

## 9:00-10:30am KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Rob Scheer, CEO of Comfort Cases

## WORKSHOP SESSION I: 11:00 am–12:00 pm

### 1A SUCCESSFUL DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS: AGENCY OR INDEPENDENT PLACEMENT – WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

*Michael S. Goldstein, Esq. / Joy Goldstein, LCSW, ACSW, Executive Director, Marillac Forever Families Through Adoption / Laurie Goldheim, Esq. / Zachary Fried, Executive Director, Adoption Star*

Panelists will discuss successful domestic adoption and the differences between agency and independent adoptions.

### 1B INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION 101

*Susan Orban, Outreach Coordinator, The Adoption Programs of Children's Home & Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota / Representatives from USCIS and State Department*

**101** Each year thousands of children join their family through international adoption from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Who are the children? What are their needs? What countries are currently placing? What is the process? When you leave this workshop you will know the answers to these questions. This workshop will lay a foundation for someone new to adoption or help the initiated to learn about countries now placing children.

### 1C UNDERSTANDING RISKS IN INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ADOPTION

*Dr. Jane Aronson, D.O., FAAP*

**119** This workshop will explore the medical and psychological risks of both domestic and international adoption. We will focus on the process of how parents perceive the risks and how they might problem solve to understand the risks in a realistic way, and discuss the risks that may arise over time as the child grows up.

### 1D THE ADOPTION HOME STUDY IN NEW YORK AND CONNECTICUT

*Steven Baranowski, LCSW*

**122** What is the social worker really looking for? How many interviews are there and with whom? Get an in-depth view of the home study process and learn how to take the anxiety out of the experience.

### 1E INFERTILITY TO ADOPTION: THE JOURNEY

*Anne F. Malave, Ph.D*

**118** This workshop will provide a roadmap for the journey from infertility to adoption with helpful landmarks along the way that will simplify the process and help with decision-making. Topics covered will include readiness to adopt, when to end fertility treatment, and how to let go of the dream of the biological child.

**1F FAMILY BUILDING IN NJ: AGENCY, INDEPENDENT AND FOSTER CARE**

*Laurie Steinberg, Esq*

- 137** This workshop will be a “how to guide” for family building specific to New Jersey residents. We will talk about the different processes and legal and practical aspects for each path: agency, independent adoption with an attorney and foster care. Bring your questions!

**1G THE MYTHS AND REALITIES OF FOSTER ADOPTION**

*Lisa Peck Goldberg, Esq , Leslie Silver Hoffman, Esq., Vivian Sklar, Esq.*

- 139** There are approximately a half a million babies and children in foster care in the U.S. That's way too many! You can build your family and give a child a beautiful life by fostering to adopt. You can pursue foster and private adoption at the same time. Let me explain the system to you, debunk the myths, and get real about how one fosters to adopt.

**1H HOW TO IDENTIFY RED FLAGS AND OTHER PITFALLS ON THE ROAD TO ADOPTION**

**207** *Jeanine Castagna, Esq.*

The adoption process can be exciting, stressful and sometimes overwhelming. In this workshop we will help you get ahead of some of the problems that can arise when you begin advertising, networking and speaking with expectant parents. Learn about the “red flags” for potential problems and scams, so that you can be more confident as you go through this process.

**1I INFANT OR OLDER CHILD ADOPTION: WHICH IS RIGHT FOR ME/US?**

**219** *Nicole Cummins, B.A., A-OK Program Manager, Adoption Star*

When we look into adopting, sometimes we do not know what path is right for our family. Deciding between an infant or the many older children available for adoption, it often comes down to knowing what to expect within each route. Come learn more about older child adoption, and keeping your heart open to the possibility of adopting a waiting older child from the U.S. It can be the most amazing outcome. Or leave knowing that infant adoption is right for your family.

