



Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Wayne County

The Intersection of Adoption and Addiction

Studies have shown that individuals who have been adopted are almost twice as likely to develop a Substance Use Disorder as those who were not adopted, though it is important to note that many other factors overlap with adoption and contribute to these numbers.

Addiction is a disease of escapism. While each person who suffers from a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) has unique underlying difficulties that cause them to seek this escape, the fundamental reason for turning to substances is rooted in a lack of ability to manage or navigate one's reality. Addiction is a solution to a problem that the user sees as unsolvable and they are hurting.

While addiction is a disease of escapism, it is also a disease of attachment. Researchers exploring the relationship between attachment and substance use have noted that those with attachment insecurity are at higher risk of an SUD.

For each adoptee struggling with SUD the starting point in treatment is their attachment health, or more specifically, their attachment fears. When adoptees crave attachment but also view it as the greatest threat to their safety, they often look for ways to soothe or distract themselves from this fear. Whether is it the solo user who isolates, or the user who crafts a "substance using family" for themselves and assuages their attachment fears by getting high, adoptees who abuse substances are looking for a way to feel some form of attachment.

Isolating users are dealing with the loneliness and depression that comes with fear-based isolation and detachment by artificially raising their mood or distracting themselves from their oppressive emotions by getting high. These adoptees often present with a blanket mistrust of the world and a very low bar for rejecting the attachment of others. They operate under a "separate but safe" mentality, often without insight into how this pattern is self-perpetuating and stems from their attachment fears. Substances often

become an attachment figure for them, and the idea of sobriety can be terrifying, not only because they have to face all of the things they have been running from, but because they are losing their most consistent attachment object.



**Orchards
Children's
Services**

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*For more information
on the Post Adoption
Resource Center
please contact us at
313-530-9746*

*Or visit our website at
PARC-orchards.org*

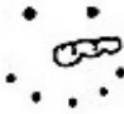
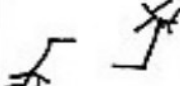
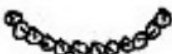
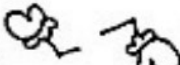
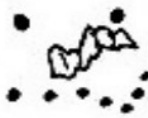
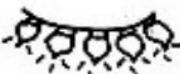


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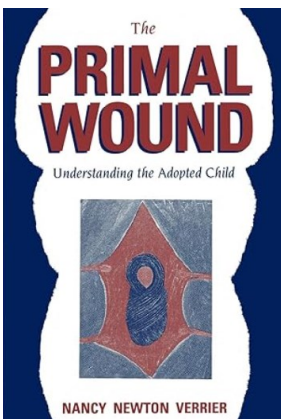
Family Activity

Roll & Draw a Snowman

Each person starts with a blank piece of paper. Take turns going around the table, each person gets to roll the die once per round. Depending on what each person rolls, that is what they will add to their snowman for that round. After the final round, show off your snowmen! Get even more creative and make up a story for each of your snowmen and share with one another.

Roll-a-Snowman	Roll #1	Roll #2	Roll #3	Roll #4	Roll #5	Roll #6
						
						
						
						
						
						

Suggested Read



The Primal Wound **Author: Nancy Newton Verrier**

The Primal Wound is a seminal work which revolutionizes the way we think about adoption.

This book gives adoptees, whose pain has long been unacknowledged or misunderstood, validation for their feelings, as well as explanations for their behavior. It lists the coping mechanisms which adoptees use to be able to attach and live in a family to whom they are not related and with whom they have no genetic cues. It will contribute to the healing of all members of the adoption triad and will bring understanding and encouragement to anyone who has ever felt abandoned.

PARC in the Community

PARC sends a huge **THANK YOU** to the **Jockey Being Family** program that continues to support our family activities. Check out their website at: creatingafamily.org to register for many free trainings and sign up to receive their newsletter.



JOCKEY
BEING FAMILY®

PARC continues to hold the Macomb parent support group and Southfield support group on a monthly basis. In October Alixandra Moyer joined us for a training on transracial adoption and shared her journey through foster care.



