THE TRANSITION TO ADOPTIVE PARENTHOOD PROJECT

We are so happy you are participating in our research. Please keep us informed of how you are doing – We are always interested in hearing your updates AND non-updates!!

Recent Adoption-Related Research

As reported by the Donaldson Institute (Winter 2015)

THE IMPORTANCE OF POST PERMANENCY OUTREACH TO FAMILIES

In “Postadoption and guardianship: an evaluation of the adoption preservation, assessment, and linkage Program” Research on Social Work Practice, (Dec., 2014), Liao and Testa examined the impact of an Illinois based post adoption support service, designed to respond to the needs of families with older children who were taken into guardianship or adopted. The study’s findings demonstrate positive program results, including higher levels of commitment from caregivers and lower rates of placement discontinuity. Recommendations include the need to provide outreach to families post permanency in order to encourage child and family well-being.

Click HERE to read the study’s abstract and HERE to read the Donaldson Institute’s summary of the study.

Recent Adoption-Related Research

As reported by The Donaldson Institute (Winter 2015)

STUDY EXAMINES DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ADOPTIVE AND NON-ADOPTIVE FAMILIES DURING THE TRANSITION TO YOUNG ADULTHOOD

Walkner and Reuter present an exploratory study of differences in conflict, closeness, and relationship quality between adoptive and non-adoptive families during the transition from late adolescence into young adulthood in “Adoption status and family relationships during the transition to young adulthood” Journal of Family Psychology, (Vol. 28). The study uses a longitudinal data set to measure changes in both family types over four years.

Outcomes from the study included higher levels of conflict as reported by adoptive mothers, fathers, and adopted children when compared with non-adoptive families in the study. Adoptive mothers and adoptees reported lower levels of closeness than their non-adoptive counterparts. However adoptive mothers were observed by the researchers to have higher closeness with their adopted children than non-adoptive mothers. Trends over time in family relationships demonstrated more similarities than differences among adoptive and non-adoptive families with the exception of adoptive mother closeness.

To read the study’s abstract, click HERE.

Winter Poll Responses

In the last newsletter, we asked you, “What type of content would you like to see MORE of in our newsletters?” Here are your responses!

- 67% said research findings, updates on TAPP conferences, publications, and presentations, and facts about TAPP participants
- 56% said tips on parenting adopted children
- 44% said policy stories
- 44% said stories from TAPP participants
- 33% said fun season/holiday-specific ideas
- 22% said other, including interesting links and the impact of studies such as TAPP
- 11% said tips on parenting

We will incorporate your feedback into future newsletters! As always, we welcome your suggestions!
### Recent Adoption-Related News

**PEOPLE STAFFER STEVE HELLING’S JOURNEY TO ADOPTING FOUR HAITIAN CHILDREN**

For PEOPLE staff writer Steve Helling, the moment of clarity came in a makeshift clinic outside of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Helling had arrived in Haiti just two days after the devastating January 2010 earthquake. As part of PEOPLE’s continuing coverage, he returned to the country three more times that year. During his assignments, he watched doctors amputate crushed limbs and struggle to save critically wounded Haitians.

By December 2010, he found himself in a clinic treating cholera-stricken infants. As he watched a premature baby struggle for his life, he learned that 13 other infants had been abandoned in previous weeks. Moved, he called his wife, Emma. "I told her, 'If I could adopt all these kids, I'd do it,'" Helling, 44, writes in a moving first-person essay in this week’s PEOPLE. "Her response stunned me. "I've been looking into it," she said quietly. "It takes a long time, but it can be done."

And so the adoption journey began.

To continue reading Helling’s story, click [HERE](#).

### Domestic Adoption Policy News

**MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCATES SEEK EQUAL ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES**

Advocates in Massachusetts are seeking to amend 2007 legislation so that Massachusetts adopted persons born between July 17, 1974 and January 1, 2008 can access their original birth certificates, as adopted persons born before and after these dates are currently able to. Upon written application, the state registrar shall:

(a) make available for inspection at the offices of the state registry the birth certificate prior to adoption which indicated the prior legal parent or parents listed on the initial birth certificate or if there has been more than 1 adoption, the birth certificate prior to the first adoption which indicates the parent or parents listed on the birth certificate prior to adoption.

