

KIDSAKE NEWSLETTER  
MAY 2009

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

Brought to you by:  
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*I have a daughter who is graduating from High School next month. I recently wrote about my feelings on letting her go and it occurred to me that they are very much the same fears and feelings I had when letting go of my son when I placed him for adoption. Letting go of a child is never easy, adopted or otherwise. As adopted parents excited to welcome your child home, I’m sure the last thing you want to hear is advice on how to let them go, but as every parent knows, that day will come. I hope my article this month helps you through any “letting go” you may have to do this year, whether as a birthmother who chooses adoption, or a parent sending their child off to their future.*

*Patricia*

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Letting Go of the “How”  
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The day after I graduated from high school I started looking for an apartment. I had \$400 in my savings account and thought I was a rich woman. I couldn’t wait to be out on my own! My friends and I searched, and by the end of the week I found an upstairs apartment in an old house that had been converted into four apartments, typical for Dubuque. I fell in love with the high ceilings, the little kitchen with a deck, and the four rooms lined up one after the other with a long hallway to connect them. I wrote my first check to the manager and went home to pack.

My Dad, at the time, was working on a construction crew that built roads. He was often away on a job for weeks and the week I decided to move out was one of them. By the time he returned I had been moved and was happily settled into my new life. He was furious. I got one of his famous “butt-chewin’” speeches one Saturday when I came back home to do some laundry. I didn’t understand why he was so upset, I had thought he’d be proud to see me growing up.

Later, Mom explained that he just felt like I didn’t need him anymore, and that maybe I could ask him over to fix something in the apartment to make him feel better. I dutifully broke the door of my bathroom off its hinges (not hard in a 100+ year old home!) and called my Dad. He was over within the hour.

He grumbled as he worked, saying how foolish it was to live in such an old house, how I should have called the landlord and not him, how I shouldn’t have been so reckless to yank on the door and break it, etc. But all the while, I saw the twinkle in his eye – he was loving every minute of it. When he finished, I gave him a tour, then we had some cookies in my little kitchen and talked awhile about my plans for the future.

For years, when I thought of this, I thought I understood what my Dad was feeling. He just wanted to know I’d still need him now and then. But now that my own daughter is graduating and moving out and on with her life, I understand there was much more. Dad wasn’t mad I had moved out – he was worried. He was worried about HOW I was going to manage it. It’s not the WHAT that is hard for parents, we all want our children to move out, get jobs, go to college, have careers, families, and more. So hearing they are on their way isn’t what’s so hard. It’s not knowing HOW they are going to get there that scares the daylights out of us!

Her whole life I knew the HOWs. I knew how she got to school, how she got asked to prom, how she was going to find a dress, how she did on her test, how she would get home from a ball game, how she would clean her room, how her clothes would get clean and how she would get fed. I knew all this because I was the one to take care of it. I worried about the HOW, took care of it, and in turn, took care of her. And now it was her turn. In order for her to become the responsible adult with the life I dreamed of for her, she would have to start finding out HOW to do these things on her own. What upset my Dad wasn’t that I found an apartment, it was that he had no idea HOW. I didn’t ask for his help, he didn’t look at them for me, he had no idea how much money I had and how I would pay rent, these were the questions that drove him crazy. And now they are the questions that drive me crazy! But I know I need to let them go.

And I know I can do it. Because 24 years ago I did it for her brother. The scariest part of placing Joe for adoption wasn’t that he would be raised by someone else, it was that I would have no idea HOW they would do it. I wouldn’t know how they calmed him when he cried, how they helped him when he fell, how they fed him,

how they clothed him, how they taught him about family, how they'd teach him to ride a bike, how they'd let him dress, I had no idea how anything in his new family would happen. But I did not that it would. I knew that somehow, they would care for him, love him, and give him a family and a home. And clinging to that is what got me through the pain of letting go. I had to let go of the HOW, hand it over to them as surely as I handed them my son, and just trust that they would find their way.

I attended my son's high school graduation. I remember his parents, how proud they were, yet also how relaxed they seemed. They didn't seem to have the fear of letting him go that I thought I would see. But after a few hours of Joe giving me a tour of his town, his life, I understood why. Because over time, Joe had been growing up, and little by little they had placed the HOW on his shoulders. So that the day he graduated they didn't need to worry anymore, they trusted him fully to take on that challenge and build his future. They knew he would know how.

As I have many times over the years, I plan to learn from their example. I may not know how my daughter is going to build her place in the world, but I do trust that she will. I trust it because I saw her grow up, I saw her make choices, and I know that she can do it without me. So on her graduation day, they'll be only one HOW for me to worry about: How am I going to stop crying like a fool? It's one thing I know how to do very well!

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PARENT CORNER: Plant a Fort  
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Children love forts, and with planting season upon us it's a great time to think ahead to how you can combine your planting needs and some fun for the kids!

You can plant a fort in a couple of ways:

**Bean Fort:** Using plumbers pvc piping, build a structure of a fort the size you'd like. Plant bean varieties that vine around the base. As the vine grows, you can use strings to attach it to the structure and guide it to grow up and over the top, creating a wonderful fort for fun and food! You can also plant flowering vines, such as Clematis, around the fort for a pretty flowered fort.

