

KIDSAKE NEWSLETTER
JUNE 2010

*A Newsletter For Birthmothers, Adoptive Parent, Adoptees
& Adoption Professionals*

Brought to you by:
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Welcome the first edition of KIDSAKE to be sent via Constant Contact – a completely new experience for me! Please let me know if this works for you, computers and I are not always friends and it's taking a big leap of faith for me to put my newsletter in the hands of a satellite dish! The good news is that if I get it to work, future newsletters may actually get out before the end of the month – a completely new experience for YOU!

I'm very excited this month, in a couple of weeks I am going to get to meet my son's fiancé. I'm sure the experience of him getting married will give me many new chapters of my story, I can't wait! Read on to hear more on how to get the clearest perspective on YOUR story, and if you are attending the KAAN Adoption Conference in Pennsylvania next month, be sure to stop by my workshop and say HI!

Patricia

Everyone Has A Story

I recently read a draft of an adoption book a friend of mine is writing, it is a wonderful story from an adoptee's point of view on how she went searching for her birth family. What she found reminded me of the fact that everyone has a story. So often, we see the world through our own point of view and tell ourselves that these are the truths. But we must remember that what we see and what we

know is only a part of the truth, it is our truth, but not necessarily that of others. In her story, her birthmother spent decades believing something was true about the birthfather. For his part, he spent decades thinking something was true about the birthmother. Yet, as my friend discovers, each was missing important information that would have completely changed what they thought to be true. (More this fall on her book when it is released!)

For those of you who have read my book, *Because I Loved You*, you'll remember that there were many years where I thought I knew the truth about my father and how he felt about my choice to place my son for adoption. Yet years later, he confides in me his own story, his own truth, and it changed everything about what I thought I knew. Adoption is such an emotional journey – for everyone. Each family member, both birth and adoptive, and even extended family and friends, will have their own “truth” or point of view. They will form opinions based on what they know. The problem is, that often they don't know all the facts. There's a saying: “You don't know what you don't know.” This is especially true in adoption. There are often so many stories for those involved, yet each person forms their story only based on what they know. This brings me (finally!) to my point: everyone has a story, and I believe we need to share them.

When I first began to write my memoir I wrote my story, what I knew and what I believed to be the story. But as I began to share it with my family, I quickly discovered that much of my story surprised them! Aunts that had no idea of the struggle of my decision and the pain of following it through who wish they had so they could have offered support. Sisters that I had no idea just how much of an impact my choice had made on their lives. My parents and I sharing for the first time the true depths of the emotional struggle the journey had been for each of us. I made these discovers, one by one, and slowly began to piece together more of the story, more of the truths. Before I even started the book, and my reason for writing it, I had been surprised to discover that open adoption was not commonplace until the late 1990's. I had spent 20 years believing everyone's adoption experience had been just like mine! I was shocked to find that open adoption was considered so new that there still were no books about it written by birthmothers!

Another piece of the puzzle was when I tracked down my adoption counselor, Nancy Kinley, to discuss my case. She was so instrumental in its success; I had always assumed she was able to help dozens of birthmothers just like me. Instead, I found that she had been considered something of a rebel within the adoption agency. She was adamant that communication between birthmothers and adoptive parents was a key to long term success, but few joined that view. I found that a decade after I placed my son she was still fighting to make open adoption more available.

As my friend and I found out when we wrote our memoirs, our stories had many points of view different from our own, and instrumental in affecting the way

people in our story behaved and reacted within our adoption experiences. We also both found that stereotypes have no place in adoption. Every person it touches is unique. They have their own way of dealing with the situation, their own type of support system, their own outlook and personality that can mold and shape the story. I said in my book that you can't put birthmothers in a box, and what I have found since the book came out and I've met so many adoptees, adoptive parents and birthmothers, is that none of them can be put in a box either.

Some birthmothers have tight, supportive families, some have families that pressure them to keep their child, some have families that pressure them to place their child, some have no family at all. Some adoptive parents want to adopt to bring a new dimension to their families, some have been trying to get pregnant for years and are coming from a place of pain and have very low thresholds for any more, some have families that support adoption, some don't, some embrace openness, some feel forced into it, some are so scared of it they don't know if they can even try. Some adoptees are brought up knowing all about their adoption, some are told when they are preschoolers, some are told when they are in high school, some are never told and find out by accident. Some counselors support open adoption, some do not. Some adoptive parents receive great counseling and guidance, some never receive any. Some birthmothers receive great counseling and are helped to look closely at both options in order to ensure there will be no regrets, some are only pushed towards adoption, some receive no counseling at all. We all have a story to tell. We often make assumptions about how others think and feel even within our own stories. Let's change that.

Maybe you're not ready to write a memoir, but it doesn't mean you can't find all the truths to your story. Start asking – ask the people in your adoption experience to talk about their point of view. I'll bet there'll be some surprises for you. Go deeper than the basics, ask them to really share what motivated them in different directions, and share how you felt as well. You'll probably surprise them too. The best way for our society to shed the stereotypes and myths is for all of us to start sharing our stories. So share!

