



Foster Care Resource Handbook

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Articles on Foster Care

Still deciding if becoming a foster parent is right for you and your family? Check out these articles; all of which give an honest and open view on becoming a foster parent

[10 Signs You Are Ready to be a Foster Parent](#)

[5 Misconceptions of Foster Care](#)

[A to Z Things You Need to Know Before Fostering](#)

[Adding Foster Children to Your Family: How Will Your Kids Take It?](#)

[Becoming a Foster Parent: How to Make it Work](#)

[Can I foster? Things Every Foster Parent Should Know](#)

[Dear Foster Curious](#)

[First Time Foster Mom Experience](#)

[From Infertility to Foster Care- Why This Mama Painted Her World Green](#)

[Foster Care HAS Affected My Biological Child](#)

Below are some great articles for preparing for a foster child and what you need to know and plan for

[10 Things You Can Do Now to Be Ready to Do Foster Care Later](#)

[Clothing Tips for Foster Parents](#)

[Essential Items for Fostering](#)

[Foster Bedroom Design Ideas](#)

[Questions to Ask Before Taking in a Foster Child](#)

[Setting up a Bedroom for Foster Care](#)

[What to Expect In the First 30 Days of Your New Foster Placement](#)

Articles on once a child is placed in your home and things you should be mindful of

[14 Ways to Be a Good Foster Parent](#)

[8 Phrases Foster & Adopted Children Need to Hear](#)

[Adjusting to a New Foster Care Placement: Trauma and Troubles](#)

[Feeding Your Foster Child](#)

[The Alphabet Soup of Foster Care Acronyms](#)

[The First Night in Foster Care: What You Need to Know](#)

Articles on how to work with a foster child's birth family

[5 Keys to Building Successful Relationships With Birth Parents](#)

[How can foster parents and birth parents successfully co-parent?](#)

[How to Connect with Your Foster Child's Birth Mom- 10 Tips](#)

[Making Birth Family Visits Successful for Your Foster Child](#)

[When Foster Families Meet Birth Families](#)

When it's time to say goodbye: articles that deal with foster children and when it's time for the children to return home.

[10 Things to do When a Foster Child is Returning Home](#)

[Saying Goodbye 8 Times: Life as a Foster Mom](#)

[Saying Goodbye to the Foster Child I Fell in Love With](#)

[What It's Like When a Foster Family Says Goodbye](#)

[Why It's Worth it to Pour Yourself into a Foster Child Even Though It Hurts Like Crazy When They Leave](#)

Local and National Foster Parent Associations

Davidson County Foster Care Association: DCFCA is a nonprofit association serving families in the Davidson county area. This association meets monthly and is committed to the care and improvement of the lives of children.

Contact: Rachel Goulet
Phone: (931) 683-2322
Email: dcfassociation@gmail.com
Website: [Davidson County FPA Website](#)

Rutherford County Foster Parent Association: The Rutherford County Foster Parent Association's mission is to provide foster children, as they enter custody, with age and gender appropriate personal hygiene items, school related supplies and clothes as needed through the Shepherd's Supply Closet and their community partners. They hold monthly meetings within the county providing training for foster parents and free childcare for children.

Contact: Ruth Meyer
Phone: (615) 418-2088
Email: ruthammeyer@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.rcfpa.net>
Facebook: [Click Here](#)

Dickson County Foster Care Association: The Dickson County Foster Parent Association...

Contact: Teresa Hadden
Phone: (615) 584-4148
Email: hadden925@gmail.com

Clarksville Foster Care Association:

Contact: Mickey Grubbs
Email: investinthekids@gmail.com

Wilson County Foster Parent Association: The Wilson County Foster Parent Association serves families within the Wilson county area through meetings, support and training.

Contact: Fairview Church- Beth Goolesby
Phone: (615) 444-0111

Robertson County Foster Parent Association: The mission of this non-profit association is to support foster families in the area. They offer advice, emotional support, advocacy and respite care. In addition, they also provide trainings for foster families.

Phone: (615) 828-4768
Facebook: [Click Here](#)

Tennessee Foster Adoptive Care Association: TFACA is a non-profit organization that functions as an advocacy support group for foster parents throughout the state of Tennessee. Membership is open to all foster or adoptive parents, employees of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services and citizens concerned about the well-being of foster and adoptive parents and children.

Phone: (615) 405-4692
Email: tnfostercare.inc@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.tfaca.net/>
Facebook: [Click Here](#)

National Foster Parent Association: NFPA is a non-profit organization established in 1972. The purpose of this organization is to support foster parents in achieving safety, permanence and well-being for the children and youth in their care.

