



## Staff Information

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Executive Director  
ext. 232

**Rachel Neukirch**  
Director of Education and  
Counseling Services  
ext. 223

**Sarah Boeker**  
Therapist  
ext. 235

**Bill Krenn**  
Therapist  
ext. 241

### Trainers:

Geri Brotherton  
Mark Goodwin  
Joy Hughes  
Gail Knipshild  
Diana Meyer  
Laverna Milberg  
Lynne Phoomsathan

**Dr. Maureen Taylor**  
Clinical Consultant

## A Message from the Crew:

*Every Who down in Whoville liked Christmas a lot, but the Grinch, who lived just north of Whoville - did not. The Grinch hated Christmas - the whole Christmas season. Now, please don't ask why; no one quite knows the reason.*

Are you the Mayor of Whoville? - a person who revels in the holiday season, loves the sights and sounds, bakes the night away? Or are you the Grinch, irritated by the demands, frustrated by the constant messages to be joyful when life is getting you down? More than likely, you are a little of both. And so is your child.

Many children who have histories of trauma, abuse and neglect struggle this time of year. Look at page 3 for some ideas on ways to calm

your child and bring (a little) peace to your home.

*And since you can't stop it from coming (just ask the Grinch!), you might as well embrace it.*

*Welcome, Christmas, bring your cheer. Cheer to all Whos far and near. Christmas Day is in our grasp so long as we have hands to clasp. Christmas Day will always be just as long as we have we. Welcome Christmas while we stand, heart to heart and hand in hand.*

The Crew

## Psychological Evaluation and Assessment Services are Coming to CHS!

Beginning in January 2011, CHS will be offering testing and evaluation for children and youth who are struggling with mental health issues, behavioral challenges, or learning difficulties. The focus of this service will be on understanding the impact of abuse, neglect, and other traumatic circumstances on the child's functioning.

Services will be available for any child or youth ages 19 years and younger who is adopted, in foster care, or living in a guardianship or kinship situation. A sliding fee scale is available and we do accept Missouri Medicaid.

If you would like more details, please call Rachel at (314) 968-2350, ext. 223.

## We believe:

All children are able to grow to their fullest potential as members of loving and supportive families.

All children deserve a family that is able to meet their emotional, developmental and physical needs.

Children who have been abused, neglected or otherwise traumatized will bring with them to their new families their feelings of hurt and anger, as well as the negative behaviors they use to express those feelings.

Families formed through the adoption process are equal to families created by birth in their love for and commitment to their children.

Families formed through the adoption process face challenges unique to adoptive families.

The challenges and issues faced by foster and adoptive families require specialized skills on the part of the parents as well as the professionals serving the family.

It is essential that the systems and professionals involved in the process of forming families through foster care and adoption be available at all stages of the family's life – prior to, during and after permanency is achieved.

## Changes to Therapeutic Group Services Will Better Meet the Needs of Children and Youth

*In response to the continued requests we receive for support groups for foster and adopted children and with the funding assistance of the Saint Louis County Children's Services Board, CHS is expanding the availability.*

### Therapy Groups Currently Forming

These groups are in the process of forming. They will be limited in duration and in the number of participants. Dates and times will be set based on what is most convenient for group members.

#### Risky Business!

*For high school girls who may be struggling with making unsafe decisions in the realms of peer relationships, dating and sexuality. Histories of sexual abuse will be discussed if beneficial.*

#### STOP and think!

*For boys ages 7 to 13 years who are struggling with challenges related to temper and impulse control. This group will be activity-based and focus on social skills and interacting successfully with others.*

### On-Going Support Group Schedule Beginning January 2011

Middle School(11-14y/o)—  
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 6:30-8pm

High School(15-19y/o)—  
2nd & 4th Tuesdays 6:30-8pm

Parents—  
1st & 3rd Tuesdays 6:30-8pm

Grandparents Raising Children -  
2nd and 4th Thursdays  
9:30 -11:30am

To Register or For More Information, Contact:

