



## **OCTOBER Adoption STAR NEWSLETTER**

October 1, 2009

Dear Friends, You should have received an invitation in the mail to our wonderful fundraising event during National Adoption Month. If you did not receive an invite, please let us know by sending your name and address to [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com). ***We hope you plan on attending.*** It promises to be fun and your presence will show your support for Adoption STAR.

### ***Celebrate Family***

November 5, Thursday, 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm An evening of gourmet food stations, fine wines, extravagant gift baskets, and music to benefit Adoption STAR. **Shea's Performing Arts Center** 646 Main Street Buffalo, NY \$35 per person \$65 per couple \$100 patron tickets

Call Adoption STAR for details, 716.639.3900 or email [Cherie@adoptionstar.com](mailto:Cherie@adoptionstar.com) The September Newsletter promised that September would be packed with many events and it was! Thank you to all those who attended any of our September functions.

September was also packed with baby placements too, including four placements occurring within 36 hours!

**October is also packed with events, and many are family friendly. Please take advantage of joining in on the fun by attending as many as you can!**

**ALSO PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE ALL OVER NEW YORK STATE IN OCTOBER SO LOOK FOR AN EVENT IN YOUR AREA OR TRAVEL A LITTLE BIT THIS OCTOBER TO JOIN IN WITH US. Please check out our November (National Adoption Month) Events listed at the end of this newsletter.**

**Adoption Informal Meeting -- NYC area** (208 W13 btw 7&8th Aves)

**October 01, Thursday, 8:00 pm -10:00 pm**

Adoption STAR will speak at WANNABE DADS AND MOMS - A support group for LGBTQ people exploring the possibilities of becoming parents through adoption. To register or for more information contact: [asgamy@mindspring.com](mailto:asgamy@mindspring.com) or 212-620-7310 x400.

**Orientation Session - Buffalo area**

**October 06, Tuesday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

Join us for this free orientation session to learn more about adoption and the Adoption STAR Agency. 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville. Please call to RSVP or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)

**A.C.E.: Adoptee Circle of Experience**

**October 14, Wednesday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

If you are an adult adoptee, age 18 and up, this support and social group meeting is for you. Contact the agency for more information.

**Fall Fun!**

**October 17, Saturday, 11 am**

Join our Rochester-area families for a day of seasonal fun at the Gro-Moore Farms annual Fall Festival. Live music, pumpkin

painting, maze tours and other cool stuff for kids of all ages make this a great day. Directions and details at [www.gromooore.com](http://www.gromooore.com). Wear your Halloween costumes, too! RSVP to [shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com](mailto:shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com).

### **Orientation Session - Ithaca Area**

**October 22, Thursday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

Your adoption journey starts with thoughtful learning. Join us for a free information session at the Tompkins County Public Library, 101 E. Green St on the Commons. An Adoption STAR representative will talk about adoption options and Adoption STAR's unique mission and philosophy.

### **SOFIA Halloween Party**

**October 24, Saturday, 10:00 am - 2: 00 pm**

SOFIA (Supporting Our Families Interested in Adoption) is stirring together a fun brew of seasonal fun! Check back for details and location. Questions? Email [sofiawny@yahoo.com](mailto:sofiawny@yahoo.com).

### **Information Session - Rochester Area**

**October 28, Wednesday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

This special presentation for LGBT singles and couples is an introduction to adoption options and Adoption STAR's mission and philosophy. Please join us at the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, 875 E Main St in Rochester, in the Youth Center on the first floor. RSVP to 585-672-5227 or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com).

Our very own, Zack Fried (Intake Worker for Adoption STAR) was featured for his MY VIEW editorial in the Buffalo News discussing his thoughts about an MTV program entitled, 16 and Pregnant. If you did not

get to see, it here is the link:

<http://www.buffalonews.com/opinion/myview/story/799270.html>

**Are you an adopted person? If not, PLEASE take a moment to cut and past the information within the next paragraph and email it to an adult adoptee that you know. Would you like to be a mentor for only two hours a month for a child in foster care waiting to be adopted? This is a specialized volunteer program that has been found to provide numerous benefits for the mentors and children in foster care. We need you for this important program! If you are interested, please contact Jody Hansen-Walker to register or for more information contact Jody at: (716) 200-8508 or jodyhansenwalker@yahoo.com This successful program originated in New York City. The founder April Dinwoody (adopted at age 2) will come to Buffalo on Thursday Nov 12th 7pm and meet in the Adoption lobby to kick off this program by providing an initial informational session and training. Please consider being a mentor! This is such a rewarding program.**