**1J BUILDING YOUR ADOPTION TEAM**

*Brian Esser, Esq. | Leslie Zindulka, LCSW*

- 225** Most pre-adoptive parents expect that they will meet lawyers and social workers on their path to adoption. But what other adoption professionals can help on the journey? Even families who are pursuing adoption through an agency may require the support and expertise of financial consultants, profile writers, marketing experts, pediatricians and therapists. Learn what types of services to expect from your agency or lawyer, and for which services you should think about retaining outside expertise.

**1K TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ADOPTION: INFANCY TO AGE 6**

Joni Mantell, *LCSW, Director, IAC Center*

**232** This workshop will focus on both the parents' and child's concerns during these early years. Parents will learn what their child can understand at these early ages, how to explore the issues with their child, how to help them answer early questions about adoption. Most importantly, we will explore how to create a safe, open empathetic family atmosphere in which adoption can be discussed as the child develops. Helpful resources and books for children and families will be shared.

# WORKSHOP SESSION II: 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

**2A ADOPTION ADVERTISING FOR THE BUDGET & TIME CONSCIOUS FAMILY**  
*Ben Santiardo, Founder, Tekk Adoptions*

**Marillac** This workshop will explore everything you need to know about adoption advertising on the web. We will talk about the differences between digital and print advertising. We will discuss Facebook and its pitfalls, using a profile vs, using a website. We will also cover the average budget for advertising and what you need to know about online security.

**2B OPEN ADOPTION**

**101** *Joni Mantell LCSW, Director, IAC Center & Rebecca Mendel, Esq*

The reality is that most adoptions are open. What open means for everyone is different. Learn about open adoption and help learn what type of openness feels right for you. Hear from a licensed social worker about the emotional impacts of open adoption, what you should consider, and proper communication with your child and your child's birth parents. Hear from an attorney about the legal considerations of open adoption and what you should expect with legal negotiations of your open adoption agreement.

**2C POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH PARENTS PRE AND POST PLACEMENT**

**119** *Joy Goldstein, LCSW, ACSW, Executive Director, Forever Families Through Adoption,*

This workshop will explore how to locate and deal effectively with birth parents on the telephone, and how to best handle the anxieties common to all contacts between adoptive and birth families.

**2D USEFUL ANSWERS TO PRACTICAL QUESTIONS**

**122** *Herb Piktowsky, Esq.*

This workshop will focus on a discussion of basic estate planning: Why you need a Will; What happens if you don't have a Will. How to designate a Guardian and Trustee for your minor child's person and property. The need and benefits of having a Durable Power of Attorney, various types of Trusts. Availability and eligibility criteria for Adoption Tax Credits.

**2E CHOOSING: ADOPTION OR THIRD-PARTY REPRODUCTION: DONOR EGG/SPERM, EMBRYO, GESTATIONAL CARRIER/SURROGATE,**

**118** *Dr. Anne F. Malave, PhD.*

This workshop will help clarify the often-overwhelming family-building task, for all family forms including heterosexual and LGBTQ individuals and couples, of choosing whether to adopt or to pursue Assisted Reproductive Technology, including Third Party Reproduction (egg, sperm, and embryo donation and gestational surrogacy). Decision-making tools will be provided to create a roadmap that will simplify the process. Topics covered include: the pros and cons of each family-building pathway, readiness to adopt, when to end fertility treatment, how to let go of the dream of the biological child, and “disclosure”-talking to the child and others about origins.