I'd like to invite all of you to share a little of your story with me, and my readers. Whether it's just a line or two, or a few paragraphs, tell me a little about your experience. And when you start asking others to share with you and find surprises, I'd love to hear those too! Together, let's start a dialog that helps others remember that they are special, that no one here wants to put them in a box. Send your stories to me at: pdischler@wildblue.net, put "My Adoption Story" in the subject line. Who knows, you may just awaken the author inside you and get a start on what will be your own memoir! I can't wait to hear from you!

PARENT CORNER: Summer Art

As everyone knows, I LOVE to be outside for everything! Art projects especially are so much easier outside, the mess can easily be cleaned up with a hose! Here's a few to try in your great outdoors:

-Use large sheets of paper on the grass and dip a flyswatter into paint put in a pie tin. Shake the flyswatter over the paper to create designs. Provide different colors of paint, each with their own flyswatter.

-Same idea, paper on ground, paint in pie tin's, only fill nylons with a cup of rice, tie in knot. Let kids dip into paint and throw at the paper – looks like fireworks!

-Take a walk in a meadow and collect dried Queen Anne's Lace. Dip dried blossom into red, white and blue paint and tap onto black paper for a fireworks display.

-Collect dozen or more sticks, about ½ inch in diameter and 2-3 feet long. Stick them in the ground in a circle about 2 feet apart from each other. Let the kids paint the sticks with bright paint creating dots, stripes, or other designs. The kids love sitting on the ground and having something interesting to paint. When done, it creates a fort for them to play in – you can even drape a sheet over the top!

-While there's no finished product, the kids love this process – Give them large plastic cups filled with shaving cream and paint brushes. The kids can then "paint" your playhouse, riding toys, play structure and other items in the yard. They love to do this and when they're done let them take turns with a spray hose to clean it all up!

IN THE NEWS

Pact Camp 2010: July 26-July 29

This year's theme - Putting it all together: Families, Adoption & Race
A gathering for adoptive families with children of color. Held at Asilomar Conference Center in Monterey, California. For more information visit:
www.pactadopt.org

St. Mary's Services Informational Seminars for Adoptive Families

Birth and Adoptive Families Panel

Saturday, July 17, 2010; 9 a.m. to Noon

St. Simon's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 717 W. Kirchhoff Rd., Arlington Heights, Illinois

For more information call 847-870-8181 or visit www.stmaryservices.com

Article Series Available: Identity Building, Do Kids Need to Know the Past?

A series of articles by The Ties Program-Adoptive Family Homeland Journeys for adoptive parents planning homeland visits for their children. Series will address:

-How kids respond upon arrival in their birth country.

-How language (or lack of language) effects the experience.
-Blending in & standing out – dual identity.
-How birth country travel validates the child.
How birth country travel addresses grief and loss that leads to healing.
AND MUCH MORE!

To receive the series, please email info@AdoptiveFamilyTravel.com to be added to the list of recipients.

The Ties Program is located in Wauwatosa, WI. Visit www.AdoptiveFamilyTravel.com for more information.

THIS MONTH'S SALE ITEMS

June Sale Item: The Patty Cake Kids & The Lost Imagination Cap

Get a copy of this inspiring children's book now, and have it autographed to your favorite little adventurer! In the book, Austin and his friends are asked by Periwinkle, their child care provider, to come to group time wearing their Imagination Caps. When Austin can't find his all his friends rally round to help, coming up with amazing and creative ideas on where it could have been lost. In the end, Austin finds the power within himself to solve his problem, and his friends are there to share his accomplishment!

Regular Price: \$9.85 Sale Price: \$5.00

July Sale Item: KIDBIZ Trainer's Guide – Professionalism in Child Care – 20% Off!

Professionalism is the cornerstone to any successful child care business! Both versions of this trainer's guide are available – Professionalism for Family Child Care, and Professionalism for Center Staff. Great asset for CCR&R's looking for materials their staff can use to conduct quality trainings for providers or center staff, and a must-have resource for center directors to use at staff meetings to raise the level of professionalism for their teachers. Each trainers guide contains a Power Point presentation, a detailed lecture, handouts for participants and an outline with objectives. Based on the presentations of Patricia Dischler and the book *From Babysitter to Business Owner*, each guide also includes a free copy of the book!

Regular Price: \$75 Sale Price: \$60

Order yours today at: www.patriciadischler.com or www.KIDBIZResources.com!

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 25, 2010

Florida Family Child Care Home Association State Conference
Tampa, Florida

Workshops: *Marketing & Interviews*
Policies & More!

For more information visit: www.familychildcare.org

June 14-June 17, 2010

National Association for Family Child Care Annual Conference
Nashville, Tennessee

Preconference Sessions:

From Babysitter to Business Owner Train the Trainer Course

Teaching the 3 Cs: Creativity, Curiosity & Courtesy Train the Trainer Course

Workshops:

Teaching the 3 Cs: Creativity, Curiosity & Courtesy

Partnerships with Parents

For more information visit: www.nafcc.org

July 24, 2010

Korean American Adoptee Adoptive Family Network Annual Conference
Hershey, Pennsylvania

Because I Loved You: Understanding Birthmothers

For more information visit: www.KAANet.com

If you are a member of a group planning a training event and would like to book one of my keynotes or workshops, visit the Lecture page on my website and contact me for availability. Visit www.patriciadischler.com/lecture.php.

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Patricia Dischler

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