



Every Life a Promise

Bethany Christian Services- Nashville, 220 Athens Way, Suite 405, Nashville, Tennessee 37228, (615)242-0909

Recent Adoptions

We have had lots of adoptions this year...which is one of the reasons we haven't had time to get newsletters out to you on a regular basis. I apologize for the delays and will try to be more timely with the newsletters. On with the announcements:

International Adoptions in May and June:

Brian and Dana McSpadden arrived home from Colombia with Daniela.

Daniel and Gretchen Rauter arrived home from Korea with Lilyanne.

John and Monica Rich arrived home from China with Miriam.

Jeremy and Sabrina Hindman arrived home from China with Zoey.

Patrick and Amy Hood arrived home from China with Jady.

Michael and Lara Vlk arrived home from Guatemala with Ian.

Domestic Adoptions in May and June:

Rob and Julie Parrish received Phoebe on May 14.

Doug and Robyn Schueler received Sarah on May 17.

David and Kathy Stewart received Price on May 31.

Stephen and Amy Foster received Serenity on June 14.

Matt and Krista Toennies received Nolan on June 19.

Brad and Alison Bynum received Nora on June 26.

Embryo Adoption:

Middle Tennessee Bethany's first Embryo Adoption Baby has been born! Jacob was born to Bryan and Paige Anderson on June 6!

Amanda Burton, on the domestic adoption team, would like to announce that she will be having a baby girl in late October. We celebrate this new life and rejoice in this exciting news!

Save the Date! *The 2007 New Friends Dinner will be on November 13, 2007.*

Please let us know if you'd like to help with this event!

July Events

- July 9 Playgroup
Location: Bethany office
Time: 6:30
Topic: Fun for families who have adopted transracially (domestic or international)
- July 16 Domestic Adoption Group
Location: Woodmont Hills Church of Christ, East Hall Room 201
Time: 6:30 pm
Topic: Male vs. Female – How is the adoption experience different?
- July 17 Adoption Information Meeting
Location: Faith Presbyterian Church, Goodlettsville
Time: 6:00 pm
Topic: Domestic, International and Embryo Adoption

From the Director

Thank you so much for being a part of Bethany's ministry. There is a specific group of people I'd like to thank for the hard work and commitment to Bethany – our Board of Directors. I can always count on this group of people coming through for the needs of our staff and our clients. Without them we would not be able to carry out the mission that God has given us...to find homes for babies and children who need them.

Bob Lawhon, Board Chair
Ron Carter
Jamie Clary
Tim Coomer
Kim Fredrickson
Lance Green
Erin McDuffie
Matt Price
Jill Robinson
Clint Russell
David Simmerman
Suzette Lucarini – Board Intern

If you are interested in becoming a board member, a good way to get started is to join one of the board committees. Please let me know if you are interested.

From Carolyn

The following is an excerpt from an article called "Can I Breastfeed My Adopted Baby?" put out by La Leche League International.

How wonderful for you and your new baby that you want to breastfeed. Each situation is unique so it is important to educate yourself as much as possible about this exciting endeavor.

Most mothers are able to produce at least a little milk. Whether you have been pregnant before or not does not affect your ability to produce milk. Adoptive mothers may be able to induce lactation by using a breast pump every 2-3 hours, either before the baby comes or after. Some also use a device such as the Medela Supplemental Nursing System or the Lact-Aid Nurser Training System. These both enable you to feed your baby while he is at your breast. This way, your baby gets enough milk while stimulating your body to produce your own milk. The key to all this is that the more stimulation your breasts receive, either by pump or baby, the more likely milk will be produced.

Mothers who have breastfed adopted babies often say that having achievable goals for inducing lactation helped them feel successful in the long run. They also say that breastfeeding has numerous benefits in addition to nutrition.

