

Director's Cut

Welcome Adoptive Parents,

Aaah, Spring is in the air!! It's that time of the year to go to the park and play Frisbee or catch. Time to invite family and friends over for cookouts and other family get-togethers. It's also the perfect time to add to your family through adoption! Many of our children are looking for that special someone to spend time with them doing just those things! As the commercial goes, *"You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent!"*

If you are considering adoption, please go to either our website, yfaadoptions.com and look under Adoption Services and click onto adoption chronicles or go to Kids Central's website, kidscentralinc.org and click on the *"adoption and family centered practice"* tab and then scroll down to adoption chronicles. The Adoption Chronicles is where you will find video's of our children available for adoption.

However, when you are looking through the children available, please pay close attention to which children have siblings. Our philosophy is that the sibling bond is seldom outweighed by expedient permanency. I'm not sure how you feel, but I could never in a million years imagine being adopted by one family while my brothers were adopted by another. Although no one would ever mistake my family for the Brady Bunch or my parents as June and Ward Cleaver or Cliff and Clair Huxtable, that was my family. If for any reason that my parents would not be able to care for me and my siblings it would have been tragic, but to then be separated from my siblings it would have been unbearable for me. Even though we got along like cats and dogs, they were my siblings and I couldn't imagine not growing up with them. Granted, there are those exceptions, but they are few and far between. For this reason, we ask that you pay special and close attention to which children have siblings and that you look at all siblings before falling in love with any of them. Our goal is to get our children adopted as a sibling group and not separately.

Again, thank you for considering adoption.

Glenn Henson
Director of Adoptions for Circuit 5
Youth and Family Alternatives

SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

At best, this job is challenging. We often have to remind ourselves what keeps us coming back every day. This story is one of those instances that reminds us why we do the job we do and who we are really working for.

Jaquail entered the foster care system when he was only a few months old. Jaquail has several medical issues that require him to be in medical foster care. Joanne and David have had

Written By: Rebecca Hager

Jaquail in their home since he was placed in medical foster care. They are the only parents he has ever known; Jaquail has been there for 10 years of his young life.

Joanne and David worked with Kim W., the Adoption Case Management Coordinator, in regards to recruiting for a family for Jaquail. Kim W. felt all along that Joanne and David would be the best fit for Jaquail

as he had been with them since infancy and this was the only family he knew.

About a year ago, Medical Foster Care considered stepping Jaquail down from their services which would have resulted in him being placed into another home. Kim W. spoke with Joanne and David regarding this. Joanne and David, for the first time, had considered what it would mean to lose Jaquail. Kim W. also helped

Shining Stars

Meet Rodelin and Moise (6 years old and 10 years old respectively) who are originally from Haiti! Moise is the older of the two boys and likes to be called "Moses" because "he is in the Bible". Moise is the Creole name for Moses. Moses has a great sense of humor and like a lot of kids, he likes to act older than he really is at times. He is a fish in water and loves to swim and be active. Both boys will do flips for a plate of chicken

and rice. Rodelin speaks Creole more fluently than English. He loves to perform and sing for others. One of his favorite songs to sing in Creole is "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." Although these boys are not biologically related, they are extremely attached to one another. They need a nurturing and supportive family who will help them appreciate their culture of origin. For more information contact Kristin Folts at 352-547-3750 or at Kristin.Folts@kidscentralinc.org



Rodelin and Moise



Jessica and Sarah

Sarah and Jessica are a delightful sibling group that are very close to each other. They would like a family that is open to them continuing a relationship with their other siblings who have been adopted previously. Sarah is a quiet young lady who likes to socialize with her friends and has great plans for her future. Sarah is confident that she would like to become apart of a forever family before she turns eighteen and is committed to making the transition

into her family a successful experience. Jessica is a free spirit and brings life to any situation. She is also creative and is very close with her siblings. Both girls would do well with a family who is open to their varied opinions about life and will thrive in an environment in which they can spread their wings under the support and watch of their forever family. For more information contact Kristin Folts at 352-547-3750 or at

TRAININGS AND RESOURCES

Do you know someone interested in making a commitment to a special needs child? Someone interested in providing a stable and loving home to a child in need? If you answered yes to either of these questions please pass along YFA's **Adoption Orientation Dates**.

Marion County

May 16th, June 20th and July 18th

Orientation begins at 6 pm

1017 NE14th Street

Ocala, FL. 34470.

Please call 352-547-3750 for more information and to RSVP

Lake County

May 17th July 18th

Sumter County

June 21st August 16th

For the Lake and Sumter County Orientations please call 352-253-5625 for the locations and registration.

Thank you to **Dave Coppula**, Operations and Training Specialist, for his hard work and dedication to children. His last day with YFA will be April 20th. The YFA family wishes him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

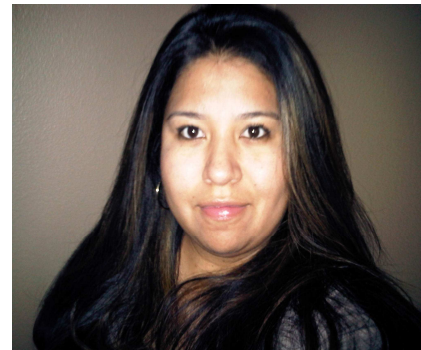


EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Congrats to **Elizabeth “Liz” Torres**, Adoption Case Manager in Lake County. Over the past 16 months with Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc., and even prior to that, Liz has continuously gone above and beyond the call of duty for her children, families and co-workers. It is said that those children assigned to Liz not only have birth parents, foster and /or adoptive parents, they also have a parent in Elizabeth. She is extremely invested in her clients and goes out of her way to make sure they receive the assistance and resources they require.

