

**Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare  
Office of Children, Youth and Families**

P.O. Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675

**For more information about  
the conference, contact:**

**Beth Duzey**

*Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries  
& Family Design Resources*  
888-793-2512 (toll free)  
717-558-1227

**or visit our website:  
[www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org)**



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## **REGISTRATION MATERIALS ENCLOSED**

**July 20-22, 2011**

**Lancaster Host Resort & Conference Center • Lancaster, Pennsylvania**

# *19th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference*

## **“Assuring a Legacy”**

**Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare • Office of Children, Youth and Families**

**Tom Corbett, Governor**

**Gary D. Alexander, acting Secretary of Public Welfare**

# Conference at-a-Glance

## WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
Matching Brunch / Exhibit Area Opens



**12:00 p.m.**  
Conference Registration Begins

**1:00 p.m.**  
Child / Teen Care Begins

**1:30 – 3:00 p.m.**  
Conference Opening / Welcome and Keynote Address /  
SWAN Advisory Award



**3:15 – 4:45 p.m.**  
Workshop Session 1

**4:45 – 5:15 p.m.**  
Break / Networking Time

**4:30 – 6:00 p.m.**  
Pre-Banquet Reception for Honorees

**6:00 p.m.**  
Recognition Banquet / Exhibit Area Closes

**8:30 p.m.**  
Child / Teen Care Ends

## THURSDAY, JULY 21

**8:00 a.m.**  
Conference Registration / Exhibit Area Opens

**8:30 a.m.**  
Child / Teen Care Begins

**9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**  
Institute Session 1

**OR**

**9:00 – 10:30 a.m.**  
Workshop Session 2

**10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**  
Workshop Session 3



**12:15 – 2:00 p.m.**  
Lunch (On Your Own)

**2:00 – 5:15 p.m.**  
Institute Session 2

**OR**

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**  
Workshop Session 4

**3:45 – 5:15 p.m.**  
Workshop Session 5

**5:30 p.m.**  
Exhibit Area Closes, Child / Teen Care Ends,  
Family Picnic

## FRIDAY, JULY 22

**8:00 a.m.**  
Conference Registration / Exhibit Area Opens  
Child / Teen Care Begins

**8:30 – 10:00 a.m.**  
Workshop Session 6

**10:00 – 10:30 a.m.**  
Hotel Checkout Break

**10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
Conference Closing and Keynote Address

**12:00 p.m.**  
Program Evaluation and Adjourn

**12:30 p.m.**  
Exhibit Area Closes / Child / Teen Care Ends

# General Information

## Purpose

The 19th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference, Assuring a Legacy, focuses on ways families and professionals from all aspects of the child welfare system can support one another and work together to achieve permanent connections for all children and youth.

The conference serves as a forum to train participants who will prepare children and families for their journey through the child welfare system towards permanency. The conference is designed to educate and support current and prospective foster and adoptive families, kinship care providers, permanent legal custodians, attorneys, child welfare professionals and others with a vested interest in permanency for children. The conference is a focal point for networking and sharing information to increase the knowledge base for children and youth issues in special needs adoptions and permanency. Waiting families are welcome to meet directly with agency workers who are looking for families for the children they represent during our Matching Brunch. The "Matching Room," has long been a huge success and it focuses on children waiting for families and families who are still waiting for children. Additional support resources are on display as well throughout the Matching Room.

## Audience

This conference is designed for current and prospective foster and adoptive families as well as families providing other permanency options, such as kinship care or permanent legal custodianship, attorneys, mental health professionals, independent living professionals, public and private agency professionals and the children on behalf of whom they work.

## Session Descriptions

Each session is described in this brochure. The targeted audience for the workshop and its expected knowledge or skill level is listed below for each session.

### Knowledge / Skill levels are:

- Basic
- Intermediate
- Advanced

### Targeted Audiences are:

- Families
- Advocates
- Permanency Professionals
- Child Welfare Workers
- Legal Professionals
- Independent Living Professionals

## Continuing Education Credits, Continuing Legal Education Credits and Certificates of Training

Approval is pending for continuing education credits for social workers through the University of Pittsburgh and continuing legal education credits through the Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board. Certificates of training will also be available.

## Help with Permanency

Do you have a permanency-related question or problem? Staff from the Office of Children, Youth and Families, OCYF, will be available to assist you. For more information, refer to the conference program that will be in your registration packet at the conference.

## SWAN Portal Open Tutorial Opportunities

Diakon/Family Design Resources staff will be available throughout the conference to assist county and affiliate workers with their portal concerns.

# Hotel Information

## Accommodations

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center by calling (800) 233-0121. Special rates have been arranged for conference participants. Mention that you are attending the PERMANENCY CONFERENCE to receive the flat rate of \$114/night (plus applicable taxes) single or double and \$124/night (plus applicable taxes) triple or quadruple. Check in time at the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center is 3:00 p.m. Check out time is 11:00 a.m.

**The deadline to receive the special room rate is June 24, 2011.** After this date, rooms will be on a space available basis and at the regular rate. Please reserve your accommodations early to avoid paying the higher rates.

## Accessibility

Because we want each participant to have the most enjoyable and accessible experience possible, please let us know what you need before you arrive by completing the special needs section of the registration form.

# Registration Information

## Conference Registration

To register for the conference, please complete the registration form included in this brochure or register online at [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org). **The last day for Early Bird Registration is June 24, 2011.** Any registrations post marked after June 24, 2011 will receive the regular registration rate. Pre-registered attendees will receive a name badge, banquet and picnic tickets, a program and other materials at the registration area. Confirmation letters will be sent to those whose registrations are received by June 24, 2011.