Phone: (800) 557-5238
Email: info@nfpaonline.org
Website: <http://nfpaonline.org/>
Facebook: [Click Here](#)

Foster Parent Podcasts

Confessions of an Adoptive Parent: Hosted by Mike & Kristin Berry, this podcast explores different topics for foster and adoptive parents in order to help them find support and validation. [Click Here](#)

Foster Parenting Podcast: Join T and W as they discuss foster care with humor, insights and Christian faith. Get your questions answered about foster care and foster to adopt system while following T and W's journey through the process. [Click Here](#)

The Adoption and Fostering Podcast: Hosted by Scott Casson Rennie and Al Coates, this podcast opens conversation and dialog regarding contemporary adoption and fostering. [Click Here](#)

Fostering with Love: Hosted by Dan Absalonson, this podcast uncovers the ups and downs of fostering as his family goes through the process. [Click Here](#)

Foster Adoption Podcast: The Foster Adoption Podcast is a resource for people who are interested in growing their family by adopting children from foster care. [Click Here](#)

The Honestly Adoption Podcast: This podcast shares various topics and points of view encompassing fostering and adoption. [Click Here](#)

Add Water and Stir: Women of Color (Adoption and Foster Care Parenting): This Podcast focuses on promoting adoption within communities of color, especially within the African American Community. [Click Here](#)

The Foster Parents: Hosted by Ben and Deb Pugh, this podcast gives tips, tools and parenting advice to foster and adoptive families. [Click Here](#)

Nothing's Ever Permanent in Foster Care: Hosted by rookie reporter: Michael Jacobson, this podcast describes his life in the system. This podcast is for teenagers and gives insight into what it is like growing up in the foster care system. [Click Here](#)

Life After Foster Care: As a child, Ashley Rhodes-Courter spent 10 years in the foster care system. She and her husband went on to become foster parents themselves, and her latest memoir explores life on both sides of the system. [Click Here](#)

Facebook Resources and Groups

Adoption Support and Encouragement for Moms: This group provides a safe place for foster families to share the hills and valleys of the adoption journey and to be an encouragement to one another. [Click Here](#)

Tennessee Foster Parents: A Facebook group for residents of Tennessee, this group is a place of support, encouragement and sharing. [Click Here](#)

Humans of Foster Care: This Facebook site shares stories of foster children, foster parents, caseworkers, policemen, detectives and bio parents. [Click Here](#)

The Foster Parent Toolbox: A compilation of resources and information to those parenting children in Foster Care or for those working on the child's team. [Click Here](#)

Foster Your Heart Out: Follow one family's journey of fostering and adoption. This family shares a candid look of the ups and downs of fostering. [Click Here](#)

Stacy Manning, Adoptive & Foster Parenting Expert: This Facebook page is for any family whether DNA related or not. This page aims to support and encourage adoptive, foster, biological, kinship, step and grandparents. [Click Here](#)

Be Strong Foster Parents: Strengthening families from the inside out, this Facebook page provides a place to help foster families thrive and be strong. [Click Here](#)

Confessions of an Adoptive Parent: A Facebook page that exists to help weary foster and adoptive parents regain hope and feel supported. [Click Here](#)

Foster2Forever: A Facebook page designed to support the well-being and faith of foster families and those families who are hoping to adopt through foster care. [Click Here](#)

Tilt Parenting: A Facebook page supporting parents raising differently-wired kids. The purpose of this page is to help build confidence, connection and peace for children as well as parents. [Click Here](#)

Parents of Foster Care: This Facebook page shares the reality of foster parenting and the joys and struggles that come with it. [Click Here](#)

Foster Care & Adoption: This Facebook page is designing as a resource for Foster Parents to be able to ask questions, seek insight and find methods for dealing with behaviors associated with foster care, adoption and parenting. [Click Here](#)

FosterAdopt Connect: This page specializes in solving problems for kids and families involved in and affected by the child welfare system in a variety of ways. [Click Here](#)

Great Apps for Foster Parents

Cozi (iOS/Android, Free): Want an app that helps keep you organized? This app is a great way to keep track of the appointments; for anyone in the household! It also has the option to create user friendly lists (whether shopping or to do's!).

Sunrise (iOS/Android, Free): If you are the person who has multiple calendars (i.e. Outlook at Work, Cozi, calendar on your phone); this is a great app that can sync all of them together in one spot! Another benefit? You can use it easily to schedule with others and send them a meeting reminder!

Google Voice (iOS/Android, Free): This is a free app that allows you to have a separate/anonymous phone number to be used for birth family contact if you prefer. You can schedule Do Not Disturb times or just turn it on and off to keep from getting calls outside of appointed times.

Tiny Scanner (iOS/Android, Free*): Need to scan something but don't have a scanner at home? This app allows you to do just that! This app produces high quality PDF's that you can email right from the app. This is perfect for reports, receipts, school excuse notes, etc.

*The free version has some limitations on its features. You may find it worth the few dollars for the full version.

Outlook/One Drive (iOS/Android, Free): This app allows you to keep your family's digital lives organized. You can create folders for everything- behavior reports, financial reports, receipts, etc.- and attach items to emails from the app. Very user friendly.