Bill Krenn MA, PLPC  
(314) 968-2350, ext. 241  
billk@chsmo.org





# Educational Opportunities for Adoptive and Foster Parents 2011

*(Each session counts as training toward your licensure requirement)*

## **Sensory Processing Disorders—Understanding the Who, What, and Why**

**Wednesday January 19th 6 to 9pm**

Is your child “overly” sensitive to loud noises? Does he have a total meltdown if you buy the wrong socks or there is an itchy label in his shirt? Difficulties with sensory processing are common for children with histories of premature birth, drug and alcohol exposure, or other traumas. Children who have been adopted or in foster care are at a heightened risk to experience challenges in this area. Come learn about Sensory Processing Disorder—what it is, signs and symptoms, suggested ways that parents and teachers can help, and resources in the area.

## **Impact of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development**

**Wednesday January 26th 6 to 9pm**

When a child is abused or neglected, it can affect every aspect of the child’s development—physical, emotional, social, psychological. It is important when parenting a child with a history of abuse or neglect to understand its impact on the child’s long-term development.

## **STOP Bullying Now!**

**Wednesday February 2nd 6 to 9pm**

Bullying is prevalent in and outside of school communities. Learn how to spot the symptoms of a child being bullied, how to intervene and work with the child’s support systems to get results. Developing resiliency in a child will also be discussed.



## **Developing Social Skills in Children**

**Wednesday February 9th 6 to 9pm**

In this workshop, focus will be on understanding your child’s unique personality traits and how these affect his ability to get along with others and make friends. Techniques for helping children learn to navigate social settings will be discussed.

**Perfect Follow-Up to STOP Bullying Now!**

## **Discipline Methods for Children with Special Needs**

**Wednesday February 16th 6 to 9pm**

Join the discussion on ways to create structure in your home, effectively handle difficult behaviors such as lying or stealing, as well as ways to begin to teach your child such things as empathy and the importance of honesty.

**To Register:**  
**(314) 968-2350, ext. 234**  
**or**  
**[gailk@chsmo.org](mailto:gailk@chsmo.org)**



## Educational Opportunities for Adoptive and Foster Parents

2011

*(Each session counts as training toward your licensure requirement)*

### **Understanding and Responding to Sexual Abuse**

**Mondays February 21st and February 28th 6 to 9pm**

Parenting a child with a history of sexual abuse can be frightening—from responding to the child's acting out behavior to dealing with your own emotions. Come share with other parents and participate in discussions on the best ways to minimize the trauma and help your child heal.

### **Attachment Disorders**

**Monday March 7th 6 to 9pm**

Children who have not received proper care during the earlier parts of their lives and who have separated from the people familiar to them are at higher risk for developing attachment issues. Learn the basics of how attachment develops and how it can be impacted by negative circumstances.

### **Adoption Search**

**Wednesday March 9th 6 to 9pm**

Were you adopted as an infant or older child through a public or private agency in Missouri? Are you curious about your birth family and wondering about the search process? Are you a parent worried that your child is going to be hurt as he or she begins the search for birth parents? Would you like to help them search? Are you afraid they won't love you as much after they find their birth family? Learn about Missouri Adult Adoptee Search laws and regulations. Come and listen to adult adoptees and their parents talk about their experiences.



### **Respite Provider / Career Respite Provider Training**

**Monday March 14th 6 to 9pm**

If there are people in your life who are willing to help by providing respite for you (family, friends, neighbors, etc.) encourage them to register for this free class. They will learn important facts and tips about helping care for children with histories of abuse and neglect. *For those interested in being licensed as Career Respite Providers, a second class is also required and will focus on caring for children with elevated needs.* **This class will meet March 21st 6 to 9pm.**

### **Parenting Teens**

**Wednesdays March 16th and March 23rd 6 to 9pm**

Parenting teenagers is a challenge under any circumstances—the moods, the attitudes, the hormones! When a child is in foster care or is adopted, additional challenges exist. Discuss ways to address behavioral challenges and talk to teens as well as learn what services are available to help. This is a two-part class and attendance at both is encouraged.

