



A partnership of
Adoptions Together
and the DC Child and
Family Services Agency

Family Time

The Post Permanency Center Has Helped Us Get Here!

By Brenda Marson



My husband Patrick and I were married in 2003 and in 2006, after parenting my biological son, Brandon, we decided to become licensed foster parents. In December of that year we welcomed biological brothers, Dayvon (age 12) and Javon (age 4), into our home. Ecstatic with the placement, we showered the boys with love, gifts, attention and sought to introduce them to a new way of living. These initial months were a 'honeymoon period', everything seemed great. Brandon, who had always been the only child in the home, embraced his new siblings with open arms. He was eager to show them the whole community as well as the ins and outs of having a stable home with all the amenities to offer. Dayvon, who was the oldest sibling (and often caretaker) in his biological home, transitioned into being the middle child and seemed to embrace the situation, learning how to 'be a kid' for the first time in his life. Javon connected to us from the beginning; he seemed to know from day one that this was home and he soaked up the love, attention and new found stability we provided for him.

In August 2007, Patrick and I decided we wanted to make Dayvon and Javon permanent members of the family and so we signed an 'Intent to Adopt' petition. We were excited to move forward but suddenly began to notice a grave difference in our interactions with the boys...this is when things became really tough! The three boys, who had previously gotten along so well, began fighting and competing for our time and attention. Dayvon became defiant and no longer accepting of guidance and structure. His problematic behavior showed up at school as well and he received multiple suspensions for fighting and general non-compliance with rules and regulations. Brandon also began acting out, displaying regressive and age inappropriate behaviors and bullying the other two boys with his biological relation status, age and physical size. Patrick and I were exhausted! Although we maintained a high level of commitment towards the family as a whole we often felt like 'giving up' and giving in to what the children seemed to want (i.e., to be given back to the foster care agency).

In early 2008, we were referred to the Post Permanency Family Center by a couple of the many professionals in our lives, and I began attending pre-adoption related therapy sessions alone. In these sessions I found a therapeutic outlet and developed a means of balancing work and this new and challenging family situation. I learned about parenting children with traumatic histories and how that intersected with my own personal experience of being in foster care. I felt embraced by the Post Permanency Family Center and it made me feel much better in regards to the adoption process as a whole. Soon thereafter, Dayvon joined the therapy sessions as he and I had the most problematic and charged relationship in the household. Due to his abuse and neglect-filled past, several failed foster placements and a previous failed adoption, Dayvon held a huge distrust for all adults and he seemed to resent every positive thing that I was trying to do for him and force me (with his behavior) to give up on him before I would voluntarily do so. In therapy, Dayvon and I learned invaluable information about one another, including our triggers and how to support each other through rough times. Eventually the entire family became involved as Brandon, Javon and Patrick joined for family sessions; these sessions helped the family identify ways to build closer relationships with one another and, most importantly, to move towards permanency in a healthy and appropriate way. With the help of the dedicated staff and their untiring efforts, we were able to finalize the adoption of Dayvon and Javon in December 2008. We are continuing to work together as a family through ups and downs of life and our special circumstances. We have been able to phase out some of the services we were receiving from the Post Permanency Family Center but maintain close contact with the staff as they are most resourceful and helpful to our family with every contact.

**Post
Permanency
Family
Center**

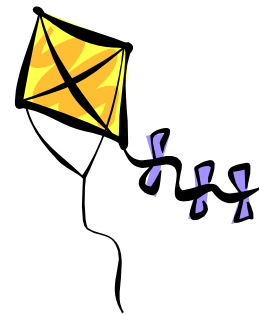
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Clients eligible to receive services through the Post Permanency Family Center are foster, adoptive, kinship, and guardianship parents with children from the DC Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) foster care system, or those needing post-adoption or post-guardianship support. The Post Permanency Family Center provides services to all members of the family.

Summer is here...



Attending a summer camp is a great way to keep a child/teen active and engaged in positive pursuits over the summer months. The Department of Parks and Recreation offers a detailed listing of various summer camps and other activities in your local area.

District of Columbia: <http://www.dpr.dc.gov>

Prince George's County: <http://www.pgparcsandrec.com>

Montgomery County: <http://www.mcparkandplanning.org/parks>

All 3 websites detail local pool hours and safe summer options for your children and teens.



Special Needs Camps

Many summer camps for children with special needs exist. Here are just a couple...please contact the camps directly to discuss program activities, fees and availability.

Camp Attaway

3 week summer day camp for children with emotional and behavioral disorders

Ages 7-13

Columbia, Maryland (Howard County)

(410) 730-2633

www.campattaway.org

Kamp A-Kom-Plish

Camp for children with emotional disabilities

Day camp and sleepaway options available

Ages 8-16

Nanjemoy, Maryland (Charles County)

(301) 870-3226

www.kampakomplish.org

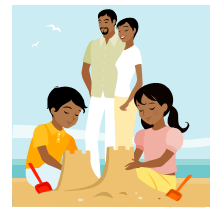
CLINICAL TIP...

