

# Monthly Calendar

## February 2024 Events and Programs

### ADULT ADOPTEEES, BIRTH PARENTS & DNA DISCOVERIES

#### General Discussion Meetings

Support and discussion groups for adult adoptees, birth parents, siblings, adoptive parents, prospective parents, professionals, and anyone interested in exploring the lifelong journey of adoption. Individuals from any location are encouraged to join.

All meeting times are shown in Eastern Time. Meetings are held via Zoom and registration is required to receive the meeting link. For more information on General Discussion Meetings and a list of upcoming special topics, please visit our website.

#### General Discussion Meeting Dates: (Virtual unless noted otherwise)

Feb. 1, Thurs., 7-9 PM led by facilitators JJ & Rosemary

Feb. 8, Thurs., 7-9 PM led by facilitators Kim & Denise

Feb. 14, Wed., 6:30-8:30 PM | Kim & Amy | **In-person**

Feb. 15, Thurs., 7-9 PM led by facilitators Dottie & Estes

Feb. 22, Thurs., 8-10 PM led by facilitators Barbara & Dan

Register at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.

#### Birth Mother Support Group (Virtual)

##### Wednesday, February 7, 7:00-9:00 PM ET

Our Birth Mother Support Group provides a safe and supportive environment to help with the complexities that are often part of the adoption experience. The meetings are open to birth mothers connected by the lifelong journey of adoption and are an opportunity for birth mothers to encourage one another in their healing process through discussion and interaction. Birth mothers who have experienced closed adoptions or adoptions with varying degrees of openness attend this meeting. We invite you to join this group of women, who are at different places on the same journey, to give and receive understanding and support. The group is facilitated by Lindsey and Nikki.

Register at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.

#### DNA Discovery Support Group (Virtual)

If you have either found family using commercial DNA testing or been found by family who used commercial DNA testing (examples of commercial DNA testing are Ancestry.com, Family Tree DNA, 23&Me, My Heritage, etc.) then this is the group for you. You do not need to have a formal adoption connection to be in this group, but you do need to have a DNA discovery for this group to be relevant to you. Finding family, or being found - whether you are looking or not - is a major life event. It can upend long-held beliefs about ourselves and challenge the very things that make us feel like, well..., ourselves.

This group will focus on supporting each other during and after such DNA discoveries. These are not one time events; they are lifelong journeys. This peer support group is not meant to delve into the technical aspects of understanding your DNA results, but rather serve as additional support on your personal journey to integrate your DNA findings into your life. The focus of this group is on the emotional journey, and not the technical aspects of DNA results or the interpretation of results. This group is facilitated by Becky and Oliver.

Register at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.

#### Special Topic: Surprise Siblings

##### Tuesday, February 6, 8:00-10:00 PM ET

Were you the oldest child in your family? Were you the baby of the family? Were you suddenly knocked off of your coveted spot by a DNA discovery? Did you suddenly have the brother or sister that you always wished you had? Do you want to meet some people that have made the journey of a surprise sibling? Join us Tuesday February 6, 2024 at 8pm as our co-facilitators bring their surprise siblings into the discussion. Share the link with your surprise sibling and join us as we explore the complicated emotional journeys we may be faced with in our DNA Discoveries!

Register at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.

**Family Pool Party****Sunday, February 4, In-person****2:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

Join us for a splashing good time at the Family Pool Party on February 4, 2024, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm at the Westlake Recreation Center. Dive into the excitement at their Indoor Aquatic Center, featuring five indoor pools, including a lap pool, a diving well, a children's play pool, a lazy river, and waterslides.

**Family Ties Monthly Gathering & Teen Tea****Thursday, February 8, In-person****6:00 PM - 7:30 PM**

Join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month for Family Ties and TeenTEA.

Join us for dinner followed by breakout sessions for parents, young children, and teens. Parents and caregivers will have an opportunity to discuss parenting topics in a supportive environment with others who understand.

Teens ages 11+ will meet separately after dinner for Teen TEA, our monthly teen group that provides a safe place for youth to share their truth, advocate for and support one another, and learn more about themselves. Children 10 and under will engage in mindful, therapeutic activities in a fun learning environment.

**Transracial Adoptive Parent Support Group****Thursday, February 15, Virtual****7:00-8:00 PM ET**

Adoption Network Cleveland and Transracial Journeys are joining forces to hold a series of co-hosted monthly support groups for parents who have adopted children outside of their own race. This collaborative effort aims to provide an intentionally structured and supportive space where parents can hear from leaders with lived expertise and come together to share their experiences, challenges, and successes in raising transracially adopted persons. Questions? Please contact Janelle by email at [Janelle.Poskocil@adoptionnetwork.org](mailto:Janelle.Poskocil@adoptionnetwork.org).

**NAMI Family Support Group****Monday, February 19, Virtual****6:30-8:00 PM ET**

In partnership with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), this Family Support Group is peer-led and intended for parents and caregivers of children and youth (18 and under) who are experiencing behavioral or mental health symptoms. Please join us virtually via Zoom the 3rd Monday of each month.

Register for all programs at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.

**Monday Evening Speaker Series****Understanding the History of Adoption in America in Order to Understand the Lived Experiences of Adoptees and Mothers****Monday, February 5, 8:00 - 9:00 PM****Presented by Rebecca Wellington**

Rebecca Wellington will share her journey of writing 'Who Is a Worthy Mother' and how it opened a watershed of impactful, historical information about adoption policies and practices in America. On this journey, she has learned that the way our society practices adoption has deep implications about how our nation differentially values women and mothers.

**Until I Find You: Disappeared Children and Coercive Adoptions in Guatemala****Monday, February 19, 8:00 - 9:00 PM****Presented by Dr. Rachel Nolan**

Join us for a discussion of the practices of international adoption from Guatemala from the 1960s to when it was closed in 2008. We will discuss children who were forcibly disappeared during a military dictatorship and later placed for international adoption, as well as the privatization of adoptions that led to the formation of profit-oriented adoption networks. While the discussion will focus on Guatemala, we will draw parallels to other Latin American countries of origin for adoptees that have seen similar issues—from Argentina to Haiti to Colombia.

**Navigating Relationships as an Adult Adopted Person****Tuesday, February 27, 8:00 - 9:00 PM****Presented by Tom Rogat, PsyD, MBA**

*Note that this session is on a Tuesday.* This informal session will provide an overview of how the trauma of early separation can affect the nervous system and impact deeply held beliefs about oneself. We will examine some common relationship dynamics that many adult adoptees struggle with, and also identify therapies that can help make positive change.

**Upcoming: Adoption 101: Where Do I Begin?****Saturday, March 9, 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM****Virtual Workshop for Prospective Parents**

Register for all programs at <http://bit.ly/CalendarANC>.