If you can't build the structure to support vines – grow it! Plant a rectangle of sunflower seeds, leaving some space at one end to create the door. Just outside of the sunflowers, plant rows of a flowering vine. As the sunflowers grow, tie the vine to the stems of the sunflowers to get it to grow around them, creating a wall. Once the sunflower is at its full height, let the vine grow loose at the top (don't let it attach again to the sunflower) When the vines on each side get long enough to reach each other, gently bring them together across the top and tie with string. Guide them to continue to grow, wrapping around each other to strengthen the "roof" of your fort. By summer's end you'll have a beautiful flower fort!

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IN THE NEWS  
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The Adoptive Families Together (AFT) Program at Children's Home + Aid in Rockford, Illinois provides relationship enrichment retreats for couples who have adopted, taken guardianship or are working towards adoption or guardianship of foster children. The retreats offer couples an opportunity to reconnect, focus on their relationships and spend time with other adoptive couples. AFT is funded through a federal grant and there is NO COST to couples who participate. Couples with a foster care license can receive 14 hours of continuing education credit. There is a retreat in Madison, WI coming up on July 31-Aug. 2. Call to get a full list of retreats or information on registration: 815-720-2184.

**Check out Pact Camp 2009** at the Alliance Redwoods Camp & Conference Center, Occidental, California, July 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The camp is for adoptive families and this year features Rose "Mama" Rock, author who parented over 27 children, including comedian Chris Rock! Parents will attend a wide range of meaningful programming on parenting, adoption and race with an outstanding staff. They will also offer for adults and kids a huge range of fun things, including a leisurely family kayaking trip down the Russian River. They are planning a special teen program an Teen Village for their older youth, and a film project headed up by adult adoptee and award-winning filmmaker Phil Bertelsen. For more details and registration visit: [www.pactadopt.org](http://www.pactadopt.org).

**Great resource for adoptive parents working on their portfolio:** Check out [www.ourchosenchild.com](http://www.ourchosenchild.com), it's a website to help you create your family scrapbook, very beautiful! Created by Joanna Ivey, it is a great resource for putting all your memories together in a beautiful keepsake.

If your organization is holding a training event, please let me know and I'll add it to the newsletter for you!

**Great Summer Camp for 7-12 year olds!**

My sister Jane and her husband Mike just opened a fantastic summer camp for 7-12 year olds in Lake Mary, Florida – they've combined great team building activities of an adventure camp with the sports kids this age love. Let those parents with children too old for your day care know there's a full day camp out there where their children will really grow – in mind and body! It's called Urban Adventures: Where Sports and Adventure Unite, for more information visit [www.uacamp.com](http://www.uacamp.com)!

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THIS MONTH'S SALE ITEMS  
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**May Sale Item: 101 Tips & Tricks - \$2 Off!**

101 of my best tips to make your job easier, save you money and save you time in your child care business! All those little things that can make a big difference that you learn the hard way over the years, or learn from other seasoned professionals gathered in one easy guide to make your job easier overnight!  
Regular Price: \$8.00. **Sale Price: \$6.00**

**June Sale Item: The Patty Cake Kids & The Lost Imagination Cap – 50% Off!**

Join Austin and his friends as they go on a search for his lost Imagination Cap! This book engages the reader on a journey to using their imagination to solve a problem. Beautiful illustrations and engaging text make this a great group time book – that you can follow up with the hat activities above!  
Regular Price: \$9.85. **Sale Price: \$5.00**

**Order yours today at: [www.patriciadischler.com](http://www.patriciadischler.com)!**

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UPCOMING EVENTS  
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May 12, 2009

Writers Round-up

Camp Whitcomb

Author-in-Residence

Book reading and “The Publishing Process” presentation.

Merton Intermediate School Camp for children writers.

June 18, 2009

Child Care Share Training

*Your Space/Their Space: Creating Inspiring Child Care Environments*

6:45 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

4530 N 85<sup>th</sup> St.

Omaha, Nebraska

For more information visit: [www.childcareshare.net](http://www.childcareshare.net)

June 19, 2009

Being the Best You Can Be! A Day of Training & Motivation

Topics covered:

*Turn the Job You Love into the Career You'll Keep!*

*Building Partnerships: Parents & Providers Working Together*

*Teaching the 3 C's: Creativity, Curiosity & Courtesy  
Tips and Tricks*  
Hosted by ECCOA  
Westside Community Conference Center  
Omaha, Nebraska  
For more information call: 402-597-4991

NAFCC Annual Conference  
Pre-conference Day:  
*From Babysitter to Business Owner Train the Trainer Course*  
Thursday:  
Presenters Marketplace booth  
Friday:  
*Parents Can't Hear Me!*  
*Marketing & Interviews*  
Saturday:  
*Tips & Tricks*  
*Teaching the 3 C's: Creativity, Curiosity & Courtesy*

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](http://www.patriciadischler.com/lecture.php).

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