Podcasts (iOS*/Free): Podcasts are a great way to listen to invaluable and inspiring information on any topic. There are some great foster care and adoption podcasts available which are worth listening to. While Apple's Podcasts app isn't on Android, there are plenty of podcast service apps available for Android devices as well.

Preparing the Family and Home for Placements

When a family decides to open their home to a placement there are many questions that arise. Here are some questions to get you thinking about the rewarding process of opening your home. Have all the family members answer the questions separately and come together to discuss the answers.

1. Does your family have a flexible schedule?
2. Many homes have very productive and full lives, but what happens when a kink is thrown in, how does that affect your family.
3. Who is the paperwork person in the family? How do they feel about taking on the documentation that is involved in caring for a child who is a ward of the state?
4. Does one parent take on more of the physical burdens, such as laundry, cleaning and other house maintenance and how do they feel about that increasing?
5. How do you feel if you see another family member under stress? Such as the other parent, and birth children.
6. How does your family handle stress? Do you talk about it, ignore it, or just move past it?
7. Does your family have meetings?
8. What aspects of your family are you most proud of?
9. Who can the family call if they need support?
10. Have you talked to friends and family about where they feel your strengths and weakness are when opening your home?

Preparing the Family and Home for Placements- Answer Guide

1. Does your family have a flexible schedule?

Being flexible is key to an easier transition for all involved. When children enter the home, they are entering a whole new environment and will not be used to your family's schedule. It's important to note that children may come from various backgrounds where there may either be a lot of structure or they are used to very little to no structure. Being able to accommodate a new person coming into the home can be harder if a family has not prepared themselves for the changes. Where might your family need to be more flexible? Where might your family need more structure?

2. Many homes have very productive and full lives. What happens when something unexpected happens? How does it affect your family?

Regardless of whether or not you foster, unexpected things happen in all of our lives. Think back to a time where someone in your family may have had a car problem, or someone in the family got sick. How well did the family handle those situations? What adjustments were needed and made to ensure life could go back to normal once the issues were resolved? Where can your family improve? How did everyone manage the expectations that were placed on them?

3. Who is the paperwork person in the family? How do they feel about taking on the documentation that is involved in caring for a child who is a ward of the state?

Over time, many families find that they fall into a pattern of routine. One partner may find they prefer to take care of the paperwork more than the other. When becoming a foster parent, there will be increased paperwork that your family will be responsible for. It is important to discuss who will handle that responsibility and how your family plans to keep organized and up to date with all necessary paperwork that comes with foster care. If a family has a single person as head of the family, do they have the tools and support to help them manage the added documentation?

4. Does one parent take on more of the physical burdens (i.e. laundry, cleaning and other house maintenance?) How will they be affected?

As mentioned previously, it is possible that the family structure may need to change in order to accommodate more members. This is a good time to talk about what tasks and daily chores each family member enjoys as well as which ones they dislike. It is also a good time to talk about who will step in when things do not go as planned. Example: If one person normally does the laundry, but they become the support for a foster youth and no longer has the time to do laundry, how will the family feel about increasing their chores to help?

5. How do you feel if you see another family member under stress? What tactics do you use to support one another?

Changes in a home can cause stress to each family member. A common hidden stressor with foster care can be watching others in the family become more selfless than previously expected. When deciding to become a Foster Home, many families take into account how they will feel about sharing their time, space and energy with someone new. What is often not taken into account, however, is watching a loved one being pulled into a different role and how the rest of the family may feel about that. It's common for families to feel protective and wanting to remove emotional burdens from the others around them, but feeling powerless to help. Have conversations about what you notice about your family members when they are stressed. In what ways does

each person want to be supported? Learning how to communicate now will be helpful when new changes arise.

6. How does your family handle stress? Typically, is stress ignored, talked about, or something that is dealt with individually to move past it?

Talking about stress can be difficult. Explore examples of ways your family does a good job at expressing and handling stress. An important step in this process is to pinpoint the stresses that are currently affecting the family. Examples of stresses might be: work, school, family obligations and other community groups. Remember to include people and activities that also bring you joy, but still require energy.

7. Does your family have meetings? If not, how could family meetings be an asset once your family is approved for foster care?

Family meetings are very important. If your family does not yet hold regular family meetings, now is a great time to start before any new members join your family. Discuss how the house is running, upcoming events and expectations. Go over family rules and goals but keep the list short on what the family is trying to master. Once a goal is accomplished, celebrate and discuss how it was made possible. Each person in the family should contribute to the meeting and feel heard.

8. What aspects of your family are you most proud of?

Each family has unique strengths as a result of working as a team. Honor those by listing and celebrating what others that come into your house will find to be true. Do you value family time? Laughing together? Supporting one another? Do you celebrate your culture? What are your traditions?

