disordered eating and feeding, and related health problems.



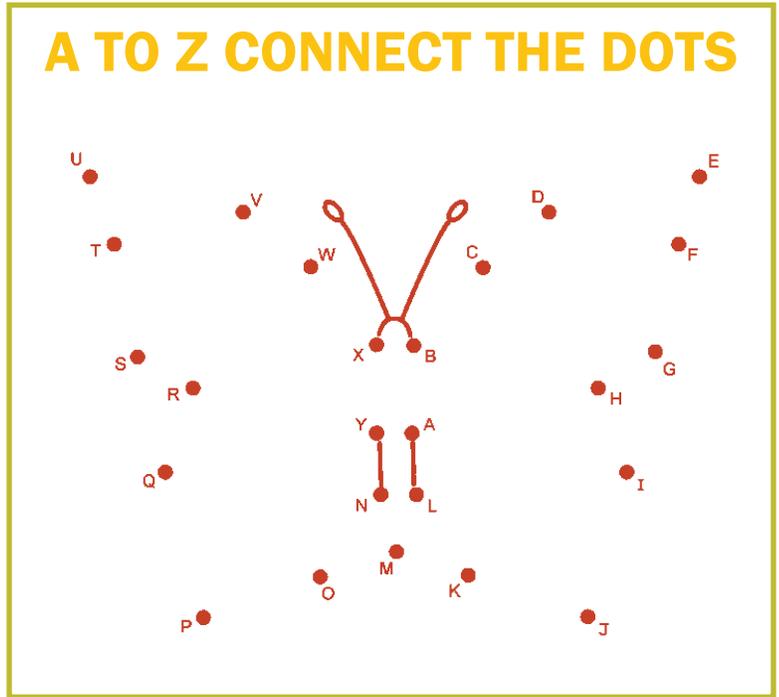
Rowell believes establishing a healthy feeding relationship— in essence— HOW children are fed is the missing piece in addressing disordered eating and weight dysregulation. Dr. Rowell provides personalized solutions and support for parents with feeding and weight concerns, from selective eating to food preoccupation.

Dr. Rowell teaches the importance of a healthy feeding relationship to health care providers, family therapists and childcare staff and consults with corporate clients, nutrition education and public health providers. She has appeared in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, *Betty Crocker Blog*, *Parents Magazine*, *Kare 11 TV*, *Brain Child Magazine*, *The Utne Reader*, *Twin Cities Live* and *Mommy MD Guides*, among others. Her writing has appeared in *LiveWell Digest*, *Huffingtonpost Parenting blogs*, *New Moon Girls Magazine*, and *Adoptive Families Magazine*.

Dr. Rowell's second book, ***Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating: A Step-by-Step Guide for Overcoming Selective Eating, Food Aversion, and Feeding Disorders***, is available on Amazon.



TIC-TAC-TOE



BOREDOM BUSTERS

Springtime Word Search

D Y Y L W G Y T M L V K C P L A F L J Y O I B Z L Y W
 A L B D J A N U L J P L S Z S D J A B Y R C B O J Q S
 Y F G L O I R A J I V U H R N Q E D W M H A X Q E Q J
 O R P N V U B M N B Q O L I Z N S J U M W W K L U A O
 H E P U I E T T O N G X O J M G S R J K D A V W K K I
 Q T R D S R N S Z B V F U C P Q U R P U F B V F T F E
 Y T R A L O P Q I F E O D E A E E V D T D E S I M D B
 D U B D I H H S Y D D X A A Q S R Q C U O G R S M F T
 I B O Q Z J J R N R E P C I N C I P B I R D I E E O L
 I R M T G K W A N Z T R I F E L Z L W Q B L H G Q M D
 L A D Y B U G I U F R Y L Y F T W E Q L F H C Y E I N
 L S R S E E U N S T Q O D C D U R X C Z E K W Z H Y B
 M B D E E B T B B U W N K K H Q P U N C X F L V M E N
 W T S M R M G O S E I R T V A Y Q H R E K V T W W B M
 T D T F O J L W R W E W A V Z L F T D Q H D O Y T K V

- BASEBALL
- BEE
- BIRD
- BUTTERFLY
- FLOWER
- LADYBUG
- OUTSIDE
- PICNIC
- RAINBOW
- SPRING
- SUNNY
- WARM
- WINDY



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