(b) send by certified mail return receipt to the adopted person age 18 or older or to the parents of an adopted person under 18 years of age a photocopy of the contents of the birth record with the following notation on it: “The contents of this birth record are being released under section 2B of chapter 46 of the Massachusetts General Laws or under a court order. This record was amended by adoption. This is not a certified copy of a birth record.”

Click [HERE](#) to read the list of legislative sponsors and co-sponsors of this amendment.
International Adoption News

As reported by Darren Wee of GAYSTARNEWS (Jan. 15, 2015)

AUSTRIA LIFTS BAN ON GAY ADOPTION

Austria’s top court yesterday (14 January) lifted a ban on gay adoption, bringing the country into line with many other EU countries.

The Constitutional Court said the law contravened the European Human Rights Convention.

Explaining the decision, chief judge Gerhart Holzinger said there was ‘no objective argument for a differing rule based solely on sexual orientation’ of the parents.

Previously, only married couples were allowed to adopt but gay marriage is not legal in Austria.

However, LGBTI couples can form registered partnerships and have been able to adopt the biological child of their partners since 2013.

Some EU countries such as the UK, the Netherlands and France allow gay marriage with full adoption rights. However, varying restrictions remain in others such as Portugal, Germany and Hungary.

Click HERE to read the full article.

Domestic Adoption Policy News

As reported by Alison Sullivan of The Gazette (Feb. 25, 2015)

ADOPTIVE PARENTS SEEK MORE TIME UNDER IOWA LAW FOR ADOPTIVE LEAVE

Erin and Brian Scott were prepared for the lengthy adoption process — the stacks of paperwork, tightening their budget, and preparing for a two-week trek to Ethiopia once the government approves their request to adopt their prospective son.

But last week the 28-year-olds encountered something they hadn’t planned for: adoption leave.

Erin, a physician’s assistant at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, assumed she would have six weeks of paid leave, which is what the UI provides for maternity leave. However, the UI’s adoption leave policies cover 40 hours — five days — of paid adoption leave, according to the UI’s Operations Manual.

Scott was surprised at the news and the additional cost she might have to bear through unpaid leave after spending roughly $35,000 throughout the adoption process.

“Adoption is so hard already, it takes so much time, energy and money. For this to be another thing, it’s just so hard,” she said.

The Scotts are not alone in their frustration over what they say are unequal policies for parental leave.

Iowa code doesn’t address adoption leave. However, bills in both the Iowa House and Senate hope to require employers to make adoption and maternity leave more identical.

Adoption “is already more expensive, and then you add in all the additional leave time, I just didn’t think it seemed fair,” said Sen. Matt McCoy, D-Des Moines, and sponsor of the Senate bill.

Click HERE to read the full article.

International Adoption News

As reported by Shalailah Medhora of The Guardian (Jan. 24, 2015)

AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES ADOPTING OVERSEAS WILL BE OFFERED GOVERNMENT HELP

Australian families who are in the process of adopting a child from overseas will be able to access federal support services as early as April, Prime Minister Tony Abbott said.

The newly-created inter-country adoption support service will provide specialist information for parents who have started or are considering starting the notoriously complex process.

Click HERE to read the full article.
**A TAPP Participant’s Open Adoption Experience**

We have invited you, our loyal and committed TAPP participants, to share your stories with us in an anonymous fashion. Here is one essay by a participant, about her experiences of openness in adoption. Please let us know if there is a story you would like to tell...we welcome them.

**Being Fearful of Being Open**

I’ve recently decided to open up EVEN MORE to the world in a way that nobody would understand unless they themselves have gone through an open adoption. Heck, we launched a website about us and had a brochure circulating both of which showed pictures of us and outlined who we are, what kind of house and environment we live in, our interests, our intentions in bringing a child to our home, and many other details about us that I would have preferred to keep private. As far as I’m concerned, I’m ALREADY out there!