**JOURNALING** Whether you have made an adoption plan for your child or you are waiting to adopt or you are currently parenting, journaling is a great way to organize your thoughts and feelings and to learn more about yourself. It is also a perfect place for you to get your feelings out when you might not feel comfortable expressing them to others. You don't have to limit yourself to writing in your journal. You can draw and paste pictures in it that have meaning to you. Be creative and use the journal to express ALL of who you are! **Here is an idea for your Journal/Blog today:**

### ***MY FEELINGS***

Feelings are important and you are entitled to feel mad, sad, happy, silly, confused or any other emotion. What kind of

feelings did you experience today and why?

**Have you joined these groups yet? SOFIA** There is NO membership fee! SOFIA means supporting our families interested in adoption. It is a special group. The focus is educational and social. It is for those families who are waiting to adopt and those families who have already adopted through STAR or through another entity. Please visit SOFIA by going to their website

at <http://www.wnysofia.com/> **FACEBOOK** It is so easy to do. Just visit <http://facebook.com/> and search for the Adoption STAR fan group. We hope to see you online! **TWITTER** Follow Adoption STAR on Twitter!

<http://www.twitter.com/adoptionstar> **Adoption STAR**

**YAHOO Online Groups**We highly recommend that once your home study is approved that you log onto and join the Adoption STAR adoptive parent's yahoo group. It is easy to join, go

to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstar/> There are so many Adoption STAR clients (those who adopted and those waiting to adopt) who all have access to each other.

Another online group is the Adoption Star Parenting Site <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstarparents/> f or those who already adopted from Adoption STAR. Please join this group to connect with other parents about the different stages of parenthood. No agency staff are members of the online groups ~ only adoptive parent clients. Please utilize this resource to post a message, to learn from others, and especially to receive support and connect with new friends and past home study peers, etc.

When you join, please list your name and your home study group's name so others will be able to welcome you to the group. **Messages from the Adoptive Family Department for**

**prospective adoptive families:** 1. **Emailing:** If you wish an update on whether or not you have been profiled OR to check on the outcome of a recent profiling please CALL the agency rather than emailing us for an update. Also if you wish an update on your file to see if you are

missing paperwork, etc., please contact us via telephone and not email.

We receive an overwhelming amount of emails each day and cannot always get back to you timely. Also email can be lost or bounce to spam files and never be received. In addition, questions that are specific to your file and profiling are important to us and we would prefer personal contact with you. **2. Profiles:** If you hoping to adopt a baby domestically and are just beginning to create your profile and need assistance there is an online company founded by Adoption STAR adoptive parents who can assist you with the process:

<http://www.petitepublishing.com/Home.html>. Even if you have already created your profile and handed it in, but feel it needs a “face lift” consider Petite Publishing for this as well. (*Adoption STAR does not receive any compensation or any portion of fees paid to Petite Publishing.*) As you know we request only five profiles (for expectant parents) to be kept at the agency. Be in touch with the agency to be sure we have more than one profile remaining. Often we run out of our clients' profiles and if this occurs you may lose out on being considered for potential adoption situations. We will not accept more than five profiles at one time (we just do not have the space to accommodate this.) Do not get discouraged if we ask for more profiles as it means your Family Advocate is working on your behalf to get your profiles viewed. Remember we cannot profile you without profiles, so if you have not handed in your profile and your home study is done, precious time is passing. **3. Profiling Opportunities:** It is sometimes difficult for families to "hear" or "read" about available children and come to learn they can not be considered unless they are home study ready. "Home study ready" means that your home study or home study update is less than 12 months old and that no paperwork has expired such as fingerprints and child abuse clearances. It also means that we have your profile too. Without these items, we are unable to consider you for domestic adoption situations in-state or out-of-state. **4. Home Study Expiration:** If your home study is coming up on expiring there is a good chance your fingerprint clearances and SCR (child abuse) clearances have already expired or will soon expire. The date of your clearances is listed in the body of your home study document. It is important to keep this up to date. Please contact the office if you need more information. We are recommending that you begin processing

your update within two months before it expires so there is no lapse. Those with expired home studies (and expired SCR clearances) are unable to be considered for potential placements.