Registration at the conference will be held in the lobby on:

Wednesday, July 20	12:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Thursday, July 21	8:00 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.
Friday, July 22	8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

## Cancellation and Refund Policy

Cancellations received after June 24, 2011 will be assessed a \$25 processing fee.

Any session may be cancelled or rescheduled because of unforeseen circumstances. Schedule changes and cancellations will be posted at the registration area and noted in the conference program distributed at the conference.

## Conference Questions

If you have questions about registration, child care, accessibility, directions or other logistical considerations, please contact:

<b>Beth Duzey</b>	<b>Conference Coordinator, Diakon/FDR</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>717-558-1227</b>
<b>Toll Free:</b>	<b>888-793-2512</b>
<b>Fax:</b>	<b>866-646-5789</b>
<b>email:</b>	<b>bduzey@diakon-swan.org</b>

# Special Conference Features & Events

## Recognition Banquet

Guest mistress of ceremonies will be Pamela Wagner, Program and Conferencing Division Manager at Diakon/Family Design Resources. Pam worked several years as a caseworker and has presented adoption workshops and trainings for more than 20 years. In addition to her professional ties to adoption, Pam is the mother of two sons who came home through adoption.



Recognition awards will be given during the banquet on Wednesday, July 20, at 6:00 p.m. for:

- Permanency Professional
- Permanency Advocate
- Permanency Teamwork
- County Collaborative
- Independent Living Professional
- Philanthropy
- Permanent Family

## Matching Room

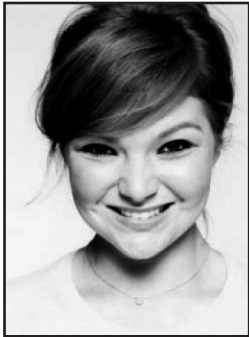
Are you looking for a child to add to your family? At the Matching Brunch on Wednesday, July 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., caseworkers will talk about their waiting children with families. Families can learn more about children in Pennsylvania in need of permanency by visiting exhibit booths that highlight children's photos, posters and multi-media presentations.

The Matching Room also includes resource and vendor tables. All exhibits will be on display during the entire conference. Please stop by and visit!

## Family Picnic

On Thursday evening, July 21, starting at 5:30 p.m., a family picnic will feature food, games and fun for everyone. Use the registration form to confirm that you are coming, and don't forget to purchase extra tickets for guests, friends or children who are not registered for the conference or child care.

# Keynote Presenters



## Ashley Rhodes-Courter

Ashley Rhodes-Courter was born in North Carolina in 1985 and entered the Florida foster care system at the tender age of three. Over the next nine years, she lived in 14 placements before being adopted at age 12 by Phil and Gay Courter of Crystal River, Florida.

Ashley graduated with honors from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, where she completed a double major in Communications and Theatre with a double minor in Political Science and Psychology.

At college, Ashley spent time in South Africa working with a children's literacy project. She then went to China during the summer of 2009 to explore their culture and child welfare system. Nationally, she serves on several child welfare boards such as: Children Without a Voice USA (Atlanta, GA) and Family Focus Adoption Services (New York). In her local community she works with several organizations including the Heart Gallery of Pasco & Pinellas and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and Ashley is also a guardian ad litem volunteer (or CASA).

Ashley was the youth advocate of the year for the North American Council on Adoptable Children and won the Child Welfare League of America "Kids to Kids" National Service Grand Prize. In 2004, she and her family jointly won the Angels in Adoption Award from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. Then in 2008, she individually won the Coalition's "National Angel" award along with the CBS Corporation.

In 2007 she was one of 20 college students selected for the USA Today All-USA Academic Team. Ashley also was one of the four GOLDEN BRICK Award winners for outstanding advocacy by Do Something and was named one of Glamour magazine's top ten college women.

In 2008, Simon and Schuster published her memoir, *"Three Little Words"* which quickly became a New York Times Bestseller. Her book has received many national and local awards and is currently being used in classrooms all across the country (2010). Ashley hosted a television program called "Explore Adoption" which was produced by the state of Florida to raise the public's awareness of foster children in need of loving and permanent homes. This segment won an Emmy in 2009.

Ashley has been featured on Montel Williams, The Today Show, Good Morning America, \$.99 Cool Ranch Doritos bags and many national and local television shows. She is currently maintaining a full calendar of speeches and workshops all across the country. She has a passion to tell her story and share hope with other foster children and encourage adoption and permanency.

## Conference Opening

**Wednesday, July 20, 2011, 1:30 p.m.**

### **Three Little Words and the Power of One**

Ashley Rhodes-Courter spent almost ten years in foster care living in 14 different placements. Today 25-year-old Ashley is the New York Times bestselling author of the book, *"Three Little Words."* She shares her experiences growing up in the system and talks about the importance of permanency, consistency and the power of one person. Ashley highlights caring parents and professionals from her past, and gives suggestions for ways to make a difference in the lives of foster children and youth.

## Workshop

**Wednesday, July 20, 2011, 3:15 – 4:45 p.m.**

### **From a Former Foster Youth: Importance of Permanency and Keys to Fostering Success**

During this session, Ashley is available to answer any questions from her keynote talk and give a more in-depth account of her personal foster care journey. Using DVD's and clips from her adoptive parents Emmy award-winning film company, Courter Films ([www.courterfilms.com](http://www.courterfilms.com)), she covers issues ranging from adopting teens, attachment and family finding - an effective technique created by Kevin Campbell that aims to locate permanent family connections for foster children.