I remember very well the same fear surfacing from my family when I first told them I was going to do an open adoption in the first place. “An open adoption? Are you sure that’s a good idea? Aren’t you afraid the birth parents will take the baby back?” While going through our open adoption placement I had to stop listening to negative comments from others and go forward anyway. If I’d let their fears dictate my actions I never would have adopted my son and formed the wonderful relationship I have with his birth parents.

Other people have pointed out to me that perhaps a generational difference is at play in the fear of exposure and in being candid about the adoption. Years ago open adoptions were not common at all; in our generation they are becoming more standard. Although many potential adoptive families still need an adjustment period to warm up to the idea of open adoptions, we are evolving as open adoptions become more and more accepted. People today are more accustomed to having their privacy exposed via the internet and social media. Our parents’ generation didn’t have that in their everyday lives.

Whether or not this generational gap is true or not, I feel very strongly that by exposing myself by sharing my stories, stories of our experiences over the years, could help other people see what is possible with open adoptions. I refuse to use an alias for my name as my parents suggested. If I am not willing to be open about my experiences (the good and the bad) exposing who I am then how will other people learn and benefit? How will the stigma of an open adoption ever be changed? And after all, isn’t being open what an open adoption is all about?

Karen’s blog [www.karencalling.com](http://www.karencalling.com) is now open for viewing! Karen Taylor is the adoptive mother of a very energetic 3 ½ year old boy. She welcomes comments and can be reached via email at karen.taylor@yahoo.com.
A TAPP Participant’s Experience with her Daughter’s Birth Mother

Here is another essay by a TAPP participant, about her experience navigating her family’s relationship with her daughter’s birth mother. Thank you to the mother who shared this story.

The Story of the Owl

Our adoption journey can only be described as a rollercoaster ride full of emotions. There was hurt and disappointment along the way. After three years and eleven months of waiting, we finally got the “call” that would change the course of our lives forever. When we signed the post adoption agreement, it included visits two to three times per year (in an agreed upon location) with the birth parents and the mailing of cards and letters to update the birth parents about our daughter’s progress and milestones every six months. This seemed like a reasonable request and we were prepared to honor it… in the scheme of things, what were a few visits and letters every six months for eighteen years? We had our whole lives to be with our daughter and they did not.

At first, things went seemingly well. We had regular visits with our daughter’s birthmother every six months and exchanged cards, letters and pictures several times per year. Shortly after our daughter’s second birthday, all contact with her birthmother stopped. She started to cancel scheduled visits, not answer e-mails and seemed to fall off the face of the earth (or so it seemed). We know that there must have been a reason for her decision at the time but what that reason was is still a mystery. However, we continued with the promises we made in our post-adoption agreement without fail for the sake of our daughter.

Four years have passed and our daughter is now six. We have never kept the story of her birth a secret from her. She knows that her birthmother grew her in her tummy and my husband and I grew her in our hearts. She also knows why her birthmother made an adoption plan. However, she is still a six year old who is trying to make sense of a very adult issue. The biggest loss our daughter feels as this point is not having a relationship with her half brother. The decision for contact is up to her birth mother and so far, she has chosen to selfishly keep them apart.

I think our daughter summed up the relationship best when on a recent, cold, snowy morning, our daughter asked: “Mom, do you know why owls hunt at night?” I replied “I am not really sure but…..”

Our daughter interrupted my thoughts and said:

“Do you want to know why I think owls hunt at night?” I replied; “Yes, I am very interested in knowing why you think owls hunt at night.” She paused for a moment and then said: “Night is when the owl hunts because all of the other animals are asleep. The owl can catch the most prey.” She continued: “Do you know why my birthmother is like an owl?” I waited for her to continue. “She’s like an owl because during the day she acts like she doesn’t want me but at night when everyone else is asleep she searches for me.” I can be almost 99% sure that the second part of this statement is accurate. We can’t even imagine the pain our daughter’s birthmother experiences when she is alone with her thoughts and nor do we pretend to understand it.

