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2017

RESOURCES, NEWS & INFORMATION FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN TEHAMA COUNTY

# TOGETHER on purpose

MELISSA MCKENNA:

## A HEARTFELT FAREWELL

After nearly 5 years as part of the Permanency Team here in Tehama County, it is time for me to announce that I am resigning my position. The time I've spent serving your families has been truly special, and I've felt honored to have a place in your individual journeys. It's been a time of big dreams, hard work, mistakes and achievements, and of watching the most amazing events unfold in tiny corners of humanity. I've loved watching your families grow, being shocked at how big your kids have gotten every time I see them, and planning the next event to get everyone together or just to give all you hard-working parents a break. I've appreciated your willingness to reach out when you've needed support, and have valued the ability to be a resource to you at times. Due to my family's own needs (we're expecting our second baby this summer!), it has become necessary to leave this position

that I have so much affection for. I'll be working in the medical social work field, and look forward to new adventures to come.

As you know, we've made big strides in the

**"I wish for you  
countless more  
beautiful moments,  
and send you  
much love."**

last few years in providing post-adoption services in our local community. The monthly parents' groups and newsletters will continue, and I have high hopes for the many events throughout the year that I know you all have come to look forward to. As part of the effort to continue the momentum we've built in our adoption community, it is my hope that those of you who are able may become involved with

the planning and accomplishment of events that are most meaningful to you. More information on the formation of a community-based committee toward this goal will be forthcoming. In the mean time, the monthly parents' meeting is a great place to get together and talk about your priorities as a group. As a public agency, I feel it is important that the community be involved in making Together On Purpose a continued success, providing guidance, accountability, and manpower toward the goals we have come so far to meet.

Again, I thank you for all of the beautiful experiences over the last 5 years. This has been much more than a "job" to me. I've seen incredible strength, dedication, successes, struggles, perseverance, love, and joy. The depth of these experiences will always stay with me. I wish for you countless more beautiful moments, and send you much love. My last day here will be February 22nd. Of course, the agency will continue to serve you while working through their staffing processes, and your patience and understanding through their transition will be appreciated.

**Best Regards,**

*Melissa McKenna*



**It's STILL not too late to get your Starbucks**

 **FREE  
STARBUCKS  
GIFT CARD**

**We only ask one small favor ...**

Visit [www.togetheronpurpose.org](http://www.togetheronpurpose.org) and fill out the survey to let us know what services YOUR FAMILY would find valuable. Then, fill out the contact form, and we'll send your gift card out!

Eligibility: Must be over 18. Must be a foster or adoptive parent in the Tehama County area (we're interpreting that pretty loosely, but keep in mind, supplies are limited). One submission (and Starbucks card) per adult. While supplies last. Rules are subject to change at any time.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Everyone here at Together on Purpose is going to miss you like crazy, Melissa! Your incredible passion and contagious enthusiasm will be deeply missed. We wish you all the best!

# WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

Coming  
Events &  
Activities

## MARCH 2017

### 8 Adoptive Teens Group

Wednesday, March 8, 6:30-7:30PM, Lilliput Children's Services, 289 Rio Lindo Ave. Chico. Monthly group for adoptive teens! All participants will receive refreshments and a \$20 gift certificate. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Elisa Chavez at 530-896-1920.

### 14 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Group (FASD) (Chico)

Tuesday, March 14, 9:30-11:30AM, Lilliput Children's Services, 289 Rio Lindo Ave. Chico. Marji Thomas, MA, CCC is facilitating this new support group, focusing on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The FASD Support Group will provide general information, resources, referral information and provide a supportive circle for you and your family. Please join us every month for this new and informative support group. For more information, contact Alice McKee, MSW- 530.828.8731 AMcKee@Lilliput.org

### 16 CAREGIVERS: Heal Yourself While Raising Traumatized Children

#### Ce Eshelman Comes to Chico!

Thursday, March 16, 9AM-4PM, Chico Women's Club, 592 E Third St, Chico. Ce Eshelman, LMFT is the founder of The Attach Place and Neurofeedback Solutions where individuals, children, and families come to strengthen their bonds, build connection, learn communication skills, and heal from pain or trauma that may be causing problems. This training will include help with parenting tools, attachment styles, trauma history and self care. **All caregivers and professionals of traumatized children are encouraged to attend.** RSVP by March 13 by calling Elisa or Abby at Lilliput Families: 530-896-1920.