This thanksgiving we were able to provide some of our families with Thanksgiving essentials and hope that everyone had something to be thankful for.

We had so much fun celebrating National Adoption Month with our families and thank each of you for everything that you do for your kiddos.



Last year we had so much fun at the holiday party that we decided to do it again! We ate delicious food together, made some amazing ornaments, had lots of laughs and even got a visit from Santa.



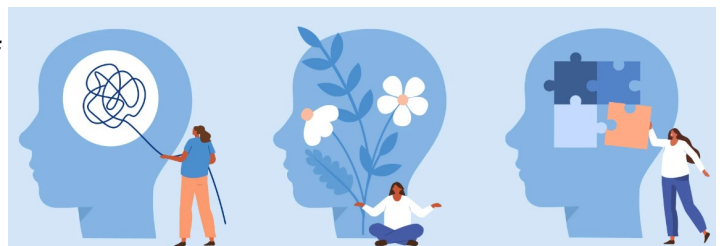
PARC has several things in the works for this upcoming year, keep an eye out. As always, if you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to reach out!

The Intersection of Adoption and Addiction (Continued)

Adoptees who use with others, use substances as a tool to form superficial attachments to those around them; substances allow them to quiet the voice of fear that pushes them to be mistrustful and run away. These individuals often form “using families,” groups of peers tied together by their substance abuse. Sobriety for them also means a loss of attachment, as once you remove substances from the using family, that family falls apart. These individuals operate under a “something is better than nothing” mentality, when in reality having relationships that lack depth and vulnerability only highlights the adoptees’ inability to connect and their grief about not having their attachment needs met. In each case, and in cases that do not fall in these two categories, we see adoptees using substances as a tool to help them face a fear they see as hopeless.

The intent of this piece is not to stigmatize adoptees as people who will develop addictions, but rather to encourage both parents and clinicians to learn more about the disease of addiction and help bring the proper services to those adoptees who are in pain.

New research shows that early and consistent education on emotion management and mental health are the best preventors of later substance abuse. Adoptees may struggle with feelings of abandonment, depression, anxiety, and a whole host of other emotions uniquely powerful to them. If they are taught how to manage, respect, and work through their emotions, they will be less likely to seek substances down the road.



**Information expanded from: NCFA - The Intersection of Adoption and Addiction - Dr. Brett Furst*

Upcoming Meetings, Trainings & Events

***NEW* Teen SUPPORT GROUP**

When: 1st Thursday of the month **Time:** 6:30 p.m.

Where: Virtual – Zoom **Meeting ID:** 834 3484 2851 **Passcode:** 6G6suj

Facilitator: Madison Peterson



ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

When: 2nd Tuesday of the month **Time:** 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 500, Southfield, MI 48075

Facilitator: Betsy Thomas

*Dinner and childcare will be provided



MACOMB COUNTY PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

When: Last Wednesday of the month **Time:** 6:00 - 7:30 p.m

Where: New Life Presbyterian Church

11300 19 Mile Rd., Sterling Heights, MI 48314

Facilitator: Mikki Boury

*Dinner and childcare will be provided



TRAINING: SPECIAL EDUCATION

When: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 (This training will be in place of the January parent support group)

Time: 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 500, Southfield, MI 48075 OR Zoom

Facilitator: Tanille Hill



ART. YOU. POWERFUL.

When: Monthly, starting January 22, 2024 - See emails/social media for full schedule

Time: 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (ages 12 and under) / 6:45 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. (ages 12 and over)

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 500, Southfield, MI 48075



CONFERENCE: SELF-CARE

When: Saturday, February 24, 2024

Time: 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Where: 24901 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 601, Southfield, MI 48075

Facilitator: Sabrina Oviatt

Focus: Self-Care - There will be a yoga instructor, parents will participate in a craft, and receive massages.

*Lunch will be provided at the conference and families will be sent home with dinner!

*Childcare is limited and will be available on a first come first serve basis.



★ Please keep an eye out for updates via email and social media! Connect with PARC at:

Website: parc-orchards.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OCSPostAdoptionResourceCenter

Email: parcocs@orchards.org