



# Adoptions From The Heart®

Presents:

## Adoption In the Changing World: Tools for Professionals & Families

*\*CEUs Available*

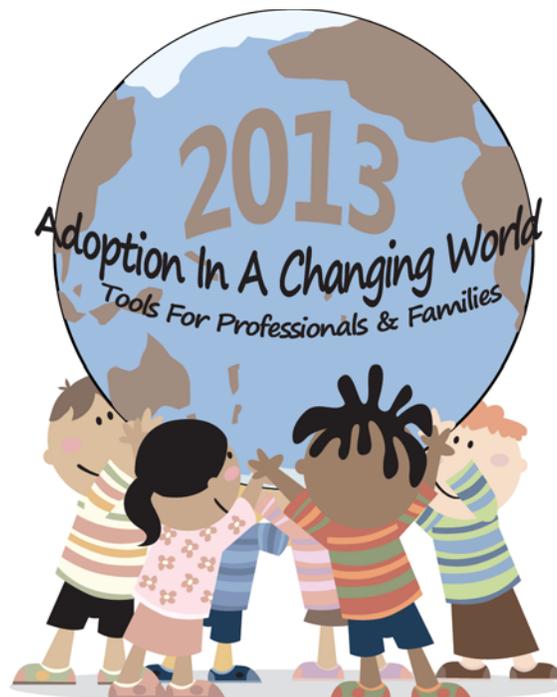
**Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013**

**9:00am- 4:00pm**

Bonus Session 4:30 - 6:00pm

**Wesleyan University**  
Middletown, CT

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Presents:

*Adoption In the Changing World: Tools for Professionals & Families*

# Conference Schedule \* 6.5 CEUs available

<b>Registration</b> Opens 8:15am	Sign-In, Raffles, Coffee & Light Breakfast			
<b>Welcome &amp; Keynote</b> 9:00 - 10:15am	Welcome Address: Maxine Chalker, Adoptions From The Heart <b>Keynote Speaker: Adam Pertman, Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute</b>			
<b>Session I</b> 10:30 - 11:45am	A. Attachment in Adoption	B. Understanding Adoption & Tools to Educate Others	C. LGBT Adoptions	D. Adoptee Panel
<b>Lunch</b> 12:00 - 1:00pm	Complimentary Buffet Style Lunch			
<b>Session II</b> 1:00 - 2:15pm	E. Medical Issues in Adoption	F. Transracial Adoption Panel	G. Birthmother Experience Panel	H. Legal Issues in Adoption
<b>Session III</b> 2:30 - 3:45pm	I. Open Adoption Discussion	J. Adoption: The Hospital Experience	K. Exploring Special Needs Adoptions	
<b>Sign-Out</b> 3:45 - 4:00pm	Sign-Out, Raffle Winners Announced			
<b>Bonus Session</b> 4:30 - 6:00pm (Optional-not required for CEUs)	The Adoption Experience: From the Adoption Triad Perspective (Panel) **Recommended for professionals, adoptive parents, and those considering adoption.			

## Introduction

### Adoption In a Changing World: Tools for Professionals & Families

Maxine Chalker, MSW, LSW co-host

Penny Rearick, LCSW co-host

Join us for a unique adoption conference full of exciting workshops and presenters and learn how adoption continues to be influenced by our changing world. The workshops are designed to give attendees a broad spectrum of topics ranging from openness in adoption and special needs adoption to attachment and legal issues in adoption as well as several panels to help attendees see adoption from various perspectives. The 2013 AFTH adoption conference will provide professionals and families with tools and resources to navigate adoption in today's world.

## Keynote

### Untangling the Web: The Internet's Transformative Impact on Adoption

Adam Pertman, Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute

The Internet (and social media in particular) is instigating historic changes in adoption practices, challenging current laws and policies, offering unprecedented opportunities and resources, and raising critical ethical, legal and procedural issues. It is likely bringing an end to "closed" adoptions and accelerating the formation of extended families that include birth and adoptive relatives. Yet there is little reliable information, research or experience to guide professionals, courts or families. This presentation draws from the Adoption Institute's recent report, "Untangling the Web," the first in-depth examination of the issues involved and their impact on millions of children, families and professionals, including recommendations for future law, policy and practice.

## Workshop Descriptions

### **Session I** (10:30am - 11:45am)

#### **A. Attachment in Adoption**

Presenter: Penny Rearick, LCSW

Attachment Theory is an important, but very much misunderstood topic. This workshop will give an overview of the spectrum of attachment concerns (from Attachment Issues to Reactive Attachment Disorder). We will discuss ways in which we as professionals can assist adoptive families to foster attachments with their adoptive children.