5. **Second Adoptions:** Many Adoption STAR families who have adopted previously from us have adopted again! If you are considering adopting again, it is important to begin the process to update your home study. We just want to remind those of you who wish to adopt again, the process does not require home study educational classes.

6. **Fingerprinting:** If you have not yet been fingerprinted by Adoption STAR since the law requiring FBI prints went into affect two years ago, it is your responsibility to make sure that those are completed. The FBI fingerprint card rejection rate is quite high. Even if the State approves the fingerprints stating no criminal history, the FBI often rejects the prints stating they need to be redone. This causes many delays and of course quite a bit of frustration. The good news is that once you are fingerprinted and receive approval from both NY and the FBI you do not need to be fingerprinted again! If those fingerprint clearances expire before you adopt, the agency will just need to request a summary judgment report. We expunge records after finalization so any of our previous families who return to adopt again, we need to re-fingerprint as we do not have the option of requesting the summary judgment report.

7. **Waiting:** Your Family Advocate understands that waiting to adopt is emotionally draining and difficult. We have a growing list of recommendations to ease your wait time. The agency's educational credit system for both domestic and international adoptions has been created to assist you while you wait to become an adoptive parent. Adoption education is a life-long process, what better way to prepare for adoptive parenthood than to continue your adoption education! We highly recommend that once your home study is approved that you log onto and join the Adoption STAR adoptive parent's yahoo group. It is easy to join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstar/> There are so many Adoption STAR clients (those who adopted and those waiting to adopt) who all have access to each other. No agency staff are members of the online group ~ only adoptive parent clients. Please utilize this resource to post a message, to learn from others, and especially to receive support and connect with new friends and past home study peers, etc.

When you join, please list your name and your home study group's name so others will be able to welcome you to the group. Finding a creative outlet often assists with one's wait. If you are planning to adopt domestically, there are a number of creative ways to help in your pursuit. One of those ways is to place your profile online at the Adoption STAR website. Here is a link to learn more: [http://www.adoptionstar.com/adoptiveparents\\_profile\\_form.php](http://www.adoptionstar.com/adoptiveparents_profile_form.php)

Another way is to arrange a training meeting with Sarah Rohde (716-639-3900) to begin the agency assisted private track. Another way is to have your profile come alive by creating a DVD presentation. For more information on the DVD project, visit: <http://www.littlelambvideo.com/> *These are just a few ideas to think about, and again, if you are struggling with the wait, we encourage you to contact the agency as we are here for you!*

**Messages about Post Adoption for families who already adopted:**

**1. Open Adoption Contact:** Just a reminder that you signed an agreement to supply the agency with photos and letters for your child's birth family whether or not the birth parents wanted an open adoption. It is imperative that you provide these photos and letters in a timely fashion.

If you haven't it is not too late to do so now. It is very sad to have to inform a birth mother or a birth father that there are no photos waiting for them in their file. Even if you have not heard from the birth family, it is still important to keep to the schedule provided to you. Many of our schedules fall into the following category (but check your placement paperwork to be sure that your agreement is the same or if it requires more frequent contact): photos/letters to be sent the first two weeks after placement, one month after placement and then every month through six months after placement, then 12 months, 18 months and 24 months! and then yearly thereafter until age 18. PLEASE also remember to also include photos for Adoption STAR. We update your files with these photos, pass them around to the staff as we all love to see our babies growing up and we continuously like to update our bulletin board! Please send all photos via regular mail attention: Anna Steinberg at Adoption STAR, 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221.

**2. Staying Connected:** Time passes so quickly and our children grow up so fast. We are working, playing, parenting... we are so busy! Even with our busy lives, we need to remember that our

adoption journey has continued from waiting, to placement, to parenthood and continues forever. Adoption does not end at the placement of our children but rather it continues. What does this mean for us adoptive families? It means that your children may have unique issues due to their adoption experiences, questions about themselves and their birth families, etc. Adoption STAR can provide you with a list of professionals who provide post adoption counseling to provide you with the support and counseling necessary when dealing with unexpected special needs or other parenting issues.

3. **Newsletter:** This monthly email newsletter is a special way to stay connected. If you know anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, please have them provide us with their email address. You do not need to be associated with the agency to receive this newsletter. 4. **Support groups:** Adoption STAR has several support groups including online groups for you to become involved with before, during and after you have a child placed in your home.