## Keynote Presenters (continued)



### LaTasha Watts

LaTasha C. Watts entered foster care as an infant in Cleveland, OH, and spent her entire childhood in the foster care system. She was eventually labeled “unadoptable” keeping her forever linked to the foster care system until her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. LaTasha lived in a variety of foster homes only to be subjected to alcohol abuse and neglect at the hands of foster families designed to protect her. She eventually aged out of the foster care system

just two days shy of her 19th birthday and a day after graduating from high school.

After her emancipation she struggled to survive. She experienced a form of homelessness, subjecting herself to abusive relationships. She was diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder, OCD, had a baby as a single mother and battled cancer all by the age of 23. Despite her adversities she maintained her determination to change the negative outcomes of children in the foster care system and beyond.

Today LaTasha is a philanthropist-foster care advocate, author and speaker, who has more than ten years experience working with youth in a variety of settings. She prominently holds the positions of founder and executive director of The Purple Project ([www.thepurpleproject.com](http://www.thepurpleproject.com)), an online and offline support and resource network for anyone linked to the foster care community. She is also founder and CEO of Cummings Watts & Associates, LLC, a lifestyle management and consulting firm.

LaTasha has received numerous recognitions, including a proclamation from former Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, in honor of her immeasurable contributions to the foster care and adoption community. She is currently working on her first book *I'm Not Broken, Just A Little Twisted* scheduled to hit bookshelves June 2011. LaTasha travels nationwide to motivate and help children and adults who are linked to the foster care community. “A lot has changed since I aged out of the foster care system. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about the roads that I had to travel to gain a successful and a fulfilled life. I am extremely grateful to God that I have survived the many obstacles in my life.”

### Teen Workshop

**Thursday, July 21, 2011**

#### **Creating Your Own Reality**

This is a creative and empowering session where teens follow LaTasha’s amazing journey as she shares her life experiences as a former foster youth. She inspires teens with her “creating your own reality” philosophy, which educates teens on how to turn a negative situation into a positive reality. Teens will leave captivated and empowered with understanding how not to let their situation define who they are or where they would like to be.

### Workshop

**Friday, July 22, 2011, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.**

#### **Ready...Set...Goals!**

This is a creative and empowering session with activities and tasks designed to provide individuals with necessary skills to be a positive self-advocate and to attain short term goals. Participants engage in a variety of fun activities that educate them about how to successfully help youth plan their everyday goals and make positive choices, which will ultimately lead them to positive outcomes.

### Conference Closing

**Friday, July 22, 2011, 10:30 a.m.**

#### **I’m Not Broken, Just A Little Twisted**

This keynote address is empowering and interactive, geared toward inspiring youth and adults to stand up and grab success, despite the obstacles and hurdles they may have faced. Audiences can follow LaTasha’s amazing journey and life experiences from being in foster care, abused, facing homelessness and even battling cancer all by the age of 23! Audiences will leave captivated and empowered as she shares her courageous and inspiring personal story of setbacks, challenges and lessons learned in order to see triumph!

## Workshop Session 1 • Wednesday, July 20, 2011 • 3:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

### W-WK1 **Adult Grief, Child Grief - It's Just Not the Same**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Families

Understanding that a child grieves differently is the key to helping them process their grief. Participants look at ways adults grieve, then compare those coping skills to those of the child. Tips are provided on how to help children process their feelings so parents become a part of the healing.

**Colleen Slebodnik**, Laurel Youth Services

### W-WK2 **Maximizing Tax Benefits for Families with Children**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Families

Understanding basic principles of federal and state income taxation ensures you are receiving all the deductions and credits your unique family deserves. Participants increase their understanding of federal and state income taxation law and apply it to their individual household situation.

**Robin Kuleck**, Penn State Cooperative Extension

### W-WK3 **Gender and Orientation: Changing our Understanding Changes Lives**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Legal Professionals

Everyone has an experience of gender and orientation. Understanding how it shows up and is expressed by foster youth paves the way to permanency, helps identify their individual needs and builds healthy lives and relationships for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning, LGBTQ, and all youth.

**Garry Bevel**, **Mimi Laver** and **Andrea Khoury**, American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law

### W-WK4 **Building an Effective Team for the Child's Sake**

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

The benefits of engaging team members in order to make sound decisions for our children are immeasurable, but working as a cohesive team can sometimes be challenging. This workshop provides a framework and concrete strategies for building an effective team.

**Stephanie Wolfe**, NHS Human Services

### W-WK5 **Without Borders: Utilizing Post-Permanency Services and International Adoption**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Families

Post-permanency is not only for domestic adoption. These services can be used for international adoptions and their unique challenges such as cultural and language issues. This workshop explores those services for international adoptions and how families may receive services.

**Scot Hines**, Diakon/Family Design Resources

### W-WK6 **From a Former Foster Youth: Importance of Permanency and Keys to Fostering**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - All

During this session Ashley is available to answer any questions from her keynote talk and give a more in-depth account of her personal foster care journey. Using DVDs and clips from her adoptive parents Emmy award winning film company, Courter Films ([www.courterfilms.com](http://www.courterfilms.com)), she covers issues ranging from adopting teens, attachment and family finding - an effective technique created by Kevin Campbell that aims to locate permanent family connections for foster children.