#### **B. Understanding Adoption & Tools to Educate Others**

Presenter: Danielle Goodman, BSW

As adoption comes more into the open, it's no longer as taboo as it once was. There is an urgent need to dispel myths and misconceptions and educate those who are indirectly, as well as directly, touched by adoption. Learn the truth about adoption in today's world and how to pass on your knowledge and understanding to others.

### **Complimentary Lunch** (12:00pm - 1:00pm)

### **Session II** (1:00pm - 2:15pm)

#### **E. Medical Issues in Adoption**

Presenter: Robert Adamenko, MD

Attendees will use a typical medical information form given during the adoption process to follow as a guide through discussing the effects of prenatal drug use as well as the realities of common medical conditions. Secondly, this workshop will address common substance exposure in infants, including the effects of alcohol, marijuana, SSRIs, and PCP drugs. Part two will discuss medical conditions such as VSD, cleft lip, and club feet. Attendees will be presented with prevalence data, risks, and more.

#### **F. Transracial Adoption Panel**

Moderator: Danielle Goodman, BSW

Trans-racial adoption is defined as: the placement of a child of a nationality or ethnic origin other than that of their adoptive parents. Today, 40% of adoptions by U.S. families are trans-racial adoptions. A moderated panel of adoptive families will share their personal experiences and insights regarding trans-racial adoption.

#### **C. LGBT Adoptions**

Moderator: Roberta Evantash, BSW

Same sex couples encounter unique obstacles in building their families. In this workshop, Adam Pertman, author of *Adoption by Lesbians and Gay Men: A New Dimension in Family Diversity* and *Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution Is Transforming Our Families*, as well as a panel of LGBT couples and singles, will discuss their experience with the adoption process in addition to parenting successes and challenges.

#### **D. Adoptee Panel**

Moderator: Maxine Chalker, MSW, LSW, Founder & Executive Director of AFTH

Through the stories told by a panel of adoptees with a variety of experiences in open, closed, international, and domestic adoptions, attendees will gain insight into the inner worlds of an adopted person's life experiences and have an opportunity to ask questions and find a deeper understanding.

#### **G. Birthmother Experience Panel**

*\*Please Note: This workshop will also be included in our Bonus Session*

Moderator: Penny Rearick, LCSW

Discover what open adoption means to women making adoption plans for their babies. Hear stories from birthmothers in open adoptions, and learn about the adoption journey from several birthmother perspectives. In this panel you will be able to ask questions and join in the conversation.

#### **H. Legal Issues in Adoption**

Presenter: Donald B. Sherer, Attorney at Law

Attorney Don Sherer is recognized in Adoption and Assisted Reproductive law and children's issues. A former Connecticut legislator he will discuss the current state of adoption in Connecticut, its emphasis on agency involvement and how it relates to other states in the domestic adoption process.

## Workshop Descriptions

### **Session III** (2:30pm - 3:45pm)

#### **I. Open Adoption Discussion**

*\*Please Note: This workshop will also be included in our Bonus Session*

Presenter & Moderator: Penny Rearick, LCSW

Open adoption is a form of adoption in which the adoptees, birth families, and adoptive families have varying degrees of contact. In an open adoption, the birth families and adoptive families may mutually agree on contact in varying forms from only sending mail and/or photos, to face-to-face visits between birth and adoptive families. A panel of birth parents and adoptive parents will share their personal experiences, representing the continuum of openness, and will provide insight into the vast spectrum of open adoption.

#### **J. Adoption: The Hospital Experience**

Co-presenter: Debbie Feigenbaum, LCSW

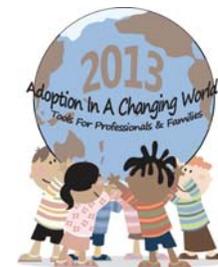
Co-presenter: Jeanne McGee, MSS

This workshop will address what may be anticipated during the hospital experience of the adoption process including counseling, making a hospital plan, and the uniqueness of emergency placements. Discover how to navigate and balance the needs of all members of the adoption triad during the hospital experience.

#### **K. Exploring Special Needs Adoption**

Presenter: Cathy Gentile Doyle, LCSW

Today, more and more families are considering special needs adoptions as a way of building their families. Gain tools to help families decide if special needs adoptions are right for them. Learn how to build a plan to manage undiagnosed special needs. Consider new, outside the box suggestions on how to address unexpected cognitive and emotional delay and understand how proactive parenting can help.