Support after adoption is encouraged and enhances the well being of the adoptive family. For more information on the agency's support groups, visit [www.adoptionstar.com](http://www.adoptionstar.com). One of the agency's online groups is specifically for those who have already adopted from Adoption

STAR: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstarparents/> All the best, *Your Friends at Adoption STAR* P.S. **Adoption STAR's 2009 Calendar Is On-Line.** Please

visit: <http://www.adoptionstar.com/participate.php> to view our upcoming calendar of events. **OCTOBER**

### **Adoption Informal Meeting**

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**Wear your Halloween costumes, too! RSVP to [shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com](mailto:shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com).**

**Blue Rose Birth Mother's Support Group Meeting**

**October 21, Wednesday, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**If you are a birth mother and feel you may be interested in learning more about the Blue Rose group please contact the agency directly. Pregnant women considering adoption are also welcome to attend to help gather some of the information they need to make an informed decision on whether adoption is right for them and their baby.**

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### **NOVEMBER**

#### **Home Study Educational Classes**

**November 03, Tuesday, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm**

**This five week program prepares you for domestic or international adoption and is open to all registered Adoption STAR clients. This is the final program series scheduled for 2009. Register today by calling 639.3900 or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com).**

#### **Exploring Your Adoption Options**

**November 04, Wednesday, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**This free workshop will introduce a multitude of adoption options including international, private, agency, older child, etc. For all those who wish to adopt!**

#### **Celebrate Family! Benefit Event for Adoption STAR**

**November 05, Thursday, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

**Join us for an evening of gourmet food stations, local wines, extravagant basket raffles and the song stylings of jazz diva Amy Barlow Liberatore in the elegant Shea's Theatre lobby on Main St in downtown Buffalo. \$35 per person, \$65 per couple and \$100 patron tickets. Sponsorship opportunities available, too. Call Cherie at 716.639.3900 for details or email [Cherie@adoptionstar.com](mailto:Cherie@adoptionstar.com).**

#### **Orientation Session - Albany area**

**November 09, Monday, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Join us for this free orientation session to learn more about adoption and the Adoption STAR Agency. Please call or email for location information and to RSVP.**

**Financial Planning for the Adoptive Family**

**November 12, Thursday, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**Back by popular demand! This class will introduce how apply to for the adoption tax credit, other adoption benefits, and financial planning for your family's future. The presenters are certified financial planners and proud adoptive parents, too!**

**Weekend Home Study Classes - Albany, NY**

**November 20, Friday, 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Friday, November 20 6 pm - 9 pm AND Saturday, November 21, 9 am - 5 pm. Please call or email to RSVP and for Albany location information.**

**Orientation Session - Buffalo area**

**November 22, Sunday, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm**

**The adoption journey starts with good information and learning. Please join us for an overview of the adoption process and to learn about Adoption STAR's mission and philosophy.**

**Please feel free to post or forward this email as appropriate.** If you are a client of Adoption STAR, we would like to remind all of you to provide the agency with updated telephone numbers (work, home, cell, pager), mailing addresses and email addresses. If you have switched jobs, left a job, moved, etc., please email Zack at [Zachary@adoptionstar.com](mailto:Zachary@adoptionstar.com) with your most updated contact information! PLEASE, PLEASE GET INVOLVED WITH THE MANY ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY! *Thank you!* **Follow Adoption STAR on Twitter!**

**<http://www.twitter.com/adoptionstar> Become a fan of Adoption STAR on facebook! <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Adoption-STAR/110156193216?ref=ts> **Adoption STAR, Inc. A NYS****

**Authorized and Florida Licensed Non-Profit Adoption  
Agency Hague Accredited Adoption Service Provider STAR**

**stands for Support, Training, Advocacy and Resources** 47 Plaza Drive

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716-639-3700 2734 East Oakland Park Boulevard, Suite

101 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306 Phone 954-566-6055 Fax

954-566-6255 **Other ways to contact us: Albany 518-391-**

**2515 Binghamton 607-330-2158 Rochester 585-672-5227 New York City**

**917-470-9340 Syracuse 315-703-7511 Poughkeepsie 845-457-4883 Toll**

**Free 866-691-3300**

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