**Ashley Rhodes-Courter**, Keynote Presenter

## Workshop Session 2 • Thursday, July 21, 2011 • 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

### TH-WK1 **Transitioning to College - The Student Perspective**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

Learn about student concerns and misperceptions as they move from college application to graduation. Identify and discuss best practices for defining student roles, responsibilities and independence to improve probability for success in college.

**Debra Schuch**, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

### TH-WK2 **Raise Your Voice**

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - All

This training focuses on helping resource parents enhance and refine their advocacy skills. Advocacy is defined as an ability to assess a child's need across a broad spectrum and identify those needs to other members of the treatment team. Various situations are identified where a resource parent is called on to be the front line advocate for a child in care and teach strategies for communicating effectively. Identifying and accessing resources are addressed.

**Regina Fike**, Regina Fike Training and Consulting Services

## Workshop Session 3 • Thursday, July 21, 2011 • 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

### TH-WK3 **Breaking the Cycle with Higher Education**

**Level** - Intermediate, Advanced **Audience** - All

Research shows that only 1.8 percent of foster students go on to a 4-year college or university. In this workshop, participants learn how to create and implement a program to assist high school students in obtaining higher education.

**JoAnn Hannah and Jennifer Damico, Allegheny County Department of Human Services**

### TH-WK4 **Transitioning Children - From Grief to Gift**

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

A fresh perspective for transitioning children in care - the impact of moves and changes on children and their caretakers. Being in the present, letting go, grieving and healing are reviewed. Personal experience as resource parent and caseworker is shared.

**Darah Walther, Contractor for Lutheran Children and Family Service**

### TH-WK5 **Blood is Thicker Than Water: Encouraging Successful Birth Family Contact**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers

This is a panel discussion about the importance of post-permanency birth family contact. Panel includes a variety of families providing permanency, including an adoptive family, kinship family and private infant adoptive family.

**Lea Moyer, Diakon Adoption and Foster Care**

## Institute 1 • Thursday, July 21, 2011 • 9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

### TH-IN1 **Understanding Adoption Assistance**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - All

It can be difficult to obtain information regarding Adoption Assistance for children with special needs in Pennsylvania. This course provides essential information concerning Adoption Assistance including what it is, who is eligible, how to negotiate rates and much more.

**Cindi Horshaw, Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families, Phyllis Stevens, Together As Adoptive Parents, Inc.**

### TH-IN2 **Safety Assessment in Out-of-Home Care**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers

This presentation provides a brief overview of the safety assessment and management process, with a specific focus on assessing safety once a child is in an out-of-home care setting. This assessment process begins once the decision is made that the child should be placed and continues until the child is reunified or has achieved another permanency goal. Focus is on the key components of the safety model and identifying ways to encourage information sharing between county and private provider agencies. Opportunities for questions and discussion are provided.

**Jana Hitchcock, University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program, Bryle Zickler, Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families**

### TH-IN3 **Incorporating Family Preparation and the Family Approval Document - An Essential Combination**

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

This session addresses how the knowledge, insight and growth of a family during the family preparation process can be integrated into the Family Approval Document. This interactive session reviews some of the essential elements identified by SWAN as critical in preparing families. It demonstrates how behavioral interviewing can create a stronger profile and assist with the integration process.

**Debra Thomas and Dianne Ott, Diakon/Family Design Resources**

### TH-IN4 **New Options for Pennsylvania Adoptions: Overview of Act 101 of 2010**

**Level** - All **Audience** - All

Act 101 of 2010 becomes effective on April 25, 2011. The Act provides for voluntary, enforceable post-adoption contracts for contact between adoptees and selected birth relatives. The Act further provides for enhanced adoption record keeping and access to adoption information. This institute examines the provisions and practice implications of the new law.

**Rachel Meaker, Diakon/Family Design Resources, Desiree Weisser, Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families**

**Lunch is on your own.**

- TH-IN5 Family Finding: Creating Permanent Connections for Older Youth**  
*Level - Basic, Intermediate Audience - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals*  
This institute focuses on the tenets of family findings, the DiaKINnections model and tools used to create durable, lifelong connections for youth as well as permanency options. The realities of detective work involved in finding relatives, family engagement, follow-through, bringing families together to create permanent plans with older youth and successful kin placement are a focus in this interactive training.  
**Elisa Esh, Chelsea Gerould, Josh Lieb, Kristen Jacobs, Amanda Olson and Jessica O'Neil, Diakon Adoption and Foster Care, Bethany Leas and Russ McCurdy, Project STAR**
- TH-IN6 America's Hurt Child - Assuring Family Legacy**  
*Level - Intermediate, Advanced Audience - All*  
This institute provides information and education related to the impact of abuse and neglect on children and their ability to achieve permanency with their families. The session addresses Reactive Attachment Disorder, RAD, and treatment approaches for families and professionals.  
**Patricia Potter, Francine Cochis, Mary Anne Albaugh and Callie Arney, Affinity Family Support Services, Irene & Greg Majchrzak, Adoptive Parents**
- TH-IN7 Improving Outcomes for Children: The Father Factor**  
*Level - Basic Audience - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals*  
Engaging fathers—how does it impact the lives of the children we serve? Explore the reasons why father involvement can improve the well being of children. Presentation includes research, data collection and the steps to implementing a fatherhood program.  
**Kim Majors, The Children's Institute-Project STAR**
- TH-IN8 Abraham's Wife: The Impact of Infertility on Permanency**  
*Level - Basic, Intermediate Audience - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers*  
The issues of infertility are far-reaching. This workshop examines the impact of infertility on the permanency process. First it explores the history of infertility and adoption. We examine how each stage of the adoption process is impacted by infertility and how the issues of infertility may be manifested as families move forward. Finally the workshop describes techniques that workers can use to assist families dealing with infertility and improve the family's chances of success as they provide permanency.  
**Pamela Wagner and Brenda Lawrence, Diakon/Family Design Resources**
- TH-IN9 Healing the Hurts: Common Struggles for Teens**  
*Level - Intermediate Audience - All*  
This institute explores three common areas of struggle of today's teens that are heightened for youth in placement. It includes strategies for helping our teens develop healthy relationships to empower them to manage these struggles.  
**Stacia Baraka-Todd, Sherry Anderson and Khalilah Martin, Three Rivers Adoption Council**
- TH-IN10 Preparing Youth for College and Post-Secondary Options**  
*Level - Intermediate Audience - All*  
College and other post-secondary training programs are within the reach of most youth in the child welfare system, but early planning and finding the right supports are key. This session highlights the experiences of current college students and showcases the tools, resources and programs that are available in high school and at post-secondary institutions to make their dreams come true.  
**Stephen Eidson, University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program**

