

Los Angeles County DCFS Adoptions Division

Post Adoption Services (PAS)

Newsletter

WINTER 05/06

ISSUE #4

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

Did you know...?

- Your child may be eligible for an age-related increase in their AAP grant. Every child who is receiving AAP at the *basic* rate is eligible to receive an age-related increase when s/he reaches the following ages: 5, 9, 12, & 15. These increases are *not* automatic. You must submit your request in writing to your eligibility worker or by calling the foster care hotline at 1-800-697-4444.
- AAP is automatically terminated on your child's 18th birthday even if your child is still enrolled in high school. Your child's AAP benefits may be extended only if your child has a documented mental and/or physical disability for which s/he is receiving services from a licensed professional. If you think your child does qualify for an extension of his/her AAP benefits past their 18th birthday, please call the PAS intake line at 1-800-735-4984 to request an extension.
- If you live in California but outside of Los Angeles County, and you need information regarding health care providers, child psychiatrists, and/or mental health professionals who will accept your child's Medi-Cal insurance, please contact a representative from the *Value Options* program @ 1-800-236-0756 for a list of providers in your area.

A Story about how PAS has helped...

In 1993, a birthmother contacted the PAS unit and requested information about, and contact

“Don't hold back your feelings. If you feel like you want to be adopted, don't hold back because of what your peers might think. Do what you think is right for you and what's going to help you in life.”*

-T.S., adopted at 17

*Quote from “You're Never Too Old – Teens Speak Out on Adoption” by The Center for Child & Family Studies @ Univ. of South Carolina.

with, the daughter she relinquished for adoption in the 1970's. She was sixteen years old when she gave birth, and one of the many reasons she chose the plan of adoption was her hope that it would result in a better future for both of them. The CSW from PAS wrote a summary of all the non-

identifying background information contained in the case file about the family who adopted her daughter and mailed it to her. The birthmother also submitted a notarized *Consent for Contact* form, which was placed in the case file. Then in 2004, the birthmother again contacted PAS to submit her new address for our records. She was disappointed to learn that her daughter had still not contacted us. As luck would have, just six months later the adult adoptee (birthmother's daughter) called PAS and requested background information about her adoption and her birth parents. The adoptee hadn't even considered having contact with her birthmother. Since her birthmother gave her up for adoption, she assumed that her birthmother wouldn't want any contact with her. Much to her surprise, the PAS social worker told her that her birthmother was very

interested in meeting and in getting to know her. After much discussion with the adoptee about her thoughts and feelings, she decided to also submit a *Consent for Contact* form. This allowed the PAS worker to facilitate a reunion between them. Subsequently, the PAS worker called the birthmother and told her the news. She was shocked, and elated! The adoptee and birthmother e-mailed and called each other right away. Despite living in different states, they met in person within a couple months. Their first meeting included the adoptee, her husband and daughter, her adoptive parents, the birthmother, and the birth mother's father. The reunion was a success, and everyone was happy and grateful to have finally met.

DON'T FORGET

Just a reminder, PAS offers several monthly support groups for adoptive parents throughout Los Angeles County. These support groups are facilitated by experienced social workers and are comprised of adoptive parents just like you. We look forward to seeing you there. For more details about the current monthly adoptive parents' support groups, please call the PAS duty line @ (800) 735-4984. We will be happy to give you directions, information, and/or place you on a mailing list for the support group in your area.

We have support groups that meet:

- On the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm in Los Angeles.
- On the third Tuesday of every month at 10:00am in Lancaster.
- On the third Wednesday of every month at 7:00pm in Pasadena.
- On the second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the San Fernando Valley.
- On the second Wednesday of every month at 6:00pm in San Pedro. If you would like more information about this group, please contact CSW Clare Naughton at (213) 351-0255.
- A Spanish-speaking adoptive parents' support group will be forming in the near future. It will be located in Monterey Park. Please contact CSW Angelica Petitt @ (213) 351-0254 for more information.

NEWS FLASH

Was your child denied an AAP grant in the Alternative Residential Model (ARM) rate amount because your child's Regional Center informed you that they were not writing "ARM rate letters"? Regional Centers recently have agreed to provide ARM rate letters from December 15, 2005 through March 31, 2006. If your child is a Regional Center client and you requested an ARM rate level AAP grant for your child and were denied solely because your child's Regional Center would not provide an ARM rate letter, please call the PAS duty line and ask to have your case re-opened.* Your child may still be able to receive an ARM rate level AAP grant.

*If it has been less than 6 months since your child's adoption has finalized, please do NOT call the PAS duty line, please contact your former adoption's CSW.

Post Adoption Services Team

ARA: Esther Herrera

SCSW:

Selena McCurdy
Sonia Elmasry

Lorna Fibus

CSW:

Vergel De La Cruz
Margaret Lipton
Denise Lytle
Clare Naughton
Jennifer Nelson
Angelica Petitt
Adam Tunick

Myrna De La Cruz
Grace Hardgrove
Jennifer Henderson
Kay Ingram
Grace Kim
Barbara McDermott
G.W. Moore

Support staff:

Don Offor

Marie Mosley

**PAS INTAKE LINE:
1-800-735-4984**

This newsletter is accessible on the DCFS Internet website at <http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/> and on DCFS internal site: LAKids. If you would like to submit questions or see other information added to this newsletter, please e-mail Clare Naughton or Jennifer Henderson.