After having the discussion of the owl with our daughter, I decided to do some research about the symbolism of owls. According to some cultures, Owls are said to have the “capacity to see beyond illusion and fake masks.” This is exactly how I would describe our daughter’s ability to separate fiction from reality. She knows that although her birth mother is indeed real, she hides behind many facades in order to deal with the loss of her daughter. She is intelligent enough to know the feeling of abandonment within her is a part of her life story. She is also aware that it is a feeling that no matter how much she is nurtured and loved will never fade away. No matter how many times we tell her how much her birthmother loved her enough to make an adoption plan; it does not change the reality of the situation. Unfortunately, this is an adopted child’s cross to bear.

Our sincere hope is that over the years, our daughter’s birthmother will become less like an owl. We hope that she will want a relationship with our daughter and will be able to see the incredible human being she has become. If and when they do see each other again, we hope that our daughter tells her the story of the owl and how it has impacted her life. We also hope that our daughter’s birth mother will be able to share her side of the adoption story and also answer the question of why she made an adoption plan in the first place. Our hope is that the owl will eventually metamorphosis into a beautiful butterfly with its wings extended. The butterfly is a symbol of rebirth and this will indicate to our family that the time is right for reconnection and forgiveness.
Transracial Parenting in the Pacific NW

When I became a mother, the color of my gorgeous, perfect baby’s skin didn’t matter as much as the fact that this tiny person turned me into a mom. Six years later, we are learning and living our way into what it means to be transracial parents, especially in these times of heightened racial awareness.

We were not making a statement when we checked off the box on the adoption form indicating our openness to a child of any skin color. We hadn’t a clue how this small action would impact our lives, and our parenting.

At first, I started noticing how very pale other people’s kids were. I’d think, “Don’t those parents ever get those babies outdoors?” The compliments our daughter received were about her wildly curly hair and huge brown eyes. And I’d think – “She’s smart too – she’s funny – she’s more than her looks. Is this her future – always judgment about her appearance first?”

In this ‘politically correct’ age, people assume my partner was the one who contributed to our daughter’s looks. In fact, one day I asked a mother of an equally beautiful mixed child, “What agency did you go through?” and received the stiff answer “My husband is black.” I never made that mistake again – and now also deal kindly with folks who imagine my family differently than it is.

In this ‘politically correct’ age, people assume my partner was the one who contributed to our daughter’s looks. In fact, one day I asked a mother of an equally beautiful mixed child, “What agency did you go through?” and received the stiff answer “My husband is black.” I never made that mistake again – and now also deal kindly with folks who imagine my family differently than it is.

Then I began looking for children’s books with many different colored faces. This was easier than I imagined, although there is still a marked absence of books with main characters that are not white. I have yet to find a book with a family that looks like us. Looking for movies and children’s cartoons which show racial diversity is very frustrating which is why Pokemon; shows featuring animals instead of humans; some anime and movies from anyplace other than Hollywood fill our Netflix queue.

Our daughter was three when she began to notice our skin differences. Putting her in her car seat one day, she caught my hand and asked “Mama, why are you white?” I loved that she noticed that I am the different one – not her.

I explained that we belonged together because her birth mother chose us. We are in a very open adoption and she regularly sees her mother. We don’t have a similar relationship with her biological father – and that cuts off our legitimate connection to our daughter’s African American roots.

At six, our daughter proudly calls her skin ‘café au lait’ – a word given to her by her birth mother. She says her Dad is ‘peachy pink’ and I am ‘pinky white.’ She sees the many different colors of skin – to a degree I’ve never noticed.

Over the years here is some of what I have noticed and learned about being a transracial parent:

1. Being a transracial family makes our adoption story clear and upfront for others. I feel this keeps us honest about our origin as a family but it also seems to give people permission to be curious to the point of being intrusive.