9. What does your family support look like? Who would you typically reach out to for help?

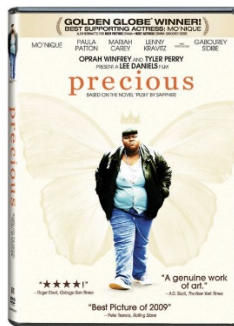
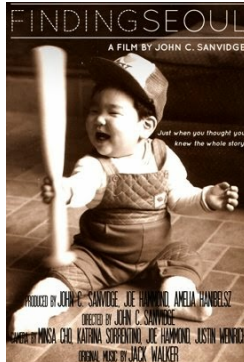
It's important to discuss as a group who helps the household. Who can others turn to if they need help outside of the family? Most successful foster families have people that they can call on who live outside the home. Asking for help is a valuable strength. If you have not done so already, pinpoint who your family has a support and include them as your family prepares to foster.

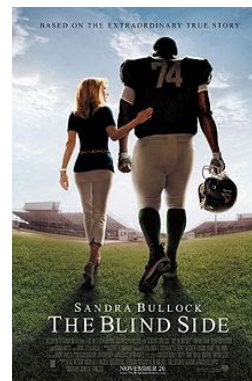
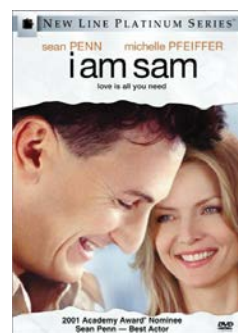
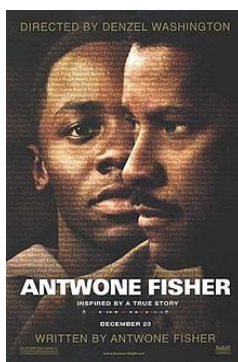
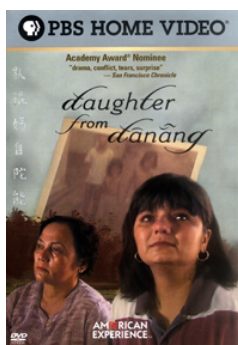
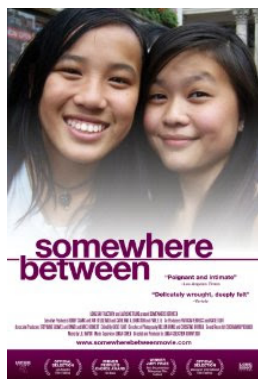
10. What do you think your family's strengths and challenges are when it will come to fostering a child?

It is not uncommon for families to find that their friends and family question and doubt their desire to foster. It is important to make sure you listen to what others are saying and make sure you feel comfortable in your response. If you find several concerned family and friends asking about how your family will deal with loss, it may be good to explore as a family how well you have dealt with loss of a loved one in the past. The questions and doubts may seem endless from some, but remember you have expressed a want to help. Talk about your strengths and weaknesses in a way that will empower your family to create an amazing experience that will result in changing a young person's life. Make sure to keep your discussion balanced and how there will be both rewarding and tough times ahead.

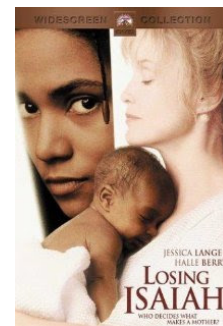
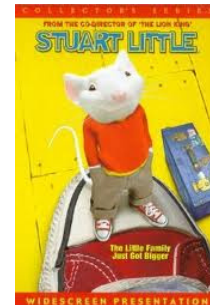
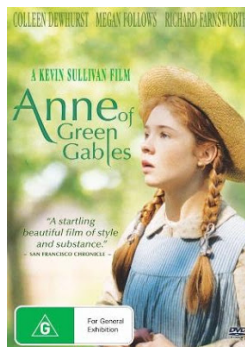
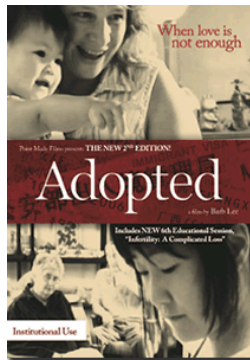
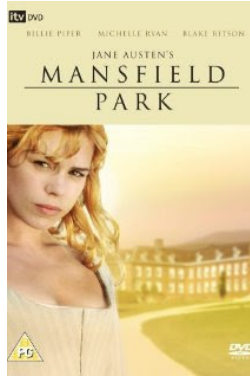
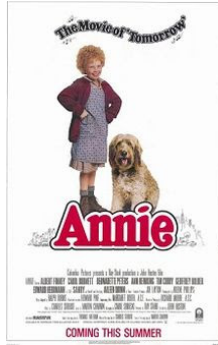
TV Shows & Movies Centered Around Foster Care

