

# the family knot



## Books That Can Change Many Older Orphans' Lives



The topic of adopting older children weighs very heavily on my heart. As an adoptive dad who has gone through the journey of adopting my daughter at almost ten, I know how critical and challenging it is to find loving families for those whose hope is diminishing with every passing day.

However, it troubles me to see the raising rate of failed adoptions of older children in recent years as more order orphans are adopted through many agencies' Waiting Child Programs. There are many reasons behind the disruption, of course, but we realize that one of the key reasons is the lack of good training and preparation material for orphanages as well as these older kids.

A few months ago Lily and I had a meeting with the CCCWA General Director Li. He asked for our help with older orphans' pre-placement training. We responded enthusiastically with a yes. Now, after almost four months of research, analyzing, writing, and editing, two booklets have been produced:

- For Their Happiness – A Training Manual for Orphanage Directors, Caretakers and Foster Families Concerning Older Orphan Adoption
- We Are Ready – An Educational Picture Manual for Older Orphans Waiting for Adoption

The two booklets tackle the most common obstacles and challenges that influence the success or failure of an older

child adoption, from child psychology, adoption information accuracy, attachment struggles, language difficulties, and cultural differences, including personal hygiene, family dynamics, schooling, relationships, food and sleeping.

Both booklets have been reviewed and approved by the CCCWA and are ready for massive printing. CCCWA wants 2,000 sets to distribute nationwide as soon as possible so every orphanage involved in international adoption will have one or two sets. Each set costs about \$10 to print, so we need to raise \$20,000 by the end of September 2014.

**Would you help us to meet this urgent and life changing need by donating to the cost of printing 1, 20, 50, 100, or however many copies you desire? We NEED YOUR SUPPORT!!!**

To donate online, you can visit [www.ccaifamily.org](http://www.ccaifamily.org), or mail your tax deductible check to: 6920 S. Holly Cir. Centennial, CO 80112.

Thank you so much,  
Josh and Lily

## Happy Fall!

As always, please let us know if there are topics you would like to see covered or if you would like to submit a photo for our featured child section!

### Summer 2014 Statistics

May-June-July



### We Need Your Help!

If you adopted a child who was over the age of 5, would you like to be part of our project? As part of our project to prepare older children for adoption, we are preparing a video that will show children others who have been adopted and are doing well. We'd love to share home videos of when your child came home, meeting family and friends or going to school for the first time, or current video if your child would be comfortable sharing about their adoption. CCAI can provide questions or topics that would be helpful for the children waiting for adoption. We'd also like to hear what both parents and children wish they would have been prepared for prior to adoption. Thanks for your help!

# The Blessing of Adoption

By Sheryl Martin

## Post Adoption Requirements

### China

A total of six post adoption reports will be submitted to the CCCWA. Here is what is required with each report.

**1 Month:** A report written by your social worker, and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

**6 Months:** A report written by your social worker; a copy of the Certificate of Citizenship; and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

**12 Months:** A report written by your social worker; a Special Needs Feedback form (Waiting Child Program only); and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

**2 Years:** A report written by your social worker and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

**3 Years:** A report written by your social worker and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

**5 Years:** A report written by your social worker and a total of 8 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

In addition to these requirements, an essay is required for every report when a child is 10 years old or older.

### Haiti

Currently two reports are required at 6 months and 12 months. Each report should be written by a social worker, and be accompanied by 4 pictures, including an individual picture and a family picture.

My excitement mounted - and so did my fears - as I packed my suitcase to head to the hospital to give birth, not one time, but each of three separate times. The butterflies were fluttering fast and furiously! The long, highly-anticipated wait was nearing its end. How would I feel when my daughter was placed into my arms?

Unexpectedly, I experienced these exact same emotions as I once again packed my suitcase for another daughter to come into our family. This time I wasn't packing for the hospital, I was packing for China!

Mariah's story began for us over a decade ago. My husband lived in Korea, and I in Thailand. Before we ever met, we fell in love with the Asian culture. Later, we fell in love with each other. We were soon blessed with three beautiful daughters. Words cannot describe the love we felt for our three girls. Yet, something was missing. We realized we were still longing for the little Asian girl God had put on our heart years before we ever even knew each other.

After a long two year wait, we headed with our seven year old daughter, to go to pick up Mariah from her Guangzhou orphanage. She was a gift from Heaven, just like my other three. That first day, Mariah was terrified. She cried and screamed for a very long time. Tears filled my own eyes while I held her and had to watch her squirm around in fear and anxiety. She had a new life now awaiting her, just as my babies did when they were placed into my arms for the first time. Over the next few months, her fear slowly subsided and gave way to peace and love.

Adoption to my family is a blessing all around, but to each one it means something different.

For my husband, the blessing of adoption has been watching the transformation of a petrified, lonely, little girl into a thriving, fun-loving daughter.

For my oldest daughter (age 7), the blessing of adoption began on day one when Hannah was able to walk hand in hand with her new little sister down the hallway of our hotel in China. Hannah chooses to share a room with Mariah, get her snacks, and read to Mariah late at night when it is just the two of them.



For my second oldest, and deepest thinker, Alyssa, the blessing of adoption has been getting to experience first-hand, how love can change a life. She is fascinated with "orphans" and really "gets it" that adoption is a life-changing event that gives someone a chance.

For my third daughter, Mikayla, the blessing came with struggles. She had to let go of being the baby and learn to become a big sister to someone very needy. Mariah's arrival has helped Mikayla become more mature and responsible. Now Mikayla has a new sister AND a new friend in Mariah.