**TH-WK6 Effective Aftercare Services**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals

This interactive workshop features successful Independent Living aftercare programs. Discussion on how to engage youth and community partners in aftercare planning is presented. Examples of creative programming individualized to meet a youth's aftercare goals from their own perspective in the transition process is shared.

**Kimberly Gavran**, Try-Again Homes, Inc., **Leasia Ayers-Caswell**, Adams County Children and Youth Services, **Stephen Eidson**, University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program

**TH-WK7 Leave the Legacy of a Better System**

**Level** - All **Audience** - All

Do you want to learn how Pennsylvania's child welfare system is currently performing? Do you want to hear about current efforts to improve the child welfare system and how to get involved? Regardless of who you are, you have an important role in improving the outcomes of children and families served by this critical safety net.

**Todd Lloyd**, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

**TH-WK8 Strengthening Independent Living through Cross-System Collaboration**

**Level** - All **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers

Government agencies are playing leadership roles in local efforts to provide more successful transitions into adulthood for foster youth. Come learn about successful efforts in Pittsburgh and the Monongahela Valley area based on cross-system collaboration.

**Sharlene Gray**, The Bridge of Pittsburgh, **Joann Hannah**, Allegheny County DHS, **Malik Swain**, ResCare Workforce Services

**TH-WK9 The Other Voices of Foster Care**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - All

This popular and relevant workshop addresses the challenges of biological children in fostering families. Sibling rivalry, separation and loss, family dynamics and other issues from the perspective of biological children are identified. Real-life stories illustrate strategies for mitigating challenges including all family members in the work of fostering. Specific training on conducting family councils is included.

**Regina Fike and Nicholas Fike**, Regina Fike Training and Consulting Services

**TH-WK10 The Young Parent Program: Beginning the Family Circle**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - All

A panel consisting of family support staff, a senior volunteer, a children, youth and family services supervisor and teen parents discuss their roles and experiences in a collaborative program designed to address the needs of teen parents and their children.

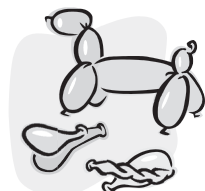
**Laurie Filitske and Sherrie Simondale**, Cen-Clear Child Services, Inc.

# Join us for Fun at the Family Picnic!

Thursday, July 21, 2011, 5:30 p.m.



**BALLOON CREATIONS BY  
JOHN CASSIDY**



**GUINNESS WORLD RECORD®  
BALLOON ARTIST**

## Workshop Session 5 • Thursday, July 21, 2011 • 3:45 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

### TH-WK11 AdoptSpeak Offers Support 24-7

**Level** - All **Audience** - All

Where can you turn at 2:00 a.m. to voice concerns, find support during the adoption process or help parenting your child with special needs? The social network AdoptSpeak has groups for diverse families who have adopted and for families considering adoption. Learn more and get connected.

**Alexandra Buczek and Christine Jacobs, National Adoption Center**

### TH-WK12 Healing the Hurt: Parenting the Sexually Abused Child

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers

This session highlights the journey of non-offending parents and caregivers of the sexually abused child from the initial outcry of abuse to recognizing resiliency in both the child and the family unit.

**Shannon Cossaboom, PinnacleHealth Children's Resource Center**

### TH-WK13 Digital Dating Abuse

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals

Digital dating abuse consists of the technology used to abuse, stalk, harass and intimidate a victim. This workshop identifies and demonstrates technology used by teens and how perpetrators can misuse this technology to abuse his or her victim.

**Lois Fasnacht, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

### TH-WK14 Venango County Court of Common Pleas Family Preservation Project

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals

This workshop profiles how Venango County has integrated the principles of Family Group Decision Making into Dependency Court through a process called Facilitation. This seminar profiles how Facilitation was implemented into the Venango County Dependency Court System and how Facilitation has changed the court proceedings from an adversarial process to one where the family is empowered through family engagement.

**William Cisek, Wilson, Thompson & Cisek, LLC, The Hon. Oliver Lobaugh, Venango County President Judge**

### TH-WK15 Enriching Emotional Connections and Resilience through Mindfulness Training

**Level** - Advanced **Audience** - Families

Mindfulness training promotes the development of stability, inner calmness and non-reactivity. Instead of finding ourselves at the mercy of worry, fear, anger and stress, we learn how to reconnect with our experience, ourselves and others in a healthier and deeper way.

