

The Bethany Times

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8: For everything there is a fixed time, and a time for every business under the sun. A time for birth and a time for death...A time for weeping and a time for laughing...A time for sorrow and a time for dancing...A time for search and a time for loss...A time to keep and a time to give away...A time for keeping quiet and a time for talk...A time for love and a time for hate...A time for war and a time for peace.

Bethany Christian Services

Volume 5, Issue 2

April—June 2007

Welcome Home...

- ☉ Gavin Leonard Juarez...Jan. 9
- ☉ Nasia Maricel...Jan. 26
- ☉ Jacob Lee...Feb. 4
- ☉ Luke Zhan...Feb. 9
- ☉ Samuel William...Feb. 14
- ☉ Brandon Nathaniel...Feb. 26
- ☉ Lily Kay...March 7



Church Bulletin Bloopers

- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.
- The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

Understanding Developmental Stages in Children Who Have Been in Institutions

by: Mary Martin Mason, MN ASAP

Mary Chesney, a staff member and researcher with the International Adoption Clinic since 1997, sees similarities between children with multiple foster care placements and children who have had extended orphanage experiences during early childhood. Both sets of children will typically experience social and emotional delays. Chesney says, "They are back working on tasks common to infants in terms of attachment. Even among those children who have been here a year or two years, some are more delayed socially or emotionally than peers. They lack those early building blocks in building social and emotional skills." She recommends that adoptive parents understand developmental stages, using these stages as a guidepost to track their child's progress.

Other delays may occur with gross and fine motor skills as well as speech and language. "One of our therapists says that the children's development is like Swiss cheese. Some parts are in place and in some parts there are holes."

Chesney adds, "We expect with children adopted from an institutional setting one month of developmental delay for every three months spent in institutional care due to the lack of opportunities for that child. If a child is adopted at 12 months who has been in orphanage since

birth, we expect them to look more like a 9-month-old. It will take them a bit of time to catch up."

Children may quickly match their peers regarding motor skills, but delays may be more profound with emotional, social development, speech and language. Unlike children in home settings from the day they are born, children from institutions and multi-transitions lack language development essentials that include early interaction with parents who explain, hold conversations, and point out concepts. For trans-nationally adopted children whose primary language is dropped, there are additional challenges. Because very young children lose their limited amount of native primary language more quickly than they acquire English language, they do not have the benefit of using a primary language as a support upon which to build a new primary language.

Provide a Mixture of Different Aged Children

Chesney says, "Studies bear out that of institutionalized kids, a third will do phenomenally well, a third will have some problems such as language issues or learning disabilities, and another third will have significant, long term issues. We tell parents that in the first year when the child is behind socially and emotionally, to expect the child to regress and progress. We recommend that children have opportunities to interact in settings with a mixture of ages. (Continued on page 3)

The Daily Grind

Springtime at Bethany brings more than warmer weather this year. We are in the process of growth and change as well. After nine years serving as Branch Director, Pam Baker is assuming a new role as Social Services Supervisor. This will allow more time to work directly with social services and program management. It will also give her more time with family and reduce her extended hours.

We are in the process of searching for an Executive Director who will focus on marketing, program development, raising funds, and increase awareness of Bethany's programs. Also in process is the hiring of a social worker to assist Sara Smit with international adoptions. We look forward to a new coworker serving families

and children. This is an exciting time for us as we look forward to serving His plans.

We also say thank you to Sandy Boudewyns, one of our case aides, who was offered a wonderful position working with seniors. The greatest joy for Sandy is that she will get to visit her grandmother every day.

After returning to the Bethany office in January, Erika Beck has chosen to stay home with her daughter, Sophia. However, she will continue to serve her clients and accept new cases on a limited basis as a field worker. Although we miss her presence in the office, we are excited for her as she focuses on motherhood!

Bethany Christian Services

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Every Life a Promise



Upcoming Trainings

We are excited to once again offer educational seminars. Please read the enclosed flyer for further details. Remember to RSVP in advance as space is limited. Hope to see you all there!

Check www.mnasap.org for more details on:

- ◆ April 13—Attachment, Brain Development & Family-Centered Practice (Bemidji)
- ◆ April 14 — Positive Parenting in the Face of Challenge (Bemidji)
- ◆ April 17 — Depression: Where Does it Hurt? Everywhere!! (Monticello)
- ◆ April 21—Get Real Parenting (St Cloud)
- ◆ 2007 Summer Camps for children diagnosed with special needs and for culture/special interests. Details on camp programs and reimbursement through MN Adoption Assistance at: www.mnasap.org/childrens_programs/specialneedscamps.html

Check www.harambeevillage.org/Villages.htm for details on:

- ◆ April 15 — Racial Identity & Self Esteem (St. Louis Park)
- ◆ April 19 & May 17— Preschool Village (Minneapolis)
- ◆ June 16-19 — Harambee Village Family Camp (Hinckley)

Additional training opportunity:

- ◆ April 24 — “This Isn’t What We Expected: Family Dreams and Realities” 7-9 pm, \$12 per couple/\$10 per individual. Lutheran Social Services (Minneapolis) Call 612-879-5248 to register.