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### **Session IV - Bonus Session** (4:30pm - 6:00pm)

#### **The Adoption Experience: From the Adoption Triad Perspective (Panel)**

Moderator: Penny Rearick, LCSW

This presentation is an opportunity for those who might have missed earlier workshops covering the topics addressed in the *Birthmother Experience Panel* and/ or the *Open Adoption Discussion*. Additionally, this presentation is a valuable learning opportunity for those unable to attend the full conference, professionals, adoptive parents, and those considering adoption. This bonus session includes a discussion from a variety of panelists including birthmothers, adoptive parents, etc.

\*Please Note: Admission to the bonus session is free for all full-day conference registrants. A fee of \$15 applies for those attending the Bonus Session only.

## Questions?

Please contact **Adoptions From The Heart** at 800-355-5500

**Alexandra** at (610) 642-7200 or [AlexandraP@afth.org](mailto:AlexandraP@afth.org)

**Penny** at (860) 657-2626 or [PennyR@afth.org](mailto:PennyR@afth.org)

## *Adoption In the Changing World: Tools for Professionals & Families*

# Presenter Biographies



### **Adam Pertman**

Adam Pertman is Executive Director of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, a national nonprofit that is the pre-eminent research, policy and education organization in its field. Pertman – a former Pulitzer-nominated journalist – is also Associate Editor of *Adoption Quarterly*, the premier research journal dealing with adoption and foster care. He is the author/editor of two newly published books, *Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution is Transforming Our Families* and *America* (which has been reviewed as “the most important book ever written on the subject”) and “*Gay and Lesbian Adoption: A New Dimension in Family Diversity*”, and has written many other chapters and articles on adoption- and family-related issues in books, scholarly journals and mass-market publications. Pertman has delivered hundreds of keynotes, trainings and other presentations in this country and internationally for organization



### **Maxine Chalker, MSW, LSW**

Maxine Chalker founded Adoptions From The Heart in 1985, today she remains Executive Director of the agency. Maxine, herself an adoptee, wanted to give adoption a new face by breaking down the barriers and taking some of the mystery out of the adoption process. Keeping in mind the needs of all the members of the adoption triad, (birth parents, adoptive parents, and adopted children) she opened the first “open” adoption agency in the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware area.

### **Penny Rearick, MSW, LCSW**

Penny Rearick, MSW, LCSW began her social work career in 1982. Her experience ranges from nursing homes and hospitals to health service agencies. For over 20 years, Penny has worked in the field of adoption. She has counseled and provided services for both adoptive parents and birthparents, coordinated international adoption programs and founded Adoption Resource Center of Connecticut in 1998, serving there for 10 years. In 2008, Penny was named District Supervisor of Adoptions From The Heart's newly opened Glastonbury, CT office location. Penny has a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Southern Illinois University, a Master's degree from Fordham University and a Post-Master's Certificate in Clinical Issues in Adoption from University of Connecticut's Graduate School of Social Work. She is also a Certified Financial Social Worker and is EMDR trained.

### **Danielle Goodman, BSW**

Danielle Goodman, BSW has been an adoption social worker with Adoptions From The Heart for 7 years. Prior to working with AFTH Danielle spent 4 years as an AIDS Waiver case manager and previously worked with clients of various disabilities. Danielle graduated with her bachelors of Social Work from Shippensburg University and has some credits towards a masters degree from Capella University.

### **Roberta Evantash, BS**

Roberta Evantash has worked in the field of adoption, both foreign and domestic, for over twenty five years. She has been responsible for opening the Pittsburgh and Virginia offices of Adoptions From The Heart and oversees those offices and the Connecticut office. For many years she was the coordinator of the agency's highly successful China Program in which over 1,500 placements occurred.

### **Robert Adamenko, MD**

Dr. Adamenko is a practicing pediatrician in Glastonbury, CT with ProHealth Physicians. He is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics in the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. As an adoptive father himself, he has developed an interest in applying his medical and personal experience to assist families pursuing adoption. Dr. Adamenko is the school medical advisor in Glastonbury, and serves on the Health Advisory Committee for Hartford's Community Renewal Team, Inc.

### **Donald B. Sheerer, Attorney at Law**

Donald B. Sheerer has been engaged in the practice of law since his 1974 graduation from Brooklyn Law School. Attorney Sheerer is Fellow of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. His practice focuses on Adoption and Reproductive Technology Law; Residential and Commercial Real Estate transactions; title searching and title law; Civil and Criminal litigation; contract law. He is a member of the NY and Connecticut Bars and is admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court and the Federal Courts of New York and CT. He was bestowed the “Angel in Adoption” designation awarded by the U.S. Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. Attorney Sheerer was elected to the Connecticut House of Representatives and served from 2003-2007. During his service, he sat on the Select Committee on Children and was the lead member of the Foster Care to Adoption Task Force.