**Joshua David O'Brien, Mindfulness Community of Central PA**

## Institute 2 • Thursday, July 21, 2011 • 2:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

### TH-IN11 Hot Topics in Termination of Parental Rights and Appeals

**Level** - Intermediate **Audience** - All

Come and discuss current legal issues in Termination of Parental Rights, TPR, and appeals with a panel of experienced attorneys who handle TPR cases, from the child's, parents' and agency's perspectives. Focus will not be on the Adoption Act. Focus is on hot topics, including recent changes in child welfare law and important recent court decisions. The workshop gives you a chance to discuss your current cases and tricky legal issues with colleagues, so bring all your legal questions and answers to this lively session.

**Joshua Lewis, Adoption Legal Services Project, Eleanor Bush, Diakon/Family Design Resources**

### TH-IN12 Financial Education Boot Camp

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

The boot camp is a unique program created to assist service coordinators, case managers and social workers incorporating financial education in their work. The session focuses on financial education topics, tools and resources appropriate for youth in transition to independence.

**Holly Chase, Pennsylvania Office of Financial Education**

**TH-IN13 Recruitment, Engagement and Matching of Diverse Family Populations**

**Level** - Intermediate **Audience** - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers

This institute, intended to be a refresher and follow-up to last year's "Working with Non-Traditional Families" workshop, addresses the misconceptions and lack of strengths-based views surrounding diverse family populations as potential permanent families for waiting youth. Focus is on recruitment and engagement of diverse families who are traditionally successful with older youth adoption. Matching techniques, strengths-based marketing and steps to change the course for making placements with these valuable family resources is covered. A panel of diverse families and agency professionals advocating for non-traditional families provides specific case examples of their experience with the permanency process.

**Elisa Esh and Jennifer Bircher**, *Diakon Adoption and Foster Care*

**TH-IN14 Foster Care in Child's Time**

**Level** - Intermediate, Advanced **Audience** - Child Welfare Workers

A summary presentation of an outcome-oriented, child-centered and family-focused model for assessment, planning, ongoing casework and decision making in foster care, designed to reach safe permanency within a timeframe that fits the needs of the child.

**Jorge Colapinto**, *Family and Children Services Program Consultant*

**TH-IN15 Continuous Quality Improvement: Our Desired Future State**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals

Continuous Quality Improvement is a major effort included in Pennsylvania's Program Improvement Plan, PIP, to facilitate and sustain change in child welfare practice. Participants learn about Pennsylvania's framework by which agencies are able to create a system to improve outcomes.

**Laura Borish and Jeanne Schott**, *University of Pittsburgh Child Welfare Training Program*, **Jennifer Richards**, *Venango County Children and Youth*, **Stephanie Maldonado**, *Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families*, **Allison Thompson**, *Philadelphia Department of Human Services*

**TH-IN16 A Difficult Journey**

**Level** - Intermediate, Advanced **Audience** - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers

The path to permanency can be a difficult journey. Often there are times along the way that can cause everyone to doubt their ability to reach the goal of permanency. This workshop looks at how we can better manage the issues that may increase the risk of disruption or dissolution and what can be done to help ensure permanency.

**Scot Hines**, *Diakon/Family Design Resources*

**TH-IN17 Agency Searches as Impacted by Act 101**

**Level** - All **Audience** - All

This institute explores Act 101 as it relates to adoption searches. This new legislation and its impact on agency practice and the scope of the searches involved are discussed. The trainers' focus is on court and agency requirements in releasing information from adoption records, in addition to exploring the role of the authorized representative. The impact of search and reunion on family members is also addressed. The Diligent Search packet is included in the discussion of techniques, tools and tips for locating family members.

**Helen Blair Schuler**, *Montgomery County Orphans' Court*, **Natalie Washine**, *Diakon/Family Design Resources*, **Lorrie Deck**, *Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families*

**Workshop Session 6 • Friday, July 22, 2011 • 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**

**F-WK1 The Father's Role**

**Level** - Basic, Intermediate **Audience** - All

Fathers have a profound impact on a child's well-being. Unfortunately all too many of our society's children have been deprived of a nurturing male involvement. This workshop examines the father's role, differences between mothers and fathers, the impact of father absence on our children and how both men and women can support children in developing positive relationships with male caregivers.

**Bob Brinker**, *ParentWISE Program of Family Services of Western PA*

**F-WK2 Ready... Set...Goals!**

**Level** - Basic **Audience** - All

This is a creative and empowering session with activities and tasks designed to provide individuals with necessary skills to be a positive self-advocate and to attain short term goals. Participants engage in a variety of fun activities that educate them on how to successfully help youth plan their everyday goals and make positive choices, which will ultimately lead them to positive outcomes.