- 2F     **EXPLORING TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION: THE SHIFT FROM COLOR BLIND TO COLOR CONSCIOUS**  
*Michele Fried, Founder, Adoption STAR / Zachary Fried, Executive Director, Adoption STAR*
- 137    This workshop will explore the recent recommendations by leading child welfare advocates to revise federal laws dealing with transracial adoptions. With concerns that the needs of black children are not met by a “colorblind” approach to placement, adoption advocates are recommending that race should be considered in selecting adoptive families and that race-oriented pre-adoption training be a necessity in transracial adoption. We will focus on assessing family’s needs when adopting transracially and methods to assist in developing cultural competence and awareness of “color consciousness” in raising their child.
- 2G     **A COMPARISON OF FOSTER AND PRIVATE ADOPTION**
- 139    *Lisa Peck Goldberg, Esq. / Leslie Silver Hoffman, Esq. / Vivian Sklar, Esq.*  
Can you simultaneously pursue foster adoption and private adoption? Can you use the same home study for both? Are the financial considerations the same? Do you need an attorney or an agency to guide you? How are these different types of adoption similar and different? This workshop will educate you on the similarities and differences of public and private adoption.
- 2H     **COMPLEX TRAUMA AND ATTACHMENT**  
*Emily Becker-Weidman, PhD, Clinical Director, Center for Family Development*
- 207    When a child’s early attachment history consists of abuse, neglect, or multiple placements, the child does not have the opportunity to experience the dyadic interactions necessary for normal development and often has a reduced readiness or ability to participate in such experiences. While some children, when placed in a foster or adoptive home that provides appropriate parenting, are able to learn how to engage in dyadic experiences, other children, have much greater difficulty responding to their new parents. For these children, specialized parenting and treatment is often required. This talk will explain how early trauma effects attachment security and brain development. We will discuss parenting principles that facilitate security of attachments and incorporate an attitude based on playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy.
- 2I     **INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION: A VIABLE PATHWAY TO PARENTHOOD**
- 219    *E Stefani Moon MA, LPC IMH E, Associate Director, of International Adoption, Spence Chapin Services to Families and Children*  
Many couples exploring adoption as a pathway to parenthood don’t realize that international adoption is still a viable option. During this discussion we will share more information about Spence-Chapin’s current, long-standing programs in South Africa and Colombia, including the children in need of families, the wonderful in-country opportunities, and the steps to take to begin your journey.

**2J UNDERSTANDING THE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTS OF IN UTERO SUBSTANCE EXPOSURE**

*Stephanie Rolin, MD, MPH, Alicia Rolin, MD ScM*

**225** Prenatal exposure to substances can have short-term and long-term effects on cognitive, behavioral, social and emotional development. In this workshop, you will learn about the potential development effects of in utero substance exposure. Understanding the possible short- and long-term effects of these exposures in terms of health, development and behavior can help guide and prepare families.

**2K STARTING THE ADOPTION PROCESS – CERTIFICATION IS THE FIRST STEP**

*Jeanine Castagna, Esq*

**232** All the answers to the questions you haven't asked! What is a certification? What to expect during the home study? How to prepare for your home study? What is your attorney's role in certification? What is the next step?

# WORKSHOP SESSION III: 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

## 3A YOUNG ADULT ADOPTEE PANEL

**Marillac** Your child will grow into an adult adoptee in an environment shaped by you and those around you. How will they turn out? What adoption issues might they experience emotionally while growing up? How will the world react to their having been adopted? What role might adoption play in their life choices? You can learn a lot by listening to the stories of young adult adoptees and asking key questions.

## 3B INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION PROCESS AND PAPERWORK

**101** Sue Orban Outreach Coordinator, *The Adoption Programs of Children's Home & Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota* | Representatives from USCIS and State Department International adoption continues to grow more complex and presents with many challenges, yet each year, thousands of children continue to find their forever families. This workshop will briefly discuss the international adoption process, including the difference between Hague and non-Hague adoptions, USCIS requirements, types of adoption programs and resources available. The factors and complexities to consider in making a decision to pursue international adoption will also be explored. There will also be a discussion regarding the Universal Accreditation Act (UAA), two years post implementation and a preview of new Federal Regulations soon to take effect. Representatives from the US State Department Office of Children's Issues and USCIS will be part of the presentation and available for questions.

## 3C CREATING ADOPTION PROFILES

**119** Joy Goldstein LCSW, Executive Director, *Forever Families Through Adoption*, Lisa Treitman, LMSW, *Forever Families Through Adoption*  
Your profile book/website is often the first way an expectant parent can learn about you. Showing who you are through your profile is very important. This session will focus on adoption profile books (hard copy and internet sites) and will include such topics as content and proper terminology.