Summer is for relaxing and getting a break from the stressful and fast-paced routine of the year...but for many children, structure and routine are critical to their emotional well-being and stability. To help your children during the summer months, it is important to keep as much ROUTINE as possible...this includes maintaining as many going to bed and getting up, meal time, church and chore routines as possible. This also means continuing to give your children their medication on a *regular* basis (remember, ADHD, anxiety and depression medications are strong and should NEVER be given on an as-needed basis like an over-the-counter medication). Talk to your children about your expectations of them during the summer months and, if possible, allow them to be involved in the planning of their summer schedules and activities. Self-care is important too...make sure to take time for yourself and schedule a vacation or mini getaway to rejuvenate.

PPFC WISHES YOU A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!

Parent Trainings Offered at PPFC

JULY & AUGUST 2009



“Uppers, Downers and All-Arounders: What Do You Know about Drugs?”

Facilitator: Ky’Nieke King, Adoptions Together staff

Date & Time: Thursday, July 16, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

2.0 education hours provided

In this workshop, participants will learn about the different categories of drugs kids are confronted with today. Discussion will include the most popularly used drugs, signs of drug use/abuse and code names for street drugs. Parents will also gain the knowledge necessary to quickly assess for drug use and some skills to confidently address it.

“CHILL in this Heat!”

Facilitator: Mary Ann Welter, MSW, foster parent

Date & Time: Saturday, July 25, 10:00am - 12:00pm

2.0 education hours provided

It’s summer, the weather is humid and HOT...and so are tempers! Keeping your cool when the kids are hot and things are hopping with challenging behaviors can be really difficult. This interactive workshop will use real at-home challenges and help parents identify ways to maintain control. Practice time and follow-up resources will be provided.

“New School Year Adventures”

Facilitator: Jennifer Klotz, Assistant Director, Center for Adoptive Families

Date & Time: Wednesday, August 5, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Youth who are successful at school are more likely to develop solid self-esteem, make positive choices and look forward to their futures. School presents all sorts of unique challenges, especially at the start of a new year or at a new school. In addition to facing peer pressure and the desire to fit in, adjustment to new teachers, students and grade level can trigger feelings of grief, loss, anger, anxiety and uncertainty. For many students, dealing with all of these feelings can be overwhelming. In this instructive workshop, parents will learn how to teach child(ren) coping skills as well as the knowledge to effectively advocate for them at school.

“Reading, Writing...CRISIS!”

Facilitator: Jack Neville, LICSW, LCSW-C

Date & Time: Thursday, August 13, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

With all the excitement and change that shifting back into school brings, a crisis or two is bound to happen. Some common questions families ask are, why do crises happen? What is effective crisis intervention? What should I *not* do during a crisis? What are some practical techniques I can use to de-escalate a crisis no matter in what situation I find myself? As director of Children & Adolescents Mobile Psychiatric Services (CHAMPS), Jack Neville has years of experience working with families during severe emotional and behavioral disturbances. This interactive workshop will empower parents to stay in control during a crisis and teach tools to effectively de-escalate the situation.

“Understanding the Special Ed Process”

Facilitator: Dr. Adrienne Mitchell, PsyD, certified school psychologist

Date & Time: Thursday, August 27, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Having difficulty navigating the special education process? Youth who are successful at school are shown to develop higher self-esteem and make positive choices toward their futures but sometimes getting them the appropriate assistance at school can be a challenging and exhausting process. Licensed and certified school psychologist, Dr. Adrienne Mitchell, has years of experience working in the DC public school system, assessing children and advocating on behalf of families with children with special needs. In this informative and empowering workshop, parents will learn how to more confidently navigate the special education process, secure the appropriate I.E.P. for their child and advocate for his/her unique needs in the academic setting.

Please call Chaz Holmon, *Training Manager & Outreach Coordinator*, at (202) 629-0206 for more information or to register.

Open Support Groups



PPFC offers two monthly support groups...RSVP for newcomers is appreciated but not required. Both groups are *free of charge* and ongoing. Please call us with any questions.

Open Support Group (for adults, teens and kids)

3rd Wednesday of every month

6:30pm - 8pm

Birthparent Support Group

last Tuesday of every month

7pm - 8:30pm

Stay tuned for details on the upcoming
LGBTQ SUPPORT GROUP FOR YOUTH

SAVE THE DATE...

Living Permanence

PPFC'S 2ND ANNUAL CELEBRATION FOR FAMILIES

Saturday, October 3, 2009

1:00pm - 4:00pm

- Food (hot dogs, hamburgers, chips)
- Help make a PPFC commercial
- Family portrait area
- Talent show
- T-shirt making and face painting
- A special visit from some furry guests



We are asking families to make a dessert to bring and share...and don't forget the recipe, we are compiling a PPFC Family Cookbook and would love to include your favorites!



MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Post Permanency Family Center
900 Varnum St, NE
Washington, DC 20017

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