**To Register:**  
**(314) 968-2350, ext. 234**  
**or**  
**gailk@chsmo.org**

## Holiday Stress!

This time of year most families are busy putting up lights, decorating a tree, signing cards, baking cookies, wrapping presents, cleaning house, going to spouse's office parties, visiting family... and the list goes on. No wonder there is holiday stress.

Many children in foster care have experienced chronic stress since a young age. Because of the on-going stress, their brains have been 'hard-wired' to be on constant alert and to respond quickly to the slightest threat. These children's stress systems are turned on even when they don't need to be. For them the holidays can be extra stressful.

For children with sensory issues, bright lights and decorations can be overwhelming. Some children feel the need to touch everything and in the meantime items are broken.

Many children have painful memories of the holidays. Most foster parents can tell stories of their children's past holidays with no food or gifts or with big family fights and violent episodes.

Foster children often worry about their birth family— Are they safe? Do they have presents? Do they miss me? No matter how happy and beautiful the life and home you are providing, it is normal for children to think about their families this time of year.

So what can foster families do? The stress that a child has experienced in the past cannot be undone; however there are some things that can help:

⇒ First of all, recognize the child for who he is. Realize that you want the holidays to be a happy time—however, for your child they

may or may not be. Do not take it personally if your child wants time to himself or is not as happy as you expect him to be. Try to understand his feelings of sadness and spend some quiet time talking about them.

- ⇒ Include your foster child in helping with the holidays but keep in mind that when you assign tasks, do it based on the developmental age of the child. Keep your expectations realistic and expect mistakes to happen.
- ⇒ Let children know what is planned during the holidays and try to keep some consistency in their daily routine.
- ⇒ If they have a traditional activity from their birth families or previous homes, incorporate it into yours. It is a great way to show your respect for their family.
- ⇒ Spend time before a large family event or neighborhood party looking at pictures and teaching the child everyone's names. Practice appropriate responses when someone asks them questions or gives them a gift.
- ⇒ Most children have a hard time waiting— this is especially true for anxious children. If attending church, get there close to the start of service. Many children in foster care have never attended church before and do not know how to act in church (nor are they excited about attending church). Accept that religion may be important to you but not to them and plan accordingly.
- ⇒ Put decorations up gradually so as not to overwhelm your child. Possibly even rethink what you put up—do you really need the talking Christmas tree, singing Bing Crosby and the barking dogs?
- ⇒ Last of all stay positive and breathe deeply! Look for opportunities to enjoy each other. And remember, it will be over soon!



# CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY

OF MISSOURI

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Saint Louis, MO 63144

(314) 968-2350

[www.chsmo.org](http://www.chsmo.org)

*Improving the Quality of  
Life for Children in Need  
Since 1891*



**CHS is happy to be an organizing partner for the**  
**2011 St. Louis Regional Kinship Care Conference**  
**Coping Strategies for Relative Caregivers of Children and Youth**  
**Featuring Joseph Crumbley, DSW, LCSW**  
**Author, Family Therapist, Trainer, Consultant**  
**Co-author, Relatives Raising Children: An Overview of Kinship Care**

Equal Opportunity/ADA Institutions

**Friday, April 15, 2011**  
**9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**University of Missouri-St. Louis**  
**J. C. Penney Conference Center**  
**\$45 (includes lunch & parking)**

*Sponsored by Gateway Grandparents/Kinship  
Network; Gerontology Graduate Program, School  
of Social Work, University of Missouri-St. Louis.  
Funded, in part, by the Urban Extension Program,  
a joint project of University of Missouri Extension  
and University of Missouri-St. Louis.*

**Register by April 1, 2011**

**Three ways to register:**  
*(credit cards accepted):*

**Mail:** Send check payable to  
St. Louis County Extension  
Council with name, address, phone, & email  
to: Kinship Care Conference  
MU Extension  
121 S. Meramec, Suite 501  
St. Louis, MO 63105

**Phone:** 314-615-2911

**Online:** [www.extension.missouri.edu/  
stlouis/kinshipcare](http://www.extension.missouri.edu/stlouis/kinshipcare)