3. We are conscious of our church and school choice as we look for adults and other children who resemble our child. We take into consideration that we live in a very white part of the US.

4. We consciously work to prepare our daughter to be able to deal with questions, prejudice and judgment about her based on her skin color. At this early stage, we are focused on appreciating differences but also reminding her that people seem to always make judgments based on the first thing they notice about a person. For example, I say: I am grey-haired and plump but is that the most important thing about me?

5. Transracial parenting means I pay close attention to things that previously did not impact me. I listen to the news, both local and national and notice how race plays a role in everything. I struggle with how to respond.

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE
Transracial Parenting in the Pacific NW (cont’d)

6. It also means we live in an undefined space where we are frequently uncomfortable, and sometimes unwelcome, newcomers – learning more about what it means to be black in the US today, even though it is not our direct experience...learning how to talk correctly and authentically about our family (ex. I am learning to say “black” instead of “African American” because it’s more accurate...we don’t typically say “Caucasian American,” so why say “African American”?)...intentionally expanding our pool of friends to include all kinds of people – older, younger and all colors of skin...

Back in 2010, we were happy to mark two boxes on the US Census for our child. It was the first time in anyone could do that on the census. We didn’t need to pick only one race and the answer reflects her reality. Right now, over half the children born in our city are mixed race children. The immediate future will look quite different from today. Many of these mixed children, including our own, are already inhabiting a multi-cultural understanding that is foreign to us parents who grew up with distinctions based on singular culture and race distinctions. The future is about fluid identity. It’s not either/or – it is both/and. And if the US Census can recognize that so can we.

TAPP Facts: Spotlight on Schools

1. For those of you who have children in school, about 53% attend public school, and 47% attend private school.

2. Out of TAPP families with kids in private schools, 31% attend a Montessori-based school.

3. For those of you with children in private schools, about 17% attend a religious school (e.g., Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, Christian).

4. Other types of schools attended by TAPP kids include Waldorf schools (3%), play-based schools (2%), special needs schools (4%), international schools (4%), and language immersion schools (3%), among many others. About 2% of TAPP kids are homeschooled.

ADOPTED AND CURIOUS?
The popularity of genealogy speaks volumes of the basic human interest in uncovering the mysteries of lineage, heredity and the ancestors who came before us.

Adoptee curiosity is no different from anyone else's and is even more understandable for those who don't know from whom they inherited their eye color, musical talent or sports ability. Adoptees lack this simple, basic knowledge all others take for granted. Some do not even know their ethnicity and even their vitally important family medical history is a blank slate. Whether you are eight or 80, if you are adopted and have not met the parents who brought you into the world, you no doubt have questions, like those expressed by Hallee Randall, 11, who inspired this post.

Adoption curiosity begins with the understanding of what it means to have been adopted and grows with knowledge of biology, birth and genetics. No matter how loved, happy and content, the adopted child grows up wondering why they were placed for adoption. Generalities based on nation of origins suffice for a while but many seek more specific answers.

Being told that you are adopted is like being told, "Here is a box that holds the secrets to your life, but it's locked and we don't have the key." The message is of forbidden fruit that is kept secreted because it contains secrets that might harm you or others.

Recognizing and Breaking Down the Barriers

The result of not knowing is nagging curiosity battling fear of the unknown and fear of hurting adoptive and birth parents. And the biggest one of all -- fear of rejection.

The flames of these fears are fanned by myths, misconceptions and old wives tales about adoption that die hard. Overt and subtle negative societal messages permeate discussions of adoptee search and reunion:

Click HERE to read the full article.
Adopting Special Needs Children

Written by Rachel Garlinghouse of Adoption.net (Feb. 2015)

SPECIAL NEEDS ADOPTION WITH WRITER AND MOM JILL ROBBINS

Many adoptive parents-to-be express interest in adopting children with special needs, but it’s hard to know where to start, how to prepare, and how to know if adopting a child with special needs is the right decision. Jill Robbins has “been there, done that.” She’s a mother of three children, two of whom have special needs and were adopted transracially. She blogs about her family’s adventures over at Ripped Jeans and Bifocals.

