



Understanding the Adoption Journey

From Conception Through Adulthood

April 14, 2018 — Oakland, CA

(location details sent upon registration)

Adult Program: 1:30–4:30 pm

Youth Program (ages 5-12): 1:30–4:30 pm

Potluck Community Gathering: 4:30–5:30 pm

Join us for a day of learning for the whole family including special programming for children ages 5-12 led by our awesome counselor/mentors and teen club members. Concurrent adult programing will be taking place for parents of all age children. Parents are invited to attend with or without their children.

YOUTH PROGRAM

Understanding Adoption and Making Decisions about What To Share When

Children will learn the language of adoption including terms and meanings and also practice responding to questions using the **WISE Up** Curriculum as a multifaceted model for responding to friends and strangers questions about adoption, inviting them to find their own comfort zone in whether or not they choose to share personal information and with whom. Groups will be joined by teens who will help them act out these lessons along with fun programing that creates community and empowerment.

ADULT PROGRAM

Adult Adoptees

Honoring Our Journey

Katie Stickles-Wynen, MSW and Panel

Hear directly from adult adoptees about the importance of acknowledging ALL steps of the adoption journey, starting with conception into



adulthood. No matter the circumstances, or challenges, all of those moments and experiences are part of an adoptee's story and therefore their adoption journey. Listen as adult adoptees of various ages and backgrounds share and reflect on what they knew and didn't know about their adoption journey and the impact it has had on them.

First/Birth Families

Relating with Integrity, Creating Opportunities for Y/Our Children,

Susan DG Leksander, LMFT

Historically, the voices and perspectives of first family members has been excluded from the discourse on adoption. Susan will invite all of us to expand the possibilities for relationships with first families. Left unexamined, conscious and unconscious biases and feelings corrode a sense of trust between the adoptee and adoptive parent, and can limit how free the child feels in their ability to connect with all of their identities. Susan will present accurate information and personal accounts of what it means to be part of a first family, providing adoptive parents tools to address their own fears and influence what's possible for their child.

We will then divide into groups to go deeper as follows:

- **International Adoption** with Katie Stickles-Wynen
- **Domestic Adoption** with Susan DG Leksander
- **Foster Care Adoption** with Beth Hall
- **Adoptive Parents of Color** with Malaika Parker



Youth Program Leadership Staff



Lisa Kelly, MA, is a biracial (Black/Colombian) adoptee, has a Masters in Early Childhood Education and is a 6th grade teacher at Realm Charter School in Berkeley. She and her brother were adopted transracially

by white parents. Lisa understands the importance of adoptees of color coming together to collectively explore and learn about their culture, ancestry, and identity. Lisa is an activist who fights for racial and gender equity for both her students and all members of oppressed communities.

Ben Powning, Pact's Event Coordinator, is a mixed raced (Colombian, Filipino and white) transracial



adoptee born and raised in the Bay Area. Ben attended and graduated from San Francisco State with a degree in communications. Ben has many years of experience working with children and is inspired by the importance of his own role models to be one for the children of Pact. Because of his own struggles to find and create a healthy racial and adoption identity, he is excited to work with both the youth and families at Pact. Ben feels like being at Pact is being at home and he looks forward to providing that kind of welcoming and nurturing space for all of the youth who participate in Pact programming.

Adult Program Presenters



Susan Dusza Guerra Leksander, LMFT is a first mother, transracial adoptee, and a licensed psychotherapist who specializes in the adoption and foster care triads. As Pact's Adoption Agency Supervisor and First/Birth Family Specialist, Susan focuses on the needs of expectant parents considering adoption, and first/birth families who have placed children of color for adoption.



Beth Hall is the white adoptive mother of a Latina daughter and an African American son (both now adults), and grew up with an adopted sister. She co-founded Pact in 1991 to combat the discrimination she witnessed

against adopted children of color and their birth families.



Katie Stickles-Wynen, MSW, is a Colombian adoptee and Pact's Adoption Social Worker and LGBTQ Advocate. After college, Katie worked at Hyde School in CT where she helped design a program for

adopted youth and parents. Katie studied under Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao in Boston before moving to California and joining the Pact staff where she leads groups, works with tweens and teens and provides psycho-educational counseling to pre-adoptive parents.



Malaika Parker, Pact's Family of Color Specialist, works with adoptive parents of color (and their parenting partners) to design resources and create community for same-race adoptive families. As an African American adoptive parent, she understands how hard-and important-it is for same-race adoptive parents to find resources that apply to their own family dynamics as opposed to those that apply to transracial families.

Community Potluck

We hope you will stay and join us for a community building potluck. Bring a side dish to share with the group. Kid-friendly healthy food appreciated!

To Register: go to www.pactadopt.org, click on the Events tab, scroll down to the April 14 event and click "Register."

PRICING			
FAMILY SIZE	COST	FAMILY SIZE	COST
1	\$40	4	\$130
2	\$75	5	\$155
3	\$105	6	\$180

(Pact Members receive a 15% discount.)