### 21 Together on Purpose Network & Resource Group

Tuesday, March 21, 3:30 - 4:30PM

Alternatives to Violence Counseling Center, 20 Antelope Blvd., Red Bluff (on the corner of Antelope Blvd. & Rio St., in the same complex as the Copy Center). 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 530-727-9423 or email acurry@atvrb.org. **We look forward to seeing you there!**

## APRIL 2017

### 11 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Group (FASD) (Chico)

Tuesday, April 11, 9:30-11:30AM, Lilliput Children's Services, 289 Rio Lindo Ave. Chico. Marji Thomas, MA, CCC is facilitating this new support group, focusing on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The FASD Support Group will provide general information, resources, referral information and provide a supportive circle for you and your family. Please join us every month for this new and informative support group. For more information, contact Alice McKee, MSW- 530.828.8731 AMcKee@Lilliput.org

### 12 Adoptive Teens Group

Wednesday, April 12, 6:30-7:30PM, Lilliput Children's Services, 289 Rio Lindo Ave. Chico. Monthly group for adoptive teens! All participants will receive refreshments and a \$20 gift certificate. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Elisa Chavez at 530-896-1920.

### 18 Together on Purpose Network & Resource Group

Tuesday, April 18, 3:30 - 4:30PM Alternatives to Violence Counseling Center, 20 Antelope Blvd., Red Bluff (on the corner of Antelope Blvd. & Rio St., in the same complex as the Copy Center). 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 530-727-9423 or email acurry@atvrb.org. **We look forward to seeing you there!**

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 16TH ANNUAL CAMP ALWAYS

JUNE 19 - 23, 2017

Held at Mt. Cross in Ben Lomond, CA in the beautiful coastal redwood forest of the Santa Cruz Mountains, Camp ALWAYS is an award-winning Adoptive Family camp that features lodging, meals, workshops and respite for parents, children's activities and FAMILY FUN!

For questions or rate information, contact camp@Lilliput.org or 916-678-7254

**Registration forms available April 1st at [www.lilliput.org](http://www.lilliput.org).**

## 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

# Adoption = Forever & Always

by Betty Krupa

*Born to mentally unstable parents, Betty cycled in and out of foster care until finding her adoptive family at age 14. Since then she has advocated on behalf of youth in foster care who still need permanent families.*

Think back to when you were leaving high school and starting college. What did you do in the summer? Attend cookouts and other events with your family? Sleep in and hang out with friends? Work to earn money for school?

What about the 20,000 youth in foster care who age out each year. How do they spend their summers? Couch surfing? Worrying about earning enough money to move into an apartment? Wondering if they can afford college?

I was lucky. At 11, after years of abuse and instability, I entered care for the last time. I finally connected all the dots after a DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer at my school explained that physical, sexual, and verbal abuse was not part of a normal upbringing. Angry at all I had suffered, I asked my worker to find an adoptive family for me.

The DARE officer helped me find a foster home, kept in touch with me, and became a role model and mentor. She took me out shopping, participated in activities like a parent might, and was always there if I needed something.

At 14, I joined a stable and loving adoptive family. My family and I bonded quickly. We all love music, traveling, and the family dog. Because I had never had anyone read books to me or care for me when I was sick, they helped fill the gaps of my past. I started out in my new family reading Dr. Seuss books, being introduced to cooking, and simply

learning how to be part of a regular family.

With my parents' and our adoptive social worker's support, I caught up in school and earned a B.A. in human services from Stevenson University. Next, my parents pushed me to apply for an internship with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI). The process was not easy, but I succeeded and interned for Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC). Then I joined Senator Mary Landrieu's (D-LA) staff, and recently I became an administrative specialist at Casey Family Programs.

## "Every child needs and deserves a supportive, loving family."

As I said, I was lucky. Everyday, about 104,000 children in the U.S. foster care system are waiting in group homes, shelters, and foster

homes to come home to a permanent family. Every child needs and deserves a supportive, loving family.

My much older birth siblings were not so fortunate. Like many other youth who age out of care, all three faced significant obstacles to success like homelessness, unemployment, depression, and substance abuse. While I was applying for the CCAI internship, my 35-year-old brother committed suicide.