## 3D LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES ON ASIA ADOPTIONS

**122** Sama Alghali, MSS, LMSW, Branch Director, *Holt International Children's Services*  
The presentation will give an overview of adopting from countries in Asia and then will focus specifically on adoption in China and Taiwan. We will present the current guidelines, timelines and everything you need to know to complete an adoption from these two countries. There will be time for Q & A after the presentation.

## 3E PARENTING AFTER FAMILY BUILDING CHALLENGES – WHAT TO EXPECT

**118** Lisa Rosenthal, MS, Ed  
Parenting is challenging. That's a given. Parenting after the ordeal of infertility, possible fertility treatment, the adoption process- that's a whole other level of challenging. What should you expect? How might you be different as a parent? What do we tell the children and when? All this and more.

**3F TALKING TO EXPECTANT PARENTS**

**137** *Nidia Sica LCSW, Executive Director, Adoption by Shepherd Care*

The pain and loss that brought you to adoption is the same pain and loss the expectant parents are facing as they consider adoption. Both types of grief are real and raw and your empathy can build a bridge between you and the expectant parents. We will explore, what questions to ask, when to ask them, how to develop a relationship based on trust and respect. Bring your questions to this important workshop.

**3G ADOPTION FROM FOSTER CARE: LEARN WHY AND HOW**

**139** *Rachel Hood LMSW, Director of Homefinding and Placement Services You Gotta Believe*

This interactive workshop will explore the benefits of adopting older youth from foster care. We will use short video clips to spark conversations about youth and teens in foster care, why they need families, what developmental needs they have, and what joys they can bring to any family willing to make an unconditional commitment. Our youth advocates will share insights from their journeys and our Director of Homefinding and Placement Services will provide details on the process of adoption from foster care.

**3H HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH ADHD THRIVE**

**207** *Emily Becker-Wiedman, Ph.D*

We will start by explaining what ADHD is and how to identify it in your child. We will debunk several myths about ADHD and clarify what executive functioning really means. The presentation will discuss difficulties kids with ADHD may have at school, home, and socially, as well as areas of strength. Finally, we will discuss strategies that can help and how you can best support your child with ADHD

**3I NY DOMESTIC ADOPTION: AGENCY vs PRIVATE PLACEMENT ADOPTION**

**219** *Denise Seidelman, Esq., Mia Diamond Padwa, LMSW, Director, Adoption & Children's Services/Compliance Officer, Family Services of Westchester, Melissa Struck*

There is no "right" answer as to which path to adoption is best for you. In this workshop, we explore the pros and cons of agency vs private adoption, and what considerations about you in particular might make one path rather than the other the right one for you.

**3J LOVE IS NOT ENOUGH: REAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION**

**225** *E.. Stefani Moon MA, LPC IMH E, Associate Director, of International Adoption, Spence Chapin Services to Families and Children*

The Beatles said "All you need is love" but we know from years of lived experience, that in transracial adoption, love is not enough. Our children cannot afford for us to take a colorblind approach. Please join us for a candid conversation about what it means to be a conspicuous family, talking with your child about race, and what our children need from us.



**3K SURROGACY, EGG DONATION, SPERM DONATION, EMBRYO DONATION**

**232** *Laurie Goldheim, Esq. Rebecca Mendel, Esq.*

Come learn the legal landscape of Assisted Reproduction. This program will explain the legal process, legal considerations and much more.

## WORKSHOP SESSION IV: 3:15 – 4:15 pm

### 4A AFFORDING ADOPTION

**Marillac** *Michele Fried, Founder, Adoption STAR*

How can we afford to adopt? What are the financial risks involved? How do we protect ourselves? Join us to learn about the financial aspects involved in all types of adoption, including grants and other funding source available to families. This interactive workshop is a necessity for those considering adoption.