Mothers who induce lactation vary widely in the amount of milk they are able to produce and in the amount of time required to produce milk. All agree that inducing lactation is a process that takes patience, commitment, diligence and education. Even mothers who have breastfed previous babies may not ever be able to fully breastfeed an adoptive baby. A sensible goal, then, might be to try to provide some, or maybe most, of your new baby's nutrition yourself, while fully enjoying the closeness and bonding that breastfeeding brings. Even if your baby does not breastfeed, you can still hold him for all his feedings (and lots of holding in between!) and foster the same kind of attachment that all babies have for the mommies and daddies who love them. Attend a La Leche League Group meeting in your area for additional information and support.

From Lisa

I am receiving feedback from families about forming a China waiting family group (since the wait is about 2 years after log in date), and thus far the response has been positive. I will be sure to let families know when the first meeting will take place. It will not be mandatory but offered if you wish to attend.

From Amanda

While searching articles on www.adoption.com I found one by Beverly Bachel that gives wisdom in helping adopted children feel loved and supported from the moment they come home. Whether you have already adopted a child, waiting for your child to come home to you, or know children within your circle of influence who are adopted, the following are a few wise ways to show them love:

- *Create a life scrapbook.* Fill it with mementos relevant to the child. Include letters, photos, and copies of birth certificates, all of which help the child create an important connection to his or her past.
- *Tell children it's okay to ask questions.* Some children fear hurting their adoptive parents' feelings or making them angry if they ask questions about their birth parents. Encourage children to talk about adoption by initiating conversation with them. Open-ended questions are a good way of getting children to open up. And remember, just because kids aren't asking questions about adoption doesn't mean they aren't thinking about it.
- *Be honest.* Do not invent stories about a child's past. Doing so will weaken the trust between you. Stick to the facts, and if you don't know how to answer a child's questions, say, "I don't know." Resist the temptation to fill in the blanks or improve the information, and only share information you feel your children are interested in or ready to hear.
- *Let children know it's okay to make mistakes.* Some adopted children feel they must be perfect or their adoptive parents will give them up. Be sure to let children know that you love them unconditionally for who they are, even when they make mistakes.
- *Honor what you have in common.* Rather than focusing on the ways that you are different, look for things you have in common. Focus on physical characteristics, such as straight hair or long fingers, and other qualities, such as you're both kind to animals or enjoy playing music.
- *Make your child feel special.* Show your children how important they are to you by getting out candles and good dishes to celebrate their everyday successes. Give them handwritten notes or letters telling them how great they did on their math test or how proud you are of them.

Children are a blessing from the Lord!! Get excited about His blessings to come, and the many blessings already in your lives!

From Sheryl

Research has shown that couples, and particularly women, experiencing infertility can experience high levels of stress equivalent to individuals facing terminal illness. That may be difficult to believe unless you or someone you love has experienced this crisis. While walking through the infertility journey, relaxation training can be an important tool for managing stress. This article is an excerpt from "Relaxation and Stress Management For Infertile Women" by Alice D. Domar, PhD. The full article can be found on www.RESOLVE.org.

The relaxation response is a state of deep rest. This is the direct opposite of the fight-or-flight response, the physical response to danger. When one is frightened or threatened, the body releases adrenalin, causing blood pressure, heart rate and breathing rates to increase. These changes allow one either to fight harder against the danger or run faster away from it. However, our bodies and minds cannot discriminate between physical danger and psychological stress; thus, we also experience the fight-or-flight response when we are stressed.

When you elicit the relaxation response, your heart rate, blood pressure and breathing rates decrease. You feel more relaxed and less anxious. Individuals who elicit the relaxation response on a regular basis report that they not only feel more relaxed and less anxious during the actual relaxation, but also feel calmer throughout the day. Those who elicit the relaxation response during medical procedures report less anxiety, pain and medication use.

You can elicit the relaxation response through a wide variety of relaxation techniques, including progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, meditation and imagery. Progressive muscle relaxation involves progressively tightening and then relaxing your muscles, either from head to toe or vice versa. Deep breathing involves breathing slowly from your belly, like sighing deeply. Meditation requires focusing on a word or phrase as you breathe. And imagery can mean a variety of things, ranging from imagining a pleasant safe spot to focusing on your body.