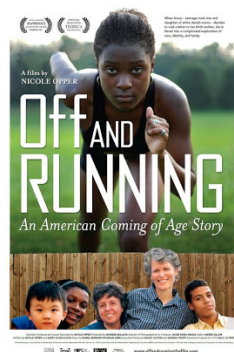
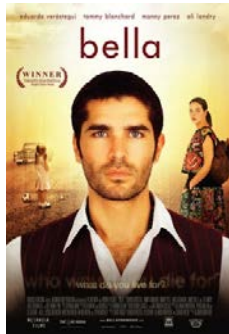
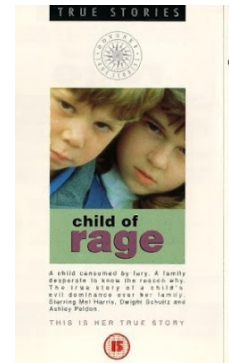
Below is a list of TV Shows and Movies that center around Foster Care. These range from informative to entertaining children's shows.





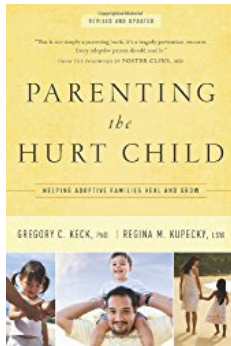
THIS HOLIDAY DISCOVER YOUR INNER ELF





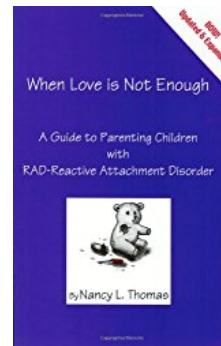
Books to Read

Books About Healing Childhood Trauma, Parenting Adopted Children, and Child Abuse



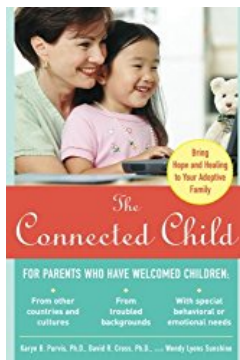
Parenting the Hurt Child

By: Gregory Keck



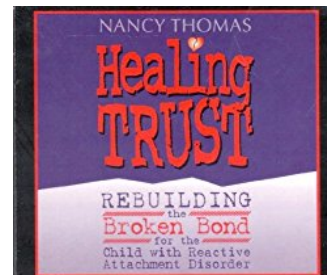
When Love Is Not Enough

By: Nancy Thomas



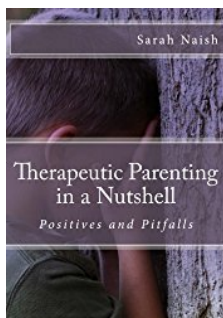
The Connected Child

By: Dr. Karin Purvis



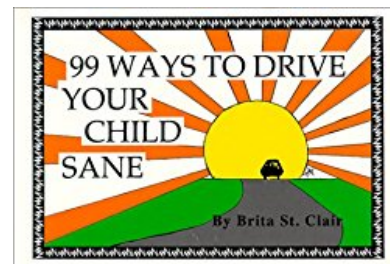
Healing Trust: Rebuilding the Broken Bond