Prayer Corner

Please pray for...the Bethany office during this time of transition. Please pray for wisdom and discernment as the search committee selects a new Executive Director.

Contact the Editors: Jane Hixson (jhixson@bethany.org) & Sara Smit (ssmit@bethany.org)

Did you know...

There is a list of support groups being offered throughout Minnesota which can be found at www.mnasap.org. Click on Support Groups in the left column.

Due to current staff demands and changes in the office, Bethany may not be able to coordinate the annual summer picnic. If you or your family would be interested in taking leadership or providing assistance in planning this event, please email Pam Baker at pbaker@bethany.org.

MOTHER'S DAY: MAY 13, 2007

- **80.5 million:** Estimated number of mothers in the United States.
- **5.6 million:** Number of stay-at-home moms.
- **1914:** The year Congress designated the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.



FATHER'S DAY: JUNE 17, 2007

- **66.3 million:** Estimated number of fathers in the United States.
- **143,000:** Number of stay-at-home dads.
- **1966:** The year President Johnson designated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day.



Understanding Developmental Stages in Children Who Have Been in Institutions, cont.

They may do better with some older children who can model appropriate behaviors and mature use of language, yet they can enjoy interactions with some younger children so that they can have an opportunity to be socially successful.”

Delay Schooling

When children first arrive into their adoptive homes, it may take them up to a year or more to develop an adequate level of conversational English, the type of language that allows people to simply converse about everyday routines and events. However, based on advice from her colleague, Kay Dole, an occupational therapist and Director of Development at the International Adoption Clinic, Chesney encourages parents to understand that conversational language is not the same as the type of language that is needed for academic learning. “Our clinic team often recommends that parents of newly arrived 4, 5, or 6 year-olds consider delaying putting newly adopted children from other countries into an academic setting. Allowing up to a year to acquire basic conversational language may be beneficial to the child prior to placing them in an environment in which acquisition of academic language will be essential.”

What’s Adoption-Related and What’s Typical Childhood Behavior?

When the Clinic gets calls about an anxious, agitated child who is not sleeping, Chesney suggests that parents use their radar and observation. “Children typically drop hints as to what is going on, even though they sometimes can’t find the words to express what is troubling them as they tackle an adoption-related task.” A preschooler, for instance, whose adoption issues are triggered by seeing friends’ mothers who are pregnant, may not be able to verbalize anything more than saying, “Tommy’s mommy has a baby in her tummy.”

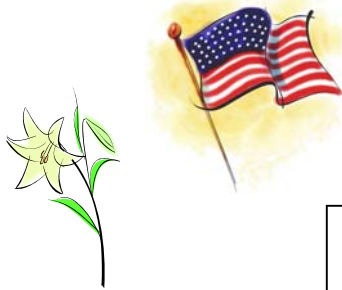
In transracial adoptions, children developmentally begin to explore looking different or being a different skin color than their parents. While the International Adoption Clinic encourages families to be positive, accepting and inclusive of their child’s culture and race, they often tell families that the child may initially resist attending language classes, culture camps or other exposures to cultural experiences. “Particularly when the child first comes into their adoptive family, he or she may want to fit in with their American family or their American neighbors or classmates. Families need to be sensitive to their children’s needs, while continuing to provide opportunities to the child to be with other children who look like them and to celebrate their culture and birth-nation heritage.”

Chesney is conducting a qualitative study on parenting expectations prior to adopting about their child’s development, health, behaviors. She will be comparing their later experience with those early expectations. “Our sense here in this clinic is that the more a parent prepares and the more the agency provides opportunities for parents to learn about issues of culture, race, and risks from institutionalization, the more the parent tends to frame realistic expectations about the adoption experience.”

One vital element of preparation is a realization that developmental stages for previously institutionalized children may differ from their non-institutionalized peers, and that an extra layer of developmental complexity is added by what happened before a child was adopted. Chesney’s research may reveal still more ways to enhance positive parent-child relationship and to ease the transition into family life for children who have been adopted from international institutional care and from multiple foster placements.

In addition to her work in the International Adoption Clinic, Chesney is the Clinical Director of the Pediatric Specialty Clinic at University of Minnesota Children’s Hospital and a doctoral candidate in the Children with Special Health Care Needs program at the University of Minnesota’s School of Nursing.

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Happy Easter!

The Bethany Christian Services office will be closed on Friday, April 6 in honor of Good Friday.



Happy Mother’s Day!



*Don’t forget...
May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month
May 12th is Birth Mother’s Day
Juneteenth is June 19th
(Go to www.juneteenth.com for more info!)*

Happy Father’s Day!

Happy Memorial Day!
The Bethany Christian Services office will be closed on May 28th in recognition.