### 4B MEDICAL ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

**101** *Paul Lee, MD, AdoptionDoctors.com*

This workshop will focus on issues relating to some of the medical and developmental risks prospective parents may encounter when adoption a child from abroad, living in foster care or an institutional environment. These include failure to thrive, rickets, exposure to infectious diseases, anemia, lead exposure, tuberculosis, developmental delays and sensory issues.

### 4C CROSSING STATE LINES: ISSUES IN DOMESTIC ADOPTION PLACEMENT

**119** *Rebecca Mendel, Esq*

You have decided to adopt, and depending upon your plans, it is possible that your child may be born out of state. This workshop will explore the process, challenges and resources needed for adoptive parents who must receive approval from both the sending and receiving states in order to cross state lines with their child. We will focus on New York ICPC and will discuss personal issues and practical perspectives for adoptive parents to consider in caring for an infant out of state in a hotel after placement, before finally being able to come home.

### 4D TALKING TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT ADOPTION

**122** *Ellen Murphy Keeley, LMSW*

This workshop will focus on the many ways to discuss adoption with children, family members, teachers and other people in our lives. This workshop will help attendees learn the language and social skills needed when talking to others about adoption. We will explore how to have conversations with children who have been adopted, family, friends, neighbors, school staff and the general public. Attention will be given to understanding why this is difficult and how to develop helpful strategies.

**4E ADOPTION OR ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE OPTIONS: WHICH FAMILY BUILDING PATH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?**

**118** *Denise Seidelman, Esq, Joni Mantell, LCSW, Director, IAC Center*

People who are unable to conceive and/or birth a child on their own have the option of pursuing two very distinct paths to parenthood. While the outcome is the same, the legal, emotional, medical and financial aspects of those two paths vary dramatically. Denise Seidelman and Joni Mantell are both professionals concentrating their respective practices in the area of adoption and assisted reproduction. Denise, an attorney, will compare and contrast the legal issues families confront while Joni Mantell, a psychotherapist, will discuss the very distinct psychological issues raised by each method of family formation. The goal of this session is to give you the information you need to make the decision that you can live with for a lifetime.

**4F 10 QUESTIONS YOU WANTED TO ASK YOUR AGENCY OR ATTORNEY BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK**

**137** *Brian Esser Esq.*

Join attorneys from an independent practice and an adoption agency to discuss some important questions. Anything from wondering about money, to what if the expectant family decides to parent, will be answered for you. Bring your questions and concerns

**4G VOICES FROM FOSTER CARE: UNDERSTANDING FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION FROM THE YOUTH'S PERSPECTIVE**

**139** *Yasmin Mistry, BFA, BSBA, MS, CASA*

Yasmin Mistry will present her documentary short film "Feeling Wanted." The film was created in collaboration with foster youth, and shares the story of a young woman growing up in the NYC foster care system. *Film Synopsis: Charell, age 6, woke up to find herself alone. She made breakfast, dropped her baby sister off with a neighbor, and walked to school. With her father incarcerated for murder, a mother on drugs and a childhood in foster care, Charell knew it was time to break the cycle.* Following the 14 minute film Yasmin will lead an interactive discussion with film subject, Charell Star. The discussion will be geared towards current and prospective foster & adoptive parents, social workers and advocates - giving them a better understanding of the foster care system through the foster youth's perspective.

**4H HOW TO ACCESS POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT IN NYS**

**207** *Caryl Svendsen Deiches, Family Support Specialist, AFFCNY*

The Adoption and Foster Family Coalition of New York (AFFCNY) is a post-adopt support service funded by the Office of Family and Children Services in New York State. AFFCNY unites foster, adoptive, and kinship care families, giving them a voice and providing support, information, and advocacy. No foster, adoptive, or kinship care family in New York State will feel alone or unsupported, come learn what tools, support and community is available to your family through post adopt support in NYS.