By: Nancy Thomas



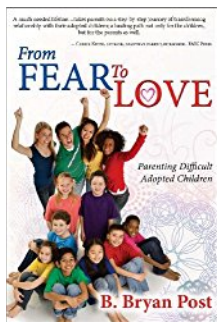
Therapeutic Parenting in a Nutshell

By: Sarah Naish



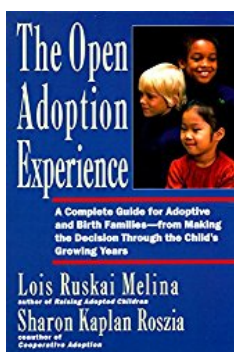
99 Ways to Drive Your Child Sane

By: Brita St. Clair



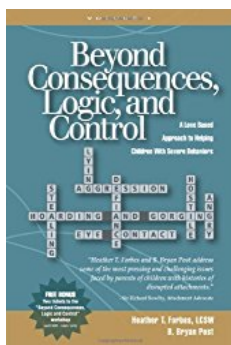
From Fear to Love

By: Bryan Post



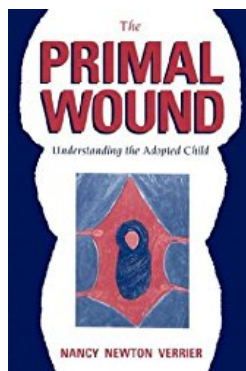
The Open Adoption Experience

By: Lois Ruskai Melina & Sharon Kaplan Roszia



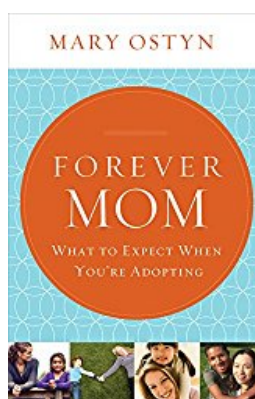
Beyond Consequence

By: Heather Forbes & Bryan Post



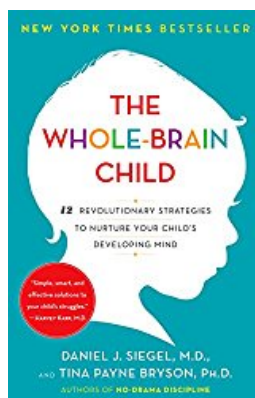
The Primal Wound

By: Nancy Newton Verrier



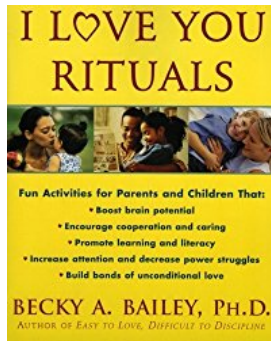
Forever Mom: What to Expect When You're Adopting

By: Mary Ostyn



The Whole Brain Child

By: Dan Siegel



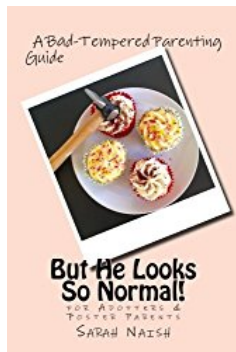
I Love You Rituals

By: Becky A. Bailey, Ph.D



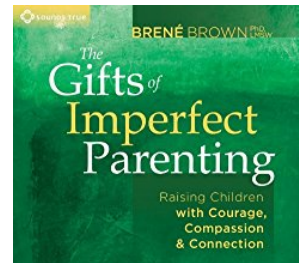
Attachment, Trauma and Healing

By: Terry Levy



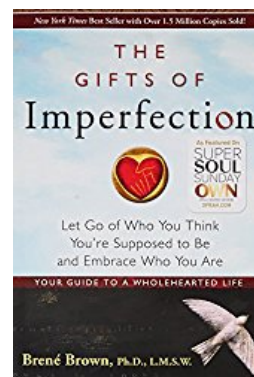
But He Looks So Normal: A Bad Tempered Parenting Guide for Foster Parents and Adopters

By: Sarah Naish



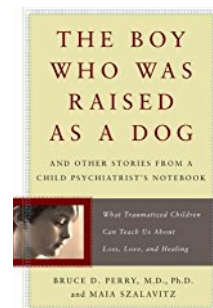
The Gifts of Imperfect Parenting: Raising Children with Courage, Compassion & Connection

By: Brene Brown



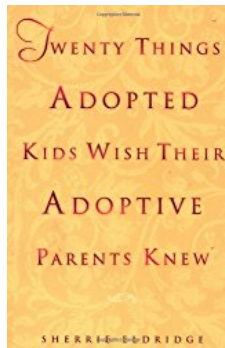
The Girts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are

By: Brene Brown



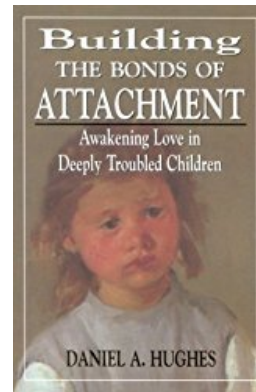
The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog

By: Bruce Perry



Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parent Knew

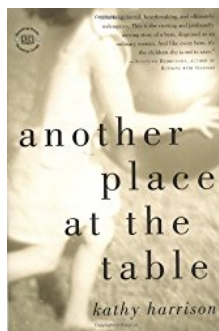
By: Sherrie Eldridge



Building the Bonds of Attachment

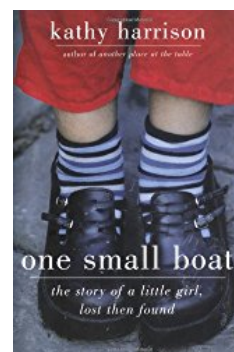
By: Daniel A. Hughes

Books About Foster Care



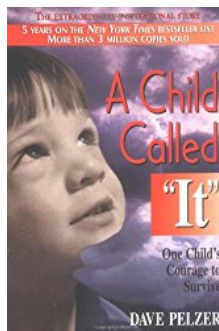
Another Place at the Table

By: Kathy Harrison



One Small Boat

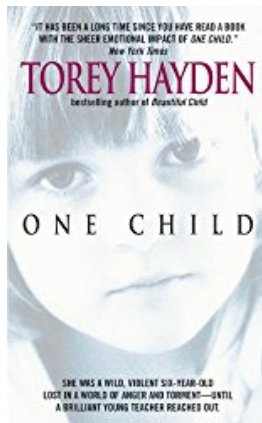
By: Kathy Harrison



A Child Called "It"