Far too often I meet foster care system alumni who wish they had been adopted. Some youth were never given that option. Some were given the case goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. Many knew that adoption was not a realistic expectation because their foster parents would have to trade low foster payments for even lower adoption subsidy payments.

Even so, I, and many of my brothers and sisters who spent years in care, strongly believe adoption is the best exit

strategy for youth in foster care. Youth who are adopted from foster care have much better educational and social outcomes than those who age out. One study reported that individuals who are adopted from care earn 74 percent more than those who stay in foster care until they age out.

For states, adoption saves money. Multiple studies have shown that it is less expensive for a youth to be adopted with adoption assistance than for a child to remain in care up to age 18. Some researchers estimate that the 50,000 children adopted from foster care each year save states as much as \$3.3 to \$6.3 billion.

When I was in foster care, I never imagined I would be adopted. I thought no one would want an older child because everyone thinks they have bad behaviors. I thought adults were scared of older children and didn't want to risk bringing them into their home.

My life shows how being adopted from care can result in great outcomes. I have an education and a career because of the amazing family who chose to take me in despite the costs to them. The state would not have paid for the 18 months of private tutoring I needed, and other supports, but my adoptive family felt I was worth the investment.

At the end of the day, I never look at my family as my "adoptive family," but as the family I've always had. For me, adoption means knowing that forever and always I have a place to call home and someone to love me no matter what. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for giving me a chance to make my dreams come true.

*Originally published in the Summer 2012 issue of Adoptalk. Adoptalk is published by the North American Council on Adoptable Children, 970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55114; 651-644-3036; www.nacac.org.*

# Getting Your Kids to ... Fall in Love with Reading

by Keira Regina

Children love stories, whether they're creating, watching or listening to them, but not every little kid enjoys reading them, as they may find it more of a chore rather than a hobby. Some research, shared by *The Guardian*, indicates that the motivation to read decreases in age, thus it's important that children are surrounded by a positive home environment where parents demonstrate their support and understanding in their kids' journey to loving literature. It's not always easy doing so with plenty of reluctant readers out there, but hopefully with the following tips, children will display more interest in books, and possibly become avid readers in the future.

## Engage with your readers

In some cases, parents simply ask their kids to read a story to them before bedtime, although it's not entirely effective since children might end up seeing this as an assignment before finally falling asleep. Reading is an experience, and Reading Rockets reminds us that not only do the children have to be enjoying the activity, but so do the adults (or at least pretend to be). Prompt your kids with questions, or take turns reading the pages. You may even want to act out the story!

## Introduce reading activities outside of books

While books are the first thing we look to encourage better reading habits in our young children while they learn, there

are plenty of other ways to get your kids actively reading, so get creative! In a blog post by Tootsa, primary school teacher James Ross suggests, "Put subtitles on when they watch films; comics or simple worded picture books work too. Find a format and context that works for your child."

## Take them to the bookstore

We do our best to pick out good stories in hopes of fostering an emotional attachment between the book and our kids. However, children develop their own interests, and if we always choose what they should be reading, they may feel

a disconnect when it comes to reading all together. Give them the freedom to select their reading materials, regardless if it's a magazine or comic book. They're more likely to retain information from literature that they've personally chosen over a book that you handed to them, according to *Lifehacker*.

## Include reading and writing during playtime

Developing reading and writing skills go hand in hand, so if you're putting a fun spin on writing activities, you're also improving their ability to read. After a day of family fun or playtime with their friends, ask your children to write about the experience and then read it aloud. This will also expand their oral language, which is another tip recommended by the National Head Start Association to promote reading for pleasure.

*Originally published in Sacramento Parent magazine and reprinted with permission, ©2016. www.SacramentoParent.com*

For great kids reading material and other resources, be sure and visit:

**Tehama County Library**

**Red Bluff:** 645 Madison Street • 530-527-0604  
**Preschool Story Time:** Wednesdays starting at 9:30 AM

**Corning:** 740 3rd Street • 530-824-7050  
**Preschool Story Time:** Mondays starting at 10AM  
**Los Molinos:** 7881 State Highway 99E • 530-384-2772

