

# Los Angeles County DCFS Adoptions Division Post Adoption Services (PAS) Newsletter

FALL 2005

ISSUE #3

## Post Adoption Services Mission Statement

Post Adoption Services is committed to providing support and resources to adoptive parents, adoptees and birth families as they face the lifelong issues of adoption.

## New news!

\*\* We are pleased to announce that a post-adoption support group for Spanish-speaking adoptive parents is being formed! The monthly support group will be held in Monterey Park on a Thursday morning. More information to come!

\*\* DCFS Revenue Enhancement, the unit responsible for processing AAP payments and recertifications, has moved from their office in Covina to a new office in Glendora. The AAP hotline number, (800) 697-4444, has not changed. The AAP hotline had experienced some problems in the last few weeks due to technical difficulties and the relocation, but things are now back to normal. \*

\*\* The DCFS Adoption Handbook has been updated online. The handbook contains numerous resources for health, counseling and other services. To get to the handbook, go to DCFS' website (<http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/>) and click the light blue Adoptions tab. On the left side of that page, you'll see a link to "DCFS Adoption Handbook." Click there and then look under the last section entitled "Community Resources."

\*\* Adoption Promotion & Support Services (APSS) is a new resource for families before and after

a child's adoption finalizes. APSS is federally funded through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act. The goal of APSS is to increase permanency for children in Los Angeles County. Community-based agencies, contracted by APSS, will provide support and services to pre- and post- adoption families to ensure permanency for children, nurture lifelong relationships and commitments, and reduce adoption disruptions. These agencies have adoption expertise and are trained to focus on adoption-related issues. Families whose adoption has finalized are eligible for case management, individual/family therapy, mentorship program and referrals for linkage services that can include childcare, physical and mental health care, developmental and Regional Center services, regular and special educational services, substitute adult role model, income support and transportation services. If you are in need of these services, please call PAS and request a referral to APSS. A PAS social worker will complete a referral form and submit it to the APSS program manager. To receive services, the child must be less than 18 years old; all therapy services require Medi-Cal.

## You're never too old to be adopted...

Here's what one teenager, adopted when he was 14 years old, had to say about being adopted\*:

"I have more freedom, as in I feel more like a human being and not like I am someone's property. Before I was adopted, I was the property of the state, and when you are property, you can only do so much. Just being adopted feels better."

\* Quote taken from the "You're Never Too Old – Teens Speak Out on Adoption" brochure created by The Center for Child & Family Studies @ Univ. of South Carolina.

## Old-but-still-valuable news

➤➤ Most children eligible for Medi-Cal are also eligible for dental coverage under the Medi-Cal Dental Program (“Denti-Cal”). Coverage can include routine dental care, preventative and restorative services, and orthodontia. If you would like your child evaluated for orthodontia, your child’s dentist must first determine if a referral to an orthodontist is appropriate. After an initial examination, the orthodontist would determine if your child’s orthodontia would be covered by Denti-Cal.

The Denti-Cal Beneficiary Services Customer Service phone number is (800) 322-6384. They can provide general program information and referrals to Denti-Cal dentists. The Medi-Cal Dental Program’s website is <http://www.denti-cal.dhs.ca.gov/default.htm>.

➤➤ Children who were in foster care and adopted after the age of 16, and whose adoption finalized after 01/01/2000, are eligible for services from the Emancipation/ILP Program. Such services could include high school graduation expenses; education-related and work-related costs; financial aid workshops; housing assistance; job placement & training; life skills training; reimbursement for some physical & mental health services costs that are not funded by Medi-Cal, including costs for classes or services related to parenting skills, nutrition, drug & alcohol use.

At times, some of these services & resources may not be available due to limited funding. The Emancipation Program receives a set budget every year from state and federal government sources. Please be aware that services & resources are distributed according to need and not as an entitlement. For more information, call the Emancipation Program at (213) 351-0100/0101 or see their website at [www.ilponline.org](http://www.ilponline.org).

➤➤ PAS continues to host and facilitate monthly support groups for adoptive parents throughout the county. We are excited to now support our Spanish-speaking parents in this venue! For details and information about dates and locations, or to be added to the mailing list, please call the PAS Intake Line at (800) 735-4984. Please note that groups are for parents only and no childcare is provided.

## Stories about how PAS has helped

Here’s a story about a baby boy who was adopted as an infant in the 1960’s... About twenty years after she relinquished her son for adoption, the birthmother contacted PAS. She received non-identifying information about her child’s adoptive family and signed a Consent for Contact form, which was placed in

the case file. About twenty years after that, the grown-up child contacted PAS asking for background information about his birthparents and adoption. The assigned PAS worker reviewed the case and discovered that since there had been contact from both parties, there was a possibility of a reunion between the adoptee and his birthmother. After the PAS worker sent him his background information, the adoptee told her that he was definitely interested in having contact with his birthmother.

A search was done and eventually the PAS worker made contact with the birthmother and had a very nice conversation with her. Birthmother related that over the years she had often thought of her son. She had always wanted the contact to come from him and was happy and excited about the prospect of having contact with him. Birthmother also shared that she had another son, whom she had always told about the child she relinquished.

The PAS worker called the adoptee and provided him with his birthmother’s information. They discussed his thoughts and feelings regarding how and when he wanted to contact her. The adoptee called his birth mother that very day, and they talked for about two hours. They both agreed that their first conversation went smoothly and lots of questions were answered. By the next day, they had e-mailed pictures to each other. The adoptee saw that he resembles his biological brother. The adoptee and birthmother live in two different states that are not far from each other, and they planned to get their families together for a reunion in a matter of months. The PAS worker felt this was a very successful reunion that filled the needs of both the adoptee and the birthmother.

## Post Adoption Services Team

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**\* PAS Intake Line: 800-735-4984 \***