**LaTasha Watts**, *Keynote Presenter*

- F-WK3 2nd Annual Statewide Child Prep Swap Meet**  
*Level - All Audience - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals*  
Child preparation workers are always searching for innovative child preparation activities. Come and discover creative ideas from workers across the state. Various child preparation activities are demonstrated. Participants are asked to send two child preparation activities to share to [dott@diakon-swan.org](mailto:dott@diakon-swan.org).  
**Dianne Ott**, *Diakon/Family Design Resources*
- F-WK4 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Awareness, Prevention and Treatment**  
*Level - Basic Audience - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers*  
The Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services has begun a strategic process to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, FASD, a significant public health issue relevant to children and their families. This workshop provides basic information regarding the physical, emotional, developmental and intellectual disabilities which may occur in an individual affected by FASD.  
**Deborah Hardy**, *Bureau of Children's Behavioral Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Department of Public Welfare*
- F-WK5 An Introduction to Mindfulness Awareness Practices**  
*Level - Basic Audience - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Child Welfare Workers*  
This workshop introduces Mindfulness Awareness Practices, MAPS. This set of tools can be helpful in maintaining a calm presence in the face of children's emotional reactivity during difficult transitions.  
**Karin Bleecker**, *PA Counseling Services*, **C. Wayne Jones**, *Center for Family Based Training*
- F-WK6 The Mental Health Needs of Children**  
*Level - Basic Audience - Families, Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers*  
This workshop explores the emotional effects of trauma and loss on young children and the impact of trauma on brain development from birth to five years old. Ways to support the mental health needs of young children and ways to develop trusting relationships are identified.  
**Kelly Miller**, *Community Services for Children, Inc.*, **Brandy Fox**, *Pennsylvania Key*
- F-WK7 Immigration Issues in Child Welfare Practice**  
*Level - All Audience - Permanency Professionals, Independent Living Professionals, Advocates, Child Welfare Workers, Legal Professionals*  
Immigrant children and their families represent one of the largest, fastest-growing populations in the United States. Children in immigrant families may face greater risks of maltreatment due to the stress and pressure experienced by their families. Difficulties accessing services and benefits may increase risk in immigrant families as well. As the immigrant population grows, child welfare agencies need to respond to immigrant families' unique needs. This session explores some of the legal, policy and practice issues faced by child welfare agencies striving to serve immigrant families.  
**Eleanor Bush**, *Diakon/Family Design Resources*

# Conference Registration Form

To register for the conference, please complete this form or register online at [www.diakon-swan.org](http://www.diakon-swan.org). Please note the dates for Early Bird and Regular Registrations. Pre-registered persons will receive a name badge, banquet and picnic tickets, a program and other materials at the registration area. Confirmation letters will be sent to those whose registrations are received by June 24, 2011. For questions about completing the form please call Beth Duzey at 1-888-793-2512.

**\*\*Please type or print clearly. Please complete one form per person.**

First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	Nickname (for Name Badge)	Professional Title
Agency Affiliation		Department	email	
Address (agency participants use company address)		City	State	Zip Code
Daytime Phone Number		Evening Phone Number	Fax Number	

Please check all that apply: I am a  Child Welfare Worker  Advocate  Legal Professional  Family  
 Permanency Professional  Independent Living Professional  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs: We want each participant to have the most enjoyable and accessible experience possible. Please let us know your special need in advance. Specify needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Specify dietary restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Workshop Session Selection:** To help us determine space requirements, please mark your preferred sessions in the appropriate spaces. Any session may be cancelled or rescheduled because of unforeseen circumstances. Schedule changes or cancellations will be posted at the registration area and noted in the final conference program that will be distributed at the conference.

## Wednesday, July 20 (Choose one)

Workshop 1 • 3:15 - 4:45 p.m.

W-WK1  W-WK2  W-WK3  W-WK4  W-WK5  W-WK6

## Thursday, July 21 Morning (Choose two workshops - one from Workshop 2 **and** one from Workshop 3 **or** one Institute)

Workshop 2 • 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

**AND**

Workshop 3 • 10:45 - 12:15 p.m.

TH-WK1  TH-WK2

TH-WK3  TH-WK4  TH-WK5

**OR**

Institute 1 • 9:00 - 12:15 p.m.

TH-IN1  TH-IN2  TH-IN3  TH-IN4  TH-IN5  TH-IN6  TH-IN7  TH-IN8  TH-IN9  TH-IN10

## Thursday, July 21 Afternoon (Choose two workshops - one from Workshop 4 **and** one from Workshop 5 **or** one Institute)

Workshop 4 • 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

**AND**

Workshop 5 • 3:45 - 5:15 p.m.

TH-WK6  TH-WK7  TH-WK8

TH-WK11  TH-WK12  TH-WK13

TH-WK9  TH-WK10

TH-WK14  TH-WK15

**OR**

Institute 2 • 2:00 - 5:15 p.m.

TH-IN11  TH-IN12  TH-IN13  TH-IN14  TH-IN15  TH-IN16  TH-IN17

## Friday, July 22 (Choose one)

Workshop Session 6 • 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

F-WK1  F-WK2  F-WK3  F-WK4  F-WK5  F-WK6  F-WK7

# Registration Options

**Please complete one form per person**

**July 20, 21 and 22 (entire conference)** (Includes two continental breakfasts, two afternoon breaks, Matching Brunch, Wednesday banquet, Family picnic, opening and closing keynote general sessions and up to six concurrent workshops)

**EARLY BIRD** (postmarked on or before June 24, 2011)

- \$180.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$100.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$75.00 – One parent

**will**  **will not be attending the banquet on Wednesday.**

**will**  **will not be attending the picnic on Thursday.**

**REGULAR RATE** (postmarked after June 24, 2011)

- \$200.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$120.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$95.00 – One parent

**Wednesday, July 20 ONLY** (Includes: Matching Brunch, opening keynote general session, afternoon break, Wednesday banquet and one workshop)

**EARLY BIRD** (postmarked on or before June 24, 2011)

- \$100.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$45.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$35.00 – One parent