**More info at:** [www.tehamacountylibrary.org](http://www.tehamacountylibrary.org)



# BOREDOM BUSTERS



**Q: What kind of bow  
can't be tied?**

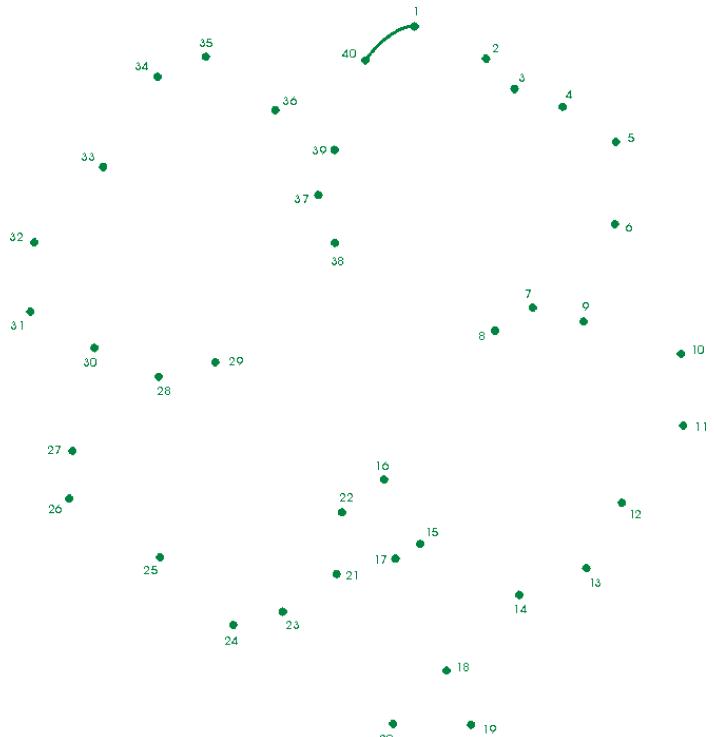
**A: A Rainbow!**

**Q: Where can you  
always find gold?**

**A: In the dictionary!**

**Q: What do you call a  
fake rock in Ireland?**

**A: A Sham-Rock!**



## ST. PATRICK'S DAY WORD JUMBLE

CAOKRSHM      

6	8					

LYCKU      

12	5			

GRNEE      

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HIIRS      

10	13			

PEARELHUCN      

4				1	15			

GDLO      

14			

WIRBOAN      

2				

TPO      

3	7	

VEROCL      

11				9

1	2	3	4	5	

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6	7		

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3	8	7	9	10	12

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13			

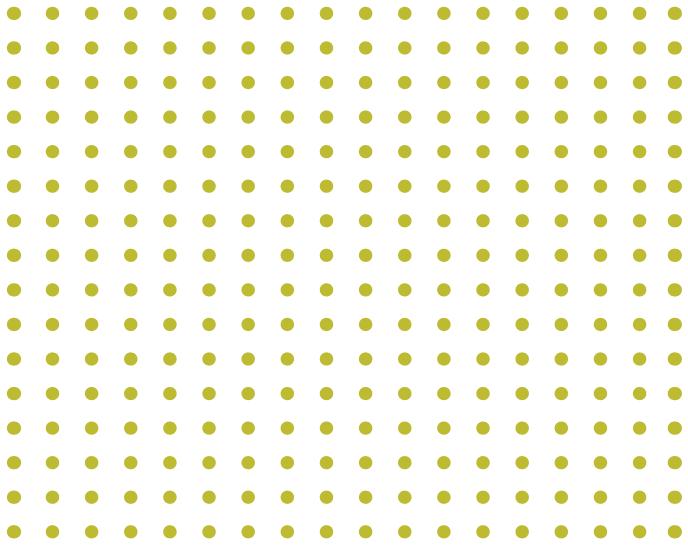
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14	15	5	

 !

## Dots-n-Boxes

Instructions: Each player takes it in turns to draw a line that joins two dots, either horizontally or vertically. The dots must be adjacent (no skipping over any dots!). When a player completes a whole box, he or she gets to put his or her initial or mark in the box. When the whole grid is filled with boxes, the person who has made the most boxes wins!



MAR  
2017

RESOURCES, NEWS & INFORMATION FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN TEHAMA COUNTY

# TOGETHER *on purpose*



It's **STILL** not too late to get your ...  
**FREE STARBUCKS GIFT CARD**

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