**4I INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC ADOPTION**

**219** *Jeanine Castagna, Esq*

An attorney concentrating in adoption will discuss the path to a successful domestic adoption. Topics will include emotions and legalities involved, potential adoption costs, birth parents' rights, waiting periods, red flags and "how to's" with a full explanation of the process involved,

**4K NEW YORK LAW: BIRTH MOTHER AND BIRTH FATHER RIGHTS**

**232** *Laurie Goldheim Esq.*

This important workshop will cover the rights of birthparents during the adoption process. Join us to learn about revocation periods, expenses and the legal process in New York.

# WORKSHOP SESSION V: 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

## 5A **INTERNATIONAL AGENCY PANEL**

**Marillac** A panel of international adoption agency professionals will discuss the available options in international adoption. Which countries are open, what kinds of programs are available, and issues to consider with each of these choices.

## 5B **THE COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL EXAM FOR THE NEWLY ADOPTED CHILD**

**101** *Paul Lee, MD AdoptionDoctors.com*

Newly adopted children have unique medical and developmental needs. During this session, we will review all the components of the first medical visit, including the physical exam, laboratory tests and immunizations. We will also discuss the critical topics of transition – how parents can better understand feeding, sleeping, and behavioral adjustments. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and bring their experience to the discussion

## 5D **NY ADOPTION HOME STUDY**

**122** *Ellen Murphy Keeley, LMSW*

Join an adoption social worker as she guides you through the home study process for every type of adoption. Bring your questions and concerns!

## 5E. **HOW TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE WHILE YOU'RE WAITING**

**118** *Leslie Zindulka, LCSW*

The wait for your adopted child can seem never-ending. You've already decided between domestic or international adoption, between independent attorney or agency adoption, between transracial, age range, special needs and level of openness and have completed your Home Study. You have been in fact "waiting" to add a child to your family for what seems like forever already and "now" you're told is when the waiting starts?

The true and dreadful answer to that question is "Yes." However, this time of waiting does not have to be filled with anxiety or checking each day off that calendar in your kitchen. Share your feelings about your hopes, desires, and dreams for your future child. Share your fears about the unexpected and the struggle of waiting.

This workshop will include my "Social Worker Approved" tips for surviving the wait!

## 5F **"WHERE'S MY MOMMY (OR DADDY)?" A GUIDE TO ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS WHEN YOUR CHILD'S FAMILY LOOKS DIFFERENT**

**137** *Brian Esser, Esq*

Single adoptive parents and same-sex couples will likely face questions like this at some point in time in their child's life. My sons liked to ask questions like this while we were getting ready for school, particularly on days when we were running late already. Whenever they ask, some other child on the playground asks, or you have to answer intrusive questions in front of your child, it is important to model pride in your family and give your child tools to answer these questions on their own in the future. In this workshop we will talk when and how these issues come up; how to talk to your child about their family both privately at home and in front of other people, and how the discussion you have with your child will evolve over time. This session is intended to be a discussion, not a lecture.

**5H DECIPHERING THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS**

**207** *Caryl Svendsen Deiches, Family Support Specialist, AFFCNY*

This workshop will provide an overview of what is Special Education, who is an appropriate education rights holder, common warning signs that a child might need special education and related services, how to request a special education assessment, how to prepare for an IEP meeting, and helpful educational resources. Bring your questions as there will be ample time for an insightful Q&A session.

**5I PRIVATE PLACEMENT ADOPTION**

**219** *Denise Seidelman, Esq.*

Private placement adoption involves working with an attorney throughout your adoption journey. This workshop will present a step-by-step guide to the legal, practical and emotional aspects of the process. Come with your questions!

**5J. POST ADOPTION AGREEMENTS AND BIRTH FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

**232** *Michael Goldstein Esq, Lisa Treitman, LMSW, Forever Families Through Adoption*

Join a discussion about challenges and rewards of post adoption relationships with birth parents and extended birth relatives. An adoptive father of two school age children from different birth families speaks about his family's varied experiences from pre-adoption and years beyond. Audience participation is encouraged.