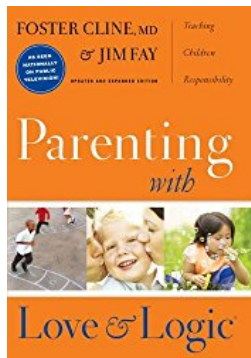
By: Dave Pelzer

Other Helpful Books and Resources



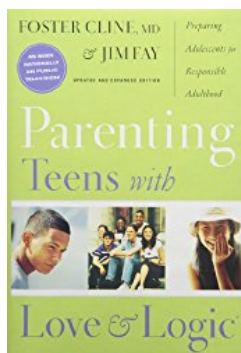
One Child

By: Torey Hayden



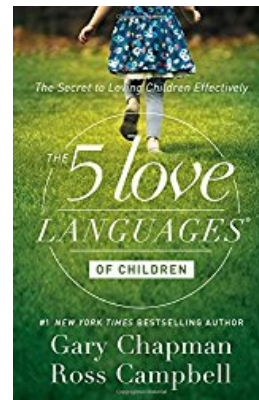
Parenting with Love and Logic

By: Foster Cline, MD & Jim Fay



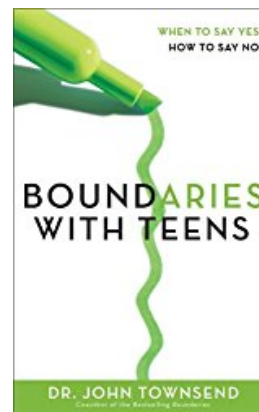
Parenting Teens with Love and Logic

By: Foster Cline, MD & Jim Fay



The 5 Love Languages

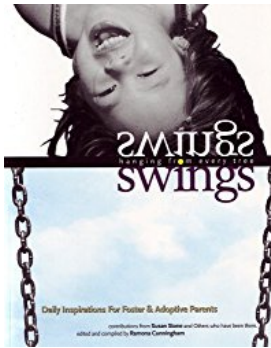
By: Gary Chapman & Ross Campbell



Boundaries with Teens

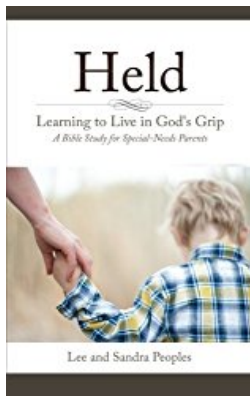
By: Dr. John Townsend

Faith-Based Books on Foster Care



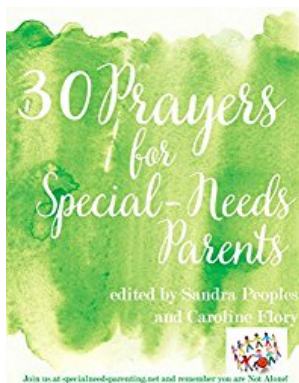
Swings Hanging from Every Tree

By: Susan Stone



Held: Learning to Live in God's Grip

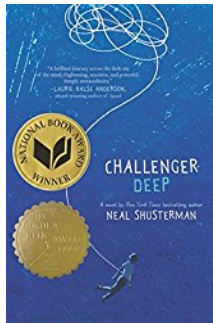
By: Lee & Sandra Peoples



30 Prayers for Special Needs Parents

By: Sandra Peoples & Caroline Flory

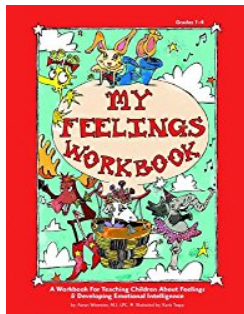
Children's Books



Challenger Deep

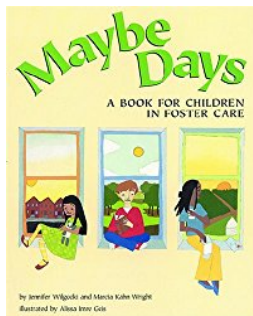
(Young Adult Novel About Mental Health Issues)

By: Neal Shusterman



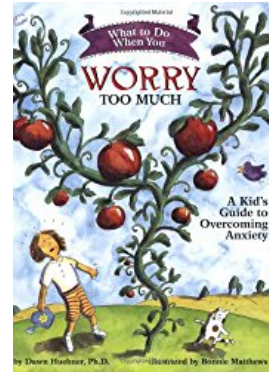
My Feelings Workbook

By: Aaron Wiemeier



Maybe Days: A Book for Children in Foster Care

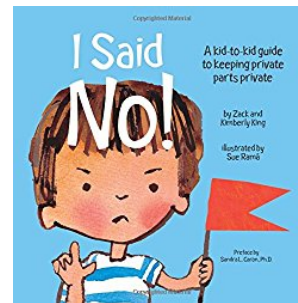
By: Jennifer Wilgocki & Marcia Kahn Wright



What to Do When You Worry Too Much

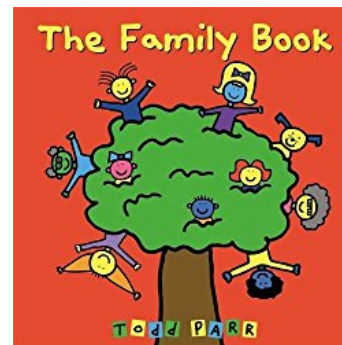
(A Book for Children Who Have Anxiety)