### **Debbie Feigenbaum, MSW, LCSW**

Deb Feigenbaum, MSW, LCSW is the Social Work Supervisor at John Dempsey Hospital. She has her undergraduate degree in Psychology from the University of Michigan and a Masters in Social Work from Columbia University. She has worked at the University of Connecticut Health Center as a Clinical Social Worker for over 22 years in many different areas. Her passion and current clinical specialty include working in the Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery, where she has worked for 15 years. She is a member of National Association of Perinatal Social Workers (NAPSW). For the past 10 years, she has been a Clinical Preceptor at the UConn School of Medicine, teaching second year medical students. In addition, she coordinates the Graduate Social Work internship program for the Health Center.

### **Cathy Gentile-Doyle, LCSW**

Cathy Gentile-Doyle has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker since 1986 (LCSW) and has practiced Social Work for approximately 35 years in both Massachusetts and Connecticut. Cathy has concentrated her long professional career upon offering child-centered, family-focused services to children and families in areas of child protection, foster care, adoption and in-patient mental health treatment. Since 2006 she has been the Project Specialist and Primary Faculty for the Clinical Issues in Adoption Post Master's Certificate program, a collaborative project that is funded by a grant from the Department of Children and Families Training Academy and cosponsored by UConn School of Social Work and Southern CT State University.



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# Adoptions From The Heart

## About Us

Adoptions From The Heart is a private, non-profit, 501(c)(3), adoption agency. Since 1985, the mission of Adoptions From The Heart has been to provide safe and loving homes for children and offer quality, comprehensive services to adoptive families, birth parents and children. AFTH is one of the highest placing agencies on the East Coast with over 6,120 children placed in loving homes since opening its doors.

With office locations and staff in Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Virginia; and now expanded domestic services to anyone in the U.S., Adoptions From The Heart offers free services to pregnant women. Services include legal and medical assistance; and on-going supportive counseling and care. Available 24/7, AFTH staff are here to help.

AFTH offers domestic adoption, homestudy services, embryo placement assistance, and surrogacy in India. Through educational, counseling and support programs, Adoptions From The Heart strives to help strengthen families, support birth parents and educate the community.

## Connect on Social Media



*For more information, visit us online at [www.aftth.org](http://www.aftth.org)*

### CONNECTICUT

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Chesapeake, VA 23320  
(757) 361-0008  
Fax (757) 361-9222

**Agency Toll Free Number:  
(800)355-5500**

# Registration Form



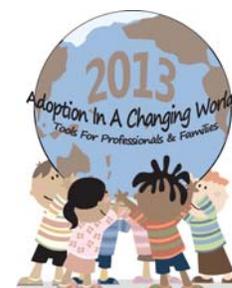
**Register Online at**  
<http://tiny.cc/2013AdoptionConference>

## Personal:

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Fee:

	Early Bird Rate	After August 30th
Professionals	<input type="checkbox"/> \$89	<input type="checkbox"/> \$99
Students/Seniors 65+ (must present valid ID's)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49	<input type="checkbox"/> \$59
Organization Discount (3 or more people from organization)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$79	<input type="checkbox"/> \$89
Bonus Session Only (4:30-6:00pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$5.00 Off</b> before 10/19/13 at 12:00pm
Add 6.5 CEUs (Continuing Education Units)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	



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## Organization:

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Attendee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

## Session Selection: (Please select one per session)

Session #1 (10:00-11:45am)

- A. Attachment Issues in Adoption
- B. Understanding Adoption & Tools to Educate Others
- C. LGBT Adoptions
- D. Adoptee Panel

Session #3 (2:30-3:45pm)

- I. Open Adoption Discussion
- J. Adoption: The Hospital Experience
- K. Exploring Sepecial Needs Adoption

Session #2 (1:00-2:15pm)

- E. Medical Issues in Adoption
- F. Transracial Adoption Panel
- G. Birthmother Experience Panel
- H. Legal Issues in Adoption

Session #4 (Bonus Session 4:30-6:00pm) \*Included for all full-conference attendees

- Yes, I will be attending
- No, I will NOT be attending

## Payment Method

- Check enclosed (payable to Adoptions From The Heart)  
 Credit card: (circle one)      Visa/MC       AmEx       Discover

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVC Number \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name (As It Appears on Card) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_