For me, the blessing comes from the peace of knowing our family is complete. I enjoy watching her ride her bike and remembering how, at first, she didn't even have the stamina to walk around our cul-de-sac. It touches me deeply when she voluntarily shares her last cookie with her sister, and I love to hear her excitedly recite from memory, her "adoption story".

For Mariah, she will only one day later understand more fully what adoption means. But for now, adoption means getting to take a bubble bath with her sisters; having lots of dresses to choose from in her closet; sitting down to three meals a day with a family; and someone putting a band aid on her boo-boos. For Mariah, adoption means she can begin to learn to trust and love.

Behind every adoption story there is a family changed forever by love.





## China Hosting Program

by Sheila King

### The China Hosting Program is under way!

Have you ever considered hosting an older child from China? The children available for hosting are orphans between the ages of 5 and 13 years old. Most of the children are already available for adoption. Families choose to host for a variety of reasons. Some families ultimately want to adopt the child they host, and find that this is a great opportunity; it also eases the transition for the child if the child already knows the family that is adopting him/her. Other families host a child in order to advocate on the child's behalf, and interested adoptive families have the opportunity to talk with the host family and meet the child during the hosting period. As a result of hosting, many older children are adopted that otherwise may not have been.

This summer CCAI helped to bring 19 orphans ages 5 to 13 from China to the US. The children spent four weeks with their host families before returning to China last week. Some of their favorite activities were: going to movies, swimming, visiting the zoo, going to parks, visiting the beach, playing toys, playing games, playing with their host family's pets, and just hanging out with their host family. The children all seemed to have a great time!

CCAI's Winter China Hosting Program is now underway! We have 34 orphans ages 5 to 13 available for hosting this winter.

If you are interested in learning more about the hosting program, or if you are you interested in hosting an older child this winter, please send an email to [hosting@ccaifamily.org](mailto:hosting@ccaifamily.org) or call 303-850-9998 x42. More information on CCAI's China Hosting Program is available on the CCAI website.



### Did you know?

CCAI is now a placing agency for China (of course!), Haiti, Latvia, and Ukraine. In addition, we can provide home study agency services for families adopting from any country (including domestic) in the states where we have offices - Colorado, Florida, Georgia, and Kentucky.

### Family to Family Program

Do you feel like you are the only family raising an adopted child? Do you wish you had a support system in place for you to talk with other parents with similar families, and for your children to play with other children like them, adopted, perhaps with special needs, in families that look a bit different? We'd like to help! We'd like to provide a list of playgroups or support groups around the country for families to join. If you know of a group or would be willing to organize a group, please send us an email with the contact information and general information about the group. Groups don't have to be "official", but can be as simple as a monthly get together at a park.

Please send information to: [postadoption2@ccaifamily.org](mailto:postadoption2@ccaifamily.org).

### Calling all Preteens!

We are happy to announce that our Adoptween schedule has been released for families living in the Colorado area. For the schedule and more information, please see the Adoptween website, [www.adoptween.org](http://www.adoptween.org).

We are also in process of completing our Adoptween manual for families who would like to start a group in their area. If you have not let us know that you would like to start a group, please let us know so that we can send you more information when it is available.

The purpose of Adoptween is to provide a community for preteens to make friends and develop valuable relationships with themselves, peers, and mentors. Adoptween is an opportunity for preteen adoptees (9-12) and young adoptee mentors (15+) from any country.



## This Issue's Featured Child

*In each issue, we love to feature a CCAI child or family! Here's the pick for this quarter.*

Say hello to darling Jonah! He was adopted this year from PuYang, Henan. He's a fun, sweet boy with a great smile!

Would you like to share a picture to be shared in our Featured Child Section next time? Send the picture and a description to [postadoption@ccaifamily.org](mailto:postadoption@ccaifamily.org). In the next issue, we'd love to feature a older child or a child from a non-China adoption!

## Sensory Integration Activities

### Learning to Self-Regulate



Research suggests the majority of adopted and foster children have some amount of sensory integration difficulty. Self-regulation helps children learn to manage these difficulties.

**For many children, self-regulation** is a challenge. Self-regulation means to be able to calm yourself, by yourself. Most children become overwhelmed with sensory difficulties or emotions, and don't have the skills to learn to calm themselves. Here are some strategies you can learn together, that your child can use to calm down if needed.

**Magic Mustache:** Holding a pointer finger straight, press the finger against the top lip gently, and count to ten. There is a pressure point at this place, which can help calm.

**Pushing Down the Wall:** This is an all-time kid favorite! Give your child permission to push against a wall where nothing will fall off or be damaged, using their arms only. They can push as hard as they can, for as long as they want. This deep muscle action helps to organize the brain and calm emotions.

**Chair Push-Ups:** This one can be done at home or at school. While seated in a chair, place both hands on the edge of the chair in line with hips. Using arms, press down on the chair, lifting the body up. Hold for ten seconds. This can be especially helpful during a stressful test at school!

## Events

*Take a look at these upcoming events at our Colorado office! For information about joining us, contact us at [mail@ccaifamily.org](mailto:mail@ccaifamily.org).*



### CCAI Anniversary

CCAI celebrates it's 22 nd anniversary!



### Orphan Care Gala

CCAI's second annual Orphan Care Gala. Stayed tuned for information on how to be involved!



For more information about our Post Adoption Department, programs, or for any questions or concerns, please contact Heather Diaz at [postadoption@ccaifamily.org](mailto:postadoption@ccaifamily.org), or (303) 850-9998 ex. 22.