**will**  **will not be attending the banquet on Wednesday.**

**REGULAR RATE** (postmarked after June 24, 2011)

- \$120.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$65.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$55.00 – One parent

**Thursday, July 21 ONLY** (Includes: continental breakfast, afternoon break, family picnic and up to four concurrent workshops)

**EARLY BIRD** (postmarked on or before June 24, 2011)

- \$100.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$45.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$35.00 – One parent

**will**  **will not be attending the picnic on Thursday.**

**REGULAR RATE** (postmarked after June 24, 2011)

- \$120.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$65.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$55.00 – One parent

**Friday, July 22 ONLY** (Includes continental breakfast, one workshop and closing keynote general session)

**EARLY BIRD** (postmarked on or before June 24, 2011)

- \$80.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$25.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$15.00 – One parent

**REGULAR RATE** (postmarked after June 24, 2011)

- \$100.00 – Agency-affiliated or other professional
- \$45.00 – Parenting couple (2 parents from the same family)
- \$25.00 – One parent

I have enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ child care/teen registration forms with payment. (See page 15 for Childcare Registration Form.) Child care/teen program registrations INCLUDE Thursday's family picnic (in addition to other meals and snacks listed on the Childcare Registration Form).

Extra meal tickets may be purchased for guests not registered for the conference or child care/teen programs. In order to help us anticipate space and meals, if you are purchasing additional tickets please indicate how many below:

ADDITIONAL BANQUET TICKETS \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$20.00/adult and \$10.00/child)

ADDITIONAL PICNIC TICKETS \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$20.00/adult and \$10.00/child)

**Payment Options:** Complete **one form per person** and attach check, money order or purchase order made payable to

*Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries*, or complete credit card information and mail to:

**Beth Duzey, Diakon/FDR, 471 JPLwick Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17111**

Credit Card Information: <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> VISA Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ Authorization code (3-4 digits on back of card) _____ Cardholder Name _____ Cardholder Address & Phone Number _____ _____ Authorized Signature _____	TOTAL REGISTRATION FEE: \$ _____  TOTAL CHILD CARE/TEEN REGISTRATIONS: \$ _____  TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: \$ _____
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# Child/Teen Care Program Information

## Child Care and Teen Registration

We are pleased to provide on-site child care, as well as activities for older children. Additional forms and payments are required if you are requesting child care. A child/teen care form (included in this brochure) must be completed for EACH child and teen who is participating in the sponsored activities. **Child/teen care is offered on a first-come basis. The deadline for child/teen care registration is June 10, 2011.** All child/teen care registrations received before June 10, 2011 will receive an informational confirmation packet. Permission forms from this packet must be filled out and brought with you to the conference. Drop-in care is NOT available. Children and teens must be pre-registered to receive care.

## Child Care and Teen Activities

**Ages infant through 11:** Child care will be available for the first 100 children registered. The rate is \$50 per child for the entire conference.

**Ages 12 through 17:** This supervised program will include a keynote session and other special activities. The teen program is limited to the first 50 youths registered.



Teens must be no older than 17 at the time of the conference. The rate is \$50 per youth for the entire conference.

**Meals:** Daily snacks, Wednesday dinner, Thursday breakfast, lunch and picnic and Friday breakfast will be provided. Parents whose children are unable to eat table food must provide food (i.e. formula, baby food, bottles, special diets, allergies, etc.).

**Activities:** On-site activities will be provided for children and teens. Swimming will be available for children ages 8 to 17. Participation in swimming and bowling requires written parental permission and appropriate clothing.

**Medications:** Parents are responsible for administering medications to children. **Child care staff will not administer medications.**

**Drop-In Care:** DROP-IN CARE IS NOT AVAILABLE. Children and teens must be pre-registered to receive care.

**No walk-ins will be accepted for either group.** Children and teens are required to attend all activities while their parents or caregivers are at the conference.

# Child/Teen Care Registration Form

Please complete **one form per child/teen**. Photocopy the form for additional children/teens if necessary.

**FEE:** \$50 per child or teen includes daily snacks, meals and activities for the duration of the conference.

Parents must provide food for children who are unable to eat table food (i.e. formula, baby food, bottles, special diets, allergies, etc.).

Child/teen care staff will **NOT** administer medications.

## THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER CHILDREN/TEENS IS JUNE 10, 2011.

Child care for children ages infant through 11 years **OR**  Teen program for children ages 12–17 years

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Initial Last

Parent/Guardian Attending Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone (in the event of an emergency) \_\_\_\_\_

Dates care is needed:  Wednesday, July 20  Thursday, July 21  Friday, July 22

Please describe any accommodations your child will need to fully participate in child care activities:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any dietary restrictions your child may have:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please disclose any medical conditions. Failure to disclose this information could result in removal from the child/teen care program:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list anything that would be helpful for the child/teen care staff to know about your child (likes, dislikes, fears, allergies, medications, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_

For child/teen care registration to be complete:

Complete form. **One per child/teen.**  To secure a space for your child, all registrations **must** be accompanied by payment.

Attach payment. **NOTE:** Make check payable to: *Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries*.  Enclose form and payment with your completed conference registration form.

**Confirmation information will be forwarded to you if the completed child/teen care registration form(s) and payment are received by June 10, 2011. You will need to complete the forms in the information packet and bring them with you to the conference. Registrations received after June 10, 2011 will receive the necessary forms at the conference. No child/teen care registrations will be accepted after June 10, 2011.**