By: Dawn Huebner



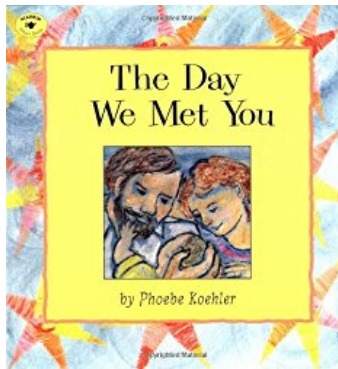
I Said "No!": A Kid-to-Kid Guide to Keeping Private Parts Private

By: Kimberly King & Zack King



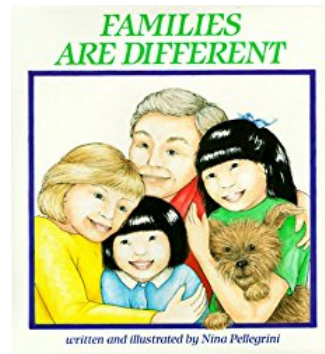
The Family Book

By: Todd Parr



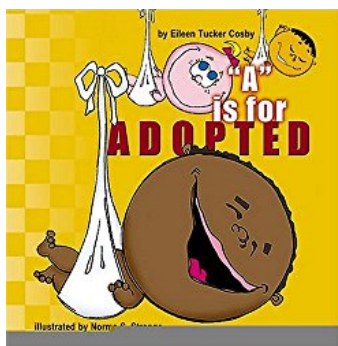
The Day We Met You

By: Phoebe Koehler



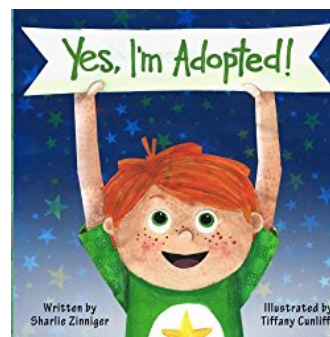
Families Are Different

By: Nina Pellegrini



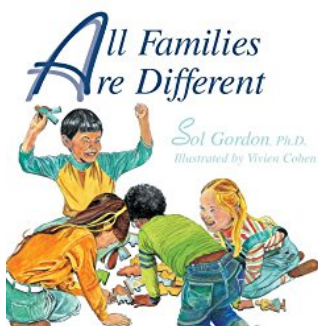
"A" is for Adopted

By Eileen Tucker Cosby



Yes, I'm Adopted!

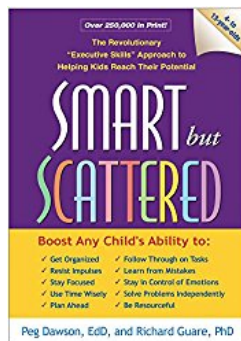
By: Sharlie Zinniger



All Families Are Different

By: Sol Gordon

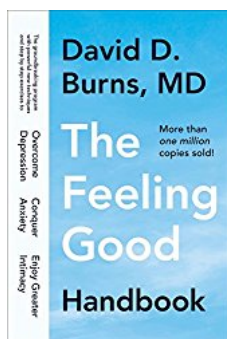
Books On Disabilities & Diagnosis



Smart but Scattered

(For ADD, ADHD and other Executive Function Issues)

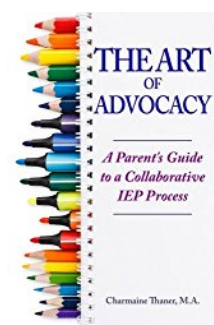
By: Peg Dawson, EdD & Richard Guare, PhD



The Feeling Good Handbook

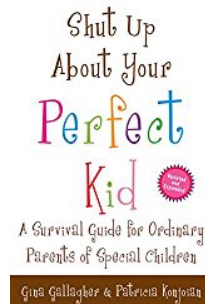
(This book is considered the Bible of Mental Health & therapy)

By: David D. Burns, MD



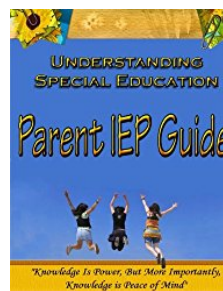
The Art of Advocacy

By: Charmaine Thaner, MA

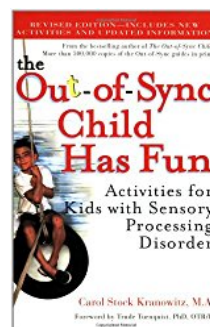


Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid

By: Gina Gallagher & Patricia Konjoran



Parents IEP Guide: Understanding Special Education



The Out-Of-Sync Child Has Fun

By: Carol Stock Kranowitz, M.A.