Rachel: Tell me about yourself and your family.

My husband and I have been together for 8 years. We live in San Antonio, Texas. We have a 22 year old daughter (my bio) and two four year old sons. The boys are adopted from China and yes, we know there’s a big gap between kid one and kid two, although people like to point that out. We decided to adopt after our daughter moved out. We joke that it was our solution to the empty nest. To clarify, our boys are not biologically related. They are four months apart and they were adopted separately. But yes, they are real brothers. We get asked that a lot.

Rachel: Why did you decide to adopt children with special needs?

This is not something we set out to do at all. We knew a family who was in the process of adopting a little boy from China. We gave the typical “what, a boy from China” response and were told this little boy was “special needs” because he was missing part of his earlobe. This made us take a pretty hard look at the China special needs adoption program—their definition of special needs is pretty broad.

We set out looking at very minor needs. We adopted our son Zack in 2012 and his special need is a hand deformity, or as it’s more commonly referred to, a limb difference.

To continue reading the interview, click HERE.
DUTCH ADOLESCENTS OF LESBIAN PARENTS DO NOT SHOW MORE PROBLEM BEHAVIOR THAN ADOLESCENTS OF HETEROSEXUAL PARENTS

LOS ANGELES — Dutch adolescents raised in planned lesbian-parent families do not show significant differences in problem behaviors compared to adolescents raised in heterosexual-parent families, according to a new study co-authored by researchers at the University of Amsterdam and The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law. Yet even though in 2001 the Netherlands was the first country to legalize same-sex marriage, some adolescents in this study reported being stigmatized for having lesbian mothers.

Key findings from the report include:

- Adolescents of lesbian parents did not show significant differences in internalizing and externalizing problem behavior compared to adolescents of heterosexual parents. (Internalizing behavior is directed toward the self, such as being withdrawn, anxious, or depressed. Externalizing behavior is directed toward others, such as breaking rules or being aggressive.)

- However, problem behavior in adolescents of lesbian parents was associated with homophobic stigmatization. Adolescents who reported more homophobic stigmatization also demonstrated more problem behavior.

These results suggest that same-sex parents could benefit from guidance in teaching their children how to respond effectively to potential homophobic stigmatization. During routine health assessments, clinicians should ask questions about experiences with stigmatization so that they can recommend relevant support services. Adolescents in countries that are less accepting of LGB people than the Netherlands may be at even greater risk for stigmatization.

For the full press release, click HERE. For the full report, click HERE.
**LBGT News: A note from the TAPP Team**

*We included this article because this highlights one of the reasons we are doing this work on schools.*

As reported by David Hudson (Jan. 2015) of GAYSTARNEWS

**NASHVILLE SCHOOL REJECTS CHILDREN BEING RAISED BY TWO GAY DADS**

A non-denomination private school in Tennessee has declined to accept two children who are being raised by a married same-sex couple.

Brian Copeland and Greg Bullard, who married in California in 2013, have been searching for a school in which to enroll their children – a son of pre-kindergarten age and a daughter, who is eight months old, reports USA Today.

Of great importance to the men was finding a school that would welcome them as a family. Bullard is a Senior Pastor at a local church, the Covenant of the Cross in Madison, and so the men ideally want a school that has a focus on faith.

After doing some research, an acquaintance recommended Davidson Academy in Nashville – a Christian school that has no direct affiliation to any particular church. Copeland arranged a visit to the school in order to be shown its facilities and meet with the Headteacher.

However, in mid January, he received a letter from the school cancelling the visit, which he shared this week on his Facebook page – prompting a storm of reaction on social media...

Copeland told The Tennessean that he and his husband’s goal is ‘not to harm the school’ but merely to show that ‘discrimination and inequality is alive and well.’

He also wished to stress that he and his husband did not regard themselves as victims and were not trying to inhibit anyone else’s religious beliefs.

