



CENTER FOR
CHILD & FAMILY
HEALTH

10th Annual Post-Adoption Parent Conference: Foundations for Wellness and Healing

As we continue to navigate a post-pandemic world, connect with other adoptive parents and learn from experts in the fields of adoption, childhood trauma, and wellness on how to support yourself, your children, and your family's growth and healing through grief, challenges, and change.

Conference Agenda & Registration

8:30 – 9:00	Registration & Refreshments
9:00 – 10:30	Welcome & Opening Remarks by Kate Murray
10:30 – 12:00	Workshop Presentations by Jessica Burch and Charlotte Elder <i>(Select one of two)</i>
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch <i>(provided)</i>
1:00 – 2:30	Workshop Presentations by Latanya DuBois and Sarah Lemay-Russel <i>(Select one of two)</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Closing Remarks by Kate Murray

WHEN:

Friday, February 16th 2024
8:30 AM-3:00 PM

WHERE:

McKimmon Center
1101 Gorman Street
Raleigh, NC 27606

Register Now!
Space is Limited.

Registration is free for eligible adoptive parents



Attendance is *free* for adoptive parents living in eligible counties,* but registration is required.

**Anson, Cumberland, Durham, Edgecombe, Franklin, Granville, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Nash, Richmond, Scotland, Vance, Wake, Warren, Wayne, Wilson counties.*

Register online:

https://duke.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3qnHZGTONwnHmnk

or contact Grace Stephenson at grace.stephenson@duke.edu





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Session Descriptions

Welcome and Opening Session by Kate Murray:

Please join us as our director, [Kate Murray, Ph.D.](#), provides a warm welcome and kicks off our tenth annual conference! Dr. Murray will speak on this year's theme, a holistic perspective on family wellness. As adoptive parents living in stressful times, you will hear about concrete strategies (or "stress busters") to cope with the challenges of parenting. By changing our relationship with stress, we can find ways to reclaim our health and wellness, and even access the rewarding aspects of parenting. This interactive session will provide you with the opportunity to reflect on your strengths and stressors, create an action plan, and engage in meaningful dialogue with other adoptive parents.

Morning Workshop A by Jessica Burch:

When Grieving Stops at Denial: An Argument for Facilitating Healthy Grieving within the Adoptive Family System to Mitigate Long Term Chronic Health Issues Across the Lifespan for Adoptees

While unprocessed trauma has long been recognized to have detrimental effects on mental and physical health, Ms. Burch is hoping to start the discussion of the ways unresolved grief and loss presents in adoptees and can also negatively impact the physical health outcomes of adoptees across the lifespan. Ms. Burch's goal is to help families recognize and respond appropriately to signs that a child may be grieving unspoken losses and provide a roadmap to facilitating family focused routines, rituals, and discussions to encourage healing in community with family and the ability to have new healthy attachments moving forward.

Jessica Burch is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who is also an adult transracial adoptee specializing in treatment and for children who have been impacted by traumatic experiences, out-of-home placement, attachment, and struggles with racial identity development. Ms. Burch currently works as an outpatient provider at Nourish; A Healing Place as an Outpatient Mental Health clinician and the Child Team lead supervisor. She has also provided clinical consultation for other clinicians in training with the NC-CTP's Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Collaborative from 2019 to 2023.

Morning Workshop B by Charlotte Elder:

Pockets of Peace: Creating Space for Self Care

It is important for caregivers of children of all ages to find ways to self-care. When you add in traumatic experiences, disrupted attachment, special needs, and take away access to traditional supports, finding ways to self care can often bring its own stress and provide minimal relief. This workshop will be a space to explore practical application of how to incorporate self care and increase well-being in a life that doesn't seem to have space to hold one more thing, even if it's a good thing. From mountain dew to overnight care, you will explore ways big and small to add joy and rejuvenation to your everyday lives.

Charlotte Elder began her journey in the foster care/adoption world as a bilingual early childhood mental health and trauma therapist at UCLA in California. After seeing how many young children were placed with aging caregivers, she moved back home to the East Coast and began her fostering journey in 2012 at the age of 30, fostering over 52 children (birth to 18), eventually adopting 3 children in 2018. Between 2007 and 2016 she combined her academic and personal experiences to provide consultation and support all over the world: college students in the US, parents and providers in Egypt, and direct care orphanage staff in Nicaragua and Honduras. When her own child was diagnosed with special needs in 2016, she shifted her focus to navigating special needs as a caregiver instead of a provider. In 2018 she started an informal support group for foster and adoptive families both in her home and online (post pandemic), and she is currently a mentor for foster and adoptive families in the community.

Afternoon Workshop A by Latanya DuBois:

8 Dimensions of You: A Parents Perspective on Prioritizing Wellness

This 90 minute interactive session will explore and enlighten parents in the areas of parents life that need more attention. As a parent who has experienced many different types of parenting, I realized to be a present parent we must first understand our own needs. Many of us are in the routine of daily responsibilities and overlook small details in our life that have a major impact on our ability to parent the way we want and the way our children need. We will use games and discussion to explore ways to increase our ability to be present in our parenting style while making sure we are well, mind, body and soul. The intention is to walk away with a fresh look on how you will be more present for you while supporting and loving your children. I look forward to meeting you there!

Mrs. Latanya DuBois and her wife of almost 25 years, Tawana, have experienced the parent spectrum. Latanya has been a bio mom, stepmom (bonus mom), god mom, grand mom, foster mom and adoptive mom. During this parenting journey they have created the WTSO (working this stuff out) method that has been instrumental in helping them be true to self while supporting their children. They have 7 children between them and have a wealth of children who see them as maternal figures in their family. Fully aware that no parent is perfect they have offered several programs and services to youth and their parents by way of personal and professional experiences.

Afternoon Workshop B by Sarah LeMay-Russel:

Sleeping and Eating: Helping your Child Meet Their Basic Needs Dr. Sarah LeMay-Russel

This session will focus on providing tools for helping your child meet their basic needs of sleeping and eating successfully. All humans must engage in both of these activities daily, yet they are often incredibly difficult tasks, especially for individuals with disrupted attachment and/or difficulty self-regulating. In this session we will discuss how to help your child regulate successfully so they are able to eat and sleep in ways that best nourish and support their growing bodies. We will also discuss how to know when to seek additional professional help and provide resources for doing so.

Dr. Sarah LeMay-Russel is a licensed clinical psychologist and assistant professor at the University of North Carolina's Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders. Sarah has an extensive background working with children, adolescents, and young adults, and was trained at Children's National Medical Center, the National Institutes of Health, and Duke University with specialties in eating and sleep concerns. She is passionate about providing excellent, equitable, culturally appropriate, trauma informed care. Sarah is also an adoptive mother and is passionate about equipping fellow adoptive families in creating warm, happy, fun, and stable environments that allow the family unit to thrive.

Register online:

https://duke.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3qnHZGTONwnHmnk

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