She strongly believes in the adoption process and does whatever is best for her clients. She has all the documentation to back up her

claims and will go to great lengths in finding the perfect family for her children and explaining why that family is the best choice for her child. Liz is not just the child’s case manager, she is a friend, a mentor and, as stated earlier, a parental figure. She is there to encourage her children to do their best but will also scowl them for misbehaving. And because the children both love and respect her, that frown is worse than any discipline. Although she truly and deeply cares for her children, it is also known that Liz will do anything in her power to assist an overwhelmed team member. Whether it’s transporting a sibling group of 3 from Tampa International Airport to their homes in two or three separate counties late Friday evening to stepping in at last minute to assist in training MAPP, employees know they can count on Liz. As for knowing the



adoption process, there are few that possess the knowledge and skills that she has and she is the go-to person if there are questions on adoption. And again, just like her children, Liz expects her fellow team mates to have the same high standards that she holds herself to.

Over the last 16 months, it has been a pleasure working with you, Elizabeth Torres. Thank you for all that you do.



Post Adoption

By LoriAnn Floramo, MSW

Why is it that psychiatrist’s are quick to label a child’s behaviors with fancy acronyms yet slow in educating parents on how to parent this child? Much too often we find children with labels of Bi-polar, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct disorder and the ever daunting and mysterious Reactive Attachment Disorder. Each one of these disorders comes with a different presentation of behaviors and different ways to handle them at home or school.

For the purpose of this article Oppositional Defiant Disorder or ODD will be addressed. ODD presents as a constellation of behaviors that can include but are not limited to:

- Frequent temper tantrums
- Excessive arguing with adults
- Often questioning rules
- Active defiance and refusal to comply with adult
- Deliberate attempts to annoy or upset people
- Blaming others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior
- Often being touchy or easily annoyed by others
- Frequent anger and resentment
- Mean and hateful talking when upset
- Spiteful attitude and revenge seeking

Here are some strategies you can use to help handle the those behaviors:

- Always build on the positives, give the child praise and positive reinforcement when showing flexibility or cooperation.
- Take a time-out or break if you are about to make the conflict with your child worse, not better. This is good modeling for your child. Support your child if he decides to take a time-out to prevent overreacting.
- Pick your battles. Since the child with ODD has trouble avoiding power struggles, prioritize the things you want your child to do. If you give your child a time-out in his room for misbehavior, don’t add time for arguing. Say “your time will start when you go to your room.”
- Set up reasonable, age appropriate limits with consequences that can be enforced consistently. Natural consequences appear to work best with a child with ODD.
- Maintain interests other than your child with ODD, so that managing your child doesn’t take all your time and energy. Try to work with and obtain support from the other adults (teachers, coaches, and spouse) dealing with your child.
- Manage your own stress with healthy life choices such as exercise and relaxation. Use respite care and other breaks as needed





Spotlight on Success

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the family to see that although they had provided a stable home for Jaquail, it was not a permanent home. Recognizing their love for Jaquail and their want to provide him with a forever home, Joanne and David decided to pursue adopting Jaquail. This decision was the result of two amazing things; the realization of Joanne and David that Jaquail had not gained permanency and the thorough and efficient case work of Kim W. Had Kim W. not worked with the family in regards to adoption there

was a good possibility Jaquail would have been removed from the only home he knew. Kim W. does not view the children on her caseload as that; she views them as her children. Because of her due diligence, Jaquail will receive permanency through adoption with his "mom and dad." It is because of families and children like this that we continue to do this challenging, yet rewarding job.

Peer to Peer Adoption Support Groups

Groups in Sumter County and teen groups are on an as needed basis. Please call the number below for assistance.*

**** Group is subject to participants RSVP's****

Lake County:

Location:

First United Methodist Church of Tavares
600 W. Ianthe St
Tavares, FL 32778

When:

Fourth Monday of each Month

Hernando County:

Location:

First United Methodist Church of Spring Hill
9344 Spring Hill Drive
Spring Hill, FL 34608

When:

Second Monday of each Month

Marion County:

Location:

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
10670 S.E. Maricamp Road
Ocala, FL 34472

When:

Second Thursday of each Month

Citrus County:

Location:

First United Methodist Church of Inverness
3896 S Pleasant Grove Rd
Inverness, FL 34452

When:

First Monday of each Month

To RSVP:

LoriAnn Floramo
352-547-3750



Youth and Family Alternatives, Inc. Locations

Corporate Office:

7524 Plathe Road
New Port Richey, FL 34653
(727) 835-4166

Marion County Office:

1017 NE 14th Street
Ocala, FL 34470
(352) 547-3750

Hernando/Citrus Office:

19245 Cortez Blvd
Brooksville, FL 34601
(352) 277-5860

Lake/Sumter County Office:

880 Duncan Drive
Tavares, FL 32778
(352) 253-5625