There are several books that provide instructions, including [The Relaxation Response](#) and [Beyond the Relaxation Response](#) by Herbert Benson, MD. Again, check first with your doctor before you start any of these techniques.

Our Website

We have been working to keep our website up to date regarding our services and upcoming events. Please visit the site to find out about support group meetings, upcoming events, detailed information about our services, and to get to know our staff a bit at www.bethany.org/nashville.

From Chris

My husband, Burt and I, have news that we want to share with everyone. We recently received our official referral from Lithuania. We have been pursuing the adoption of a Child of Promise for some time now. Her name is Abigail Reda (Abby), she is 3 ½ years old and we are hoping to be able to bring her home by late summer.

One of the questions that I am often asked is, "How do I make sure that my biological child doesn't resent our adoption?"

Families that have biological children in the home are presented with unique challenges as they began their adoption pursuit. At first their biological child may be excited at the possibility of having a sibling around; however, that excitement may turn to resentment when the adopted child seemingly receives so much attention early on.

Here are some suggestions to make the transition as easy as possible:

1. Let your biological child be a part of the adoption process, as much as possible. Be creative; allow them to "tell" their story. For some that will mean drawing pictures, for others it will look more like keeping a journal, some may want to add their page to the profile book.
2. Acknowledge that bringing in another child to your family will change things. You will always love your biological child, but God has also given you a special love for your adopted child as well. Help them understand that there is enough of Mom/Dad to go around.
3. Help your biological child have something special to celebrate who they are. Your adopted child will have a birthday and a "gotcha day". Your biological child can benefit from having a special day that celebrates and acknowledges that they are also a special gift from God.

Deep down, some parents worry that they may actually feel different about their children. Parents who have been interviewed on this subject said that the way that their children entered into the family made no difference in the intensity or quality of love that they feel for them. ([Raising Adopted Children](#), Melina, 1998)

From Leslie

I'd like to introduce an exciting new program that Bethany has started. It is called the Shepherding Home Families Program. The goal of the program is to provide private housing with supportive, loving, Christian individuals or families to clients with limited housing resources while they are planning their children's future.

Shepherding Home Parents will have the following qualifications:

- Prospective Shepherding Home parents must be professing Christians who are active in their Church and who show a willingness to help birthmothers.
- Prospective Shepherding Home parents should have a stable marriage, be deeply committed to each other and be able to communicate openly. Both must be enthusiastic and committed to the concept of shepherding. If the parents have children, they too must be enthusiastic about the possibility of opening their home. In some situations, a single Christian woman may meet the criteria for providing shepherding home care.
- Prospective Shepherding Home parents must be able to provide a pregnant woman with a loving atmosphere of spiritual nurture, physical care, genuine acceptance, understanding and compassion.

If you feel that God might be leading you in the direction of becoming a Shepherding Home parent, or if you just have questions regarding the program, please contact Leslie Intintoli, Birth Parent Counselor at 242-0909.

Infertility Support Group

Bethany is preparing to begin the next six-week infertility support and educational group. The group will address many issues including how infertility affects marriage, friendships, spirituality, and finances. The group also investigates ethical issues that can arise during treatment. The cost is \$10 per session (for couples or individuals) and meetings will be held each Tuesday night from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm at the Bethany office located at 220 Athens Way, Suite 405 in Nashville. If you are interested, please email sfindley@bethany.org or call the office for dates.

Birthmother Mentoring Program

Many of you may know that we have a Birthmother Mentoring Program. The program is up and running and we are now in need of more volunteers! We are looking for Christian women ages 21 and older who have a flexible schedule during the day to help with practical needs of birthmothers including, but not limited to, transportation to prenatal appointments. This program is designed for mentors to develop a one-on-one relationship with a woman in a crisis pregnancy to provide support, encouragement, and friendship. Please contact Sheryl in our office for more information. Please note that women who are in our pool of waiting families for domestic adoption are not eligible as to avoid any possible conflict of interest.