Click [HERE](#) to read the full article.

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**LGBT News**

As reported by Ben Bold (Feb. 2015) of Marketing Magazine

**APPLE EMOJI FINALLY EMBRACE RACIAL AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY**

Apple has diversified the skin tones of its emoji characters on the latest beta version of its OS X operating system, with a range of five skin colours.

The pre-release update to Apple’s OS X was sent to developers and includes an updated emoji keyboard featuring skin-tone variations based on the Fitzpatrick scale, which is a skin-colour classification system recognised by dermatologists.

Apple has not stopped at representing racial diversity, but has also used its latest update to introduce emoji in same-sex relationships, including families with lesbian and gay parents.

To read more, click [HERE](#).

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**LGBT Resources**

From www.welcomingschools.org

**BOOKS FOR STUDENTS INCLUSIVE OF LGBT FAMILY MEMBERS AND CHARACTERS: A SHORT LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

This pdf has a long list of books for children that are inclusive of LGBT family members. Categories include “All Kinds of Families,” “Picture Books with LGBT Family Members or Characters,” and “Chapter Books with Gay Family Members or Characters.” Discover new books for you and your family to read together!

Check out the full list of books [HERE](#).
Great news from TAPP Headquarters! I recently received a second grant from the Spencer Foundation (www.spencer.org) to continue the important research we are doing on adoption, families, and schools. This follow-up builds on the last follow up (which focused on schools) but builds on it in a number of unique ways. It is specifically focused on your children’s experiences in elementary school, including their peer interactions, extracurricular activities, and experiences with teachers. We are also interested in learning about your experiences interacting with educators and schools in general. Some key points about this follow up:

- We will be contacting you to participate approximately 9 years after you adopted your child. So, for most of you, your child will be in 4th grade or beyond.
- The survey will be entirely online. We will break up the questions and questionnaires into 3 parts, each of which will take about 15-25 minutes each. That way, you can do them in pieces.
- We will pay families $60.00 for this set of questionnaires – more than we have been able to offer in the past!
- We prefer to have both partners/spouses participate.
- We will be interviewing a small number of participants for about 45 minutes to get more in depth about your experiences with your children’s schools, parenting, and other related topics. We will pay your family an additional $50.00 for participation in the interviews.
- A totally new, unique, and optional part of this follow up: We’d like to talk to your child! Some of you have remarked that if we do this study long enough, eventually it might be interesting to talk to the kids – and that’s exactly what we want to do.
Amazon Editorial Review: Artfully directed by award-winning filmmaker Roger Weisberg and Vanessa Roth, AGING OUT chronicles the daunting obstacles that three young people in foster care encounter as they “age out” of the system and are suddenly on their own for the first time. Navigating the transition from adolescence to adulthood is challenging for even the most mature and privileged youth. For three teens in urban New York and Los Angeles, however, making the transition to independent living is considerably more difficult. AGING OUT is more than a dark chronicle of young people who move from foster care into the welfare, mental health, and criminal justice systems. This emotionally complex film is also a portrait of young adults struggling to overcome the scars of their troubled childhood in order to realize their dreams of independence and fulfillment.

To check out the film’s website, click HERE.

Tissue Cherry Blossom Tree
From marthastewart.com

Materials
* Branches
* Pink tissue paper
* White glue

Steps
1. Gather branches that have fallen outside; let dry, if necessary.
2. Cut out 2-inch squares of pink tissue, pinch tightly in the middle to create blossoms, and affix them to branches with white glue.
3. Display in a tall container, such as a canning jar with the lid’s center removed.

Print and try this “Think Spring!” word search!

Quick Ideas for Nurturing and Connection!

Please send us your updates.
If you have any questionnaires lying around, please send them back!
We are thinking of you all.

-Abbie & the Transition to Adoptive Parenthood Project team (April, Katie, & Kay)

PS: We’re on Facebook! Even if you don’t have a page of your own, you can look at the TAPP Facebook page. To check us out, click here.