



# PARC NEWSLETTER

## FOR ADOPTIVE AND GUARDIANSHIP FAMILIES

Region 6

Volume 21

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### Take a Stand. Lend a Hand.

Bullying is a hot topic throughout our school communities. More than one out of every five (20.8%) students report being bullied (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016). Our adopted and guardian kids are at risk of being bullied and at risk of exhibiting bullying behaviors.

What behaviors are considered bullying? According to the website [www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov), bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity, to control or harm others.
- Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

What can be done about bullying? [www.StopBullying.gov](http://www.StopBullying.gov) says we must stop bullying on the spot. When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior, they send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time. There are simple steps adults can take to stop bullying on the spot and keep kids safe:

- Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
- Separate the kids involved.
- Make sure everyone is safe.
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
- Model respectful behavior when you intervene.
- Don't ignore it.
- Don't think kids can work it out without adult help.
- Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.
- All kids involved in bullying—whether they are bullied, bully others, or see bullying—can be affected. It is important to support all kids involved to make sure the bullying doesn't continue and effects can be minimized.



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In Association With



# PARC FAMILY PAGE

WRITING SUBMISSIONS FROM OUR FAMILY'S

**Peer-to-Peer Support-** Research has found peer-to-peer support to be extremely beneficial. This is very true for adoptive/guardian families. Below is an entry from an adopted youth who wishes to share her experience and her story. If you would like to submit your thoughts in an effort to support others, please email them to the link below.

## “Relationships” by Grace, age 16, adopted at 2

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**Relationship**, adjective - The way in which two or more concepts, objects or people are connected. Or the stage of being connected. Today I am going to tell you about my journey with my mom. The relationship we have and the obstacles we have overcome. “Life has many ways of testing a person’s will, by having nothing happen at all or having everything happen at once” -unknown. My mom and I have always had a rocky relationship. We have agreed/disagreed, gotten in fights/gotten along, been super close/really distant. I’ve always lived a pretty simple life. No big tragedies, or events happened. Up until eighth grade I was “kinda normal” until the middle of eighth grade when I started going down this slope. I went from going to school, to either swim, track, or gymnastics to skipping all of those and coming home to sleep. This is what I would call being down. My parents were noticing that when I was acting a bit down, I stopped eating as much and sleeping A LOT. To the point where my mom wouldn’t let me sleep. My mom has always been one to try to help and work things out, never pushy just someone to talk to when I needed it. She was the last person I wanted help from.

I was embarrassed to get help. In my eyes she’s perfect. I always thought to myself why can’t I be smart and be normal. Out of all six kids, why am I the different one? These thoughts kept rushing through my head daily. I hated being the only one out. I was shutting the one person I needed the most away from me. At times it seemed like it was the right thing to do but on the other hand a really bad idea. Ninth grade came around and I started diving with the high school swim and dive team. I was never home. I was still in this down stage but it started going away. I was so caught up with school and friends, I had no time for family. I started to get into drama and lying. Both these things were building into bigger and bigger things. I was losing trust from my parents. I would say I started acting like a rebel but definitely not in a good way. I started not caring what they would say and skip practice. I lost all care in the world about my grades and school. My grades went down increasingly. I lost trust from my friends and parents, my grades were dropping. I’m right back to that feeling I was in the beginning of the year. I was trying everything to fix myself. It’s impossible to change yourself overnight.

I was mad and upset with not just myself but the world. I started hating the world. I was so irritated by everyone and I hated everyone. Water polo season came around, and I started coming back to my normal shell. As you can expect, a few weeks into that I was right back to my down self. This was an ongoing roller coaster I just couldn’t seem to control or get off. The summer came around and I was completely fine. The beginning of 10th grade started. I was super close with my mom, closer than ever. We would talk all the time and get to know each other. I could say I was okay. A few months into school I went through a really hard time, accepting who I was and trying not to fix myself but to make a better me. I was getting hurt by everyone around me, including myself. At this point I was lower than ever and I was so ready to give up. Luckily I have the world’s best mom. She is an incredible person. She is so strong willed and I wish I would have given her a chance before I just shut her out. She would’ve been the last person to judge or hurt me. I started going to therapy and getting my life in order. I was diagnosed with depression. Yes hearing the word depression sounds like an awful thing to deal with but having the right person next to you walking your journey by your side was the last of my worries. I am so thankful for everything I’ve been through. Yeah it sucked but, time will pass quicker than you think. Just hang in there. “Where your treasure is, there will also be your heart.” This quote from the Alchemist really speaks to me because through my journey I was looking for my treasure which was hope.

**IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN OUR NEWSLETTER, PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSION TO TRACY BY EMAIL AT [TRACY\\_KAPUSANSKY@JUDSONCENTER.ORG](mailto:TRACY_KAPUSANSKY@JUDSONCENTER.ORG)**

# Self-Care Spotlight

## Self-Care just isn't important, it's crucial!

It's very easy to forget to take care of ourselves with the hustle and bustle of day to day life. We have families, work, and other responsibilities that need our attention. Self-care is crucial for adoptive and guardian parents. The physical and emotional toll of taking care of children who are traumatized from past experiences can be overwhelming. Children can project the hurt they are feeling onto their parents, and blame parents for their feelings of loss and despair. Parents must be aware of the unique needs their child has and understand that their child's grief and loss is not a linear plane. When parents have the knowledge and practice self-care, parents can remain balanced and effective.

### Common Barriers to Self-Care

- Adoptive and guardian parents are natural caregivers. Most days the amount of energy they put into others exceeds the amount of energy they have for themselves. Many caregivers are uncomfortable on the receiving end of care.
- Many adoptive parents struggle with family always wanting to be there for every single event. Many times they work longer and harder to try to meet their family's needs.
- When asked, many adoptive parents do not know what they would do if given the chance to have more self-care. It is not only tough to ask for help, but it's nearly impossible to ask for help if you aren't fully aware of what you need.
- Many parents feel like they shouldn't need help. The stigma associated with receiving help prevents individuals from asking for help.

Take  
care of  
your  
self!

### The Road to Good Self-Care

- Give yourself a break, and admit when you need something.
- Stop comparing your journey to other families' adoptive journeys. Every family and child is unique.
- Join a support group
- Have personal down time everyday
- Have a routine to get out of the house, and do something for yourself.
- Critically analyze which part of your day is the hardest and develop a plan to make it smoother.
- Make expectations and life choices that fit your family. Having unreasonable expectations creates stress when they are not met.

SELF CARE:  
*Attitudes and actions  
that contribute to  
happiness, balance,  
and well-being.*

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER: "I WAS CHOSEN, I WAS WANTED, I WAS CHERISHED, I GREW IN THEIR HEARTS, I WAS THE MISSING PIECE, I AM LOVED, I AM ADOPTED." – UNKNOWN





## Region 6 Meetings, Support Groups, and Trainings!

Build connections with and get support from others who truly understand!

In addition to adult meetings, PARC youth groups for older children and childcare for younger ones are available at most meetings!

### Genesee County Family Connections Meeting

Meeting starts with a potluck dinner; please bring a dish to pass if you are able. Childcare provided with RSVP by email to: [Luginia\\_Srygley@JudsonCenter.org](mailto:Luginia_Srygley@JudsonCenter.org) or by phone to: 810-938-3770.

When: First Thursday of each month

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: South Baptist Church G4091 Van Slyke Rd., Flint, MI 48507.

### Lapeer Family Connections Meeting -

Adoptive, guardian, kinship and foster families are invited to attend this group to get support and build connections with others who share similar experiences.

Childcare provided with RSVP by email to:

[Somer\\_Vickery@JudsonCenter.org](mailto:Somer_Vickery@JudsonCenter.org)

or by phone to: 810-732-8510

When: Second Monday of the Month

Time: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Location: St. Paul Lutheran Church 90 Millville Rd., Lapeer, MI 48446



### Online Calendar Link:

[www.parc-judson.org/calendar](http://www.parc-judson.org/calendar)

## Adoptive Family Resource Spotlight

From the State of Michigan  
Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Office

Did you know Medical Subsidy funds are available for **Tutoring Services** for children adopted from foster care? If your child is having a difficult time getting back in the swing of school or remembering last year's information, consider obtaining a prior approval for tutoring. Medical Subsidy may fund up to five hours of tutoring up to \$30 per hour, if your child has a related physical, mental, or emotional condition certified by the Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Office.

To discuss your child's approved diagnoses on their Medical Subsidy Agreement and how to obtain a prior authorization for tutoring services, contact your Medical Subsidy Analyst who is assigned according to your last name; (A-F) Laveda Hoskins 517-373-6212; (G-M) Areka Maki 517-373-3235; (N-Z) Stacy Wieske 517-241-8854.

## Contact Us



Please feel welcome to contact the PARC office in your region, visit our website for information, or connect with us via social media!

### Region 5 Office

3840 Packard Rd.

Ste. 170

Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734-794-2988

### Region 6 Office

2503 S. Linden Rd.

Ste. 130

Flint, MI 48532

810-732-8510

Website: [www.parc-judson.org](http://www.parc-judson.org)



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