

PRE AND POST ADOPTION RESOURCES

Adoption support for every age



CONTACT US

Pre and Post Adoption Services

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Sign up for our newsletter to receive more information about our events and services by visiting:

spence-chapin.org/newsletter





At Spence-Chapin, we understand that adoption is a lifelong journey not just a snapshot in time. As a leader in the adoption world and long-time advocates for all who are connected to adoption, we have developed a wide array of post-placement services to meet the needs of your family at every stage.

A warm, supportive community awaits you and your family at Spence-Chapin. We provide long-term counseling, short-term coaching, supportive services, and a welcoming and engaging community for kids and adults. We also offer resources and education around all adoption-related issues.

No matter where you are in your adoption journey, there's a place for you at Spence-Chapin.

PRE-ADOPTION SERVICES

The guidance you need, every step of the way



From the moment you consider adoption as an option for your family, Spence-Chapin is there to provide you with support. Through webinars, coaching, counseling, and community programming, you can know that our team of dedicated professionals is there to help you throughout your adoption journey.

Home Study Services

Through the home study process, Spence-Chapin helps you prepare to parent through adoption. You will have a team at Spence-Chapin supporting you, offering individual support through the paperwork and the personalized attention of a dedicated social worker. We offer home study for domestic and international adoptions.



Whether you are adopting in one of Spence-Chapin's adoption programs or are working with an attorney or another agency for placement, you will receive the same guidance and support through the home study, as well as access to our pre- and post-adoption services including community events, workshops and panels. We move through the home study at the pace your family needs.

- Domestic and international home studies completed in 2-4 months
- Expedited home studies available
- Home studies provided for kinship/relative adoptions
- Coordination of services with your placement agency or attorney
- Guidance through all documentation and clearances
- Pre-adoption training
- Interviews with a social worker, including a home visit
- Pre- and post- adoption support including community events, workshops and panels

COUNSELING

Thoughtful, knowledgeable, and effective



Our experienced therapists are dedicated to providing therapeutic services to the adoption constellation. We focus exclusively on those connected to adoption. We know that every family, every individual, and every adoption story is different. Whether you are a birth parent, adoptive parent, or adoptee, our counseling services are here for you. We understand the challenges that are unique to adoption, including:

- Grief and Loss
- Conflicts in Relationships
- Identity
- Behavioral Concerns
- School Issues
- Talking About Adoption
- Attachment
- Emotion Regulation
- Self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Navigating Open Adoption

Our treatment is carefully tailored to meet each person where they are in their journey, offering a blend of behavioral and relational therapy to best support individuals and families and effect positive change.

Simply put: We get it, we know it, and we can support you through it.

COACHING

Solution-focused, short-term, and accessible

Coaching is short-term and issue specific, typically one to three sessions, and goal-oriented. Coaching can address any issues you are facing. It does not need any type of diagnosis. Some of the topics included are:

- Do you freeze every time your son asks about his birth parents?
- Are you having trouble explaining your decision to make an adoption plan to your family?
- Is getting your seven-year-old to go to bed an epic battle every night?
- Are you wondering how to respond to a birth relative who found you through DNA testing?
- Are you thinking about searching?
- Are you in reunion and have hit some bumps?

Our coaches have worked with hundreds of individuals and families across the country on all types of adoption-related issues.

Spence-Chapin offers in-person, video or phone coaching to target and address your challenge.

When you need us, we are here for you.





COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

A place for lifelong connection

Spence-Chapin believes in the power of community and the importance of connection to others who share adoption stories. We offer workshops, groups, and social events for everyone connected to adoption.

Bagels and Blox

For families with children 0-6 years old

A monthly playgroup for children and their families to socialize with their adoption community. Staffed by Spence-Chapin social workers and volunteers who are teen adoptees, families have the chance to connect with other families, enjoy breakfast, and play with their children, while also having professionals present to answer questions and provide tips. We have fun, do crafts, and of course, talk about adoption.

Play Café

For families with children 6 to 9 years old

A regular event where kids enjoy crafts and adoption-related activities while forming friendships with other adopted children.

Mentorship

For adoptees in middle and high school

Adult adoptee mentors and tween and teen adopted mentees meet monthly for fun social gatherings that allow them to make new friends, build self-confidence, and connect with others who can relate to them. Mentorship is also a place for adult mentors to connect with an adoptive community of peers as they mentor the tweens and teens.

Lifebook

For families of children 6 years old and older

A fun and exciting workshop that allows children of all ages to be the author of his or her life story. Making a Lifebook – or updating an existing one – provides an invaluable tool for children to process their unique adoption story and share it with others. Our social workers facilitate Lifebook workshops in groups or can arrange a private workshop for your child and family.

Mask-Making and Identity

For families with children 10 years old and older

Throughout the course of this workshop, we discuss our inner and outer selves, including how adoption influences both. Mask Making sparks meaningful conversation between families while they are being creative together.

Volunteering

For anyone high school age and older

We offer volunteer opportunities for high school and adult adoptees through many of our programs to support Spence-Chapin's adoption community.

Groups

For all ages

Spence-Chapin provides space for groups outside of our own programming. We host a birth parent group every third Thursday of the month and we support AAPAC (African-American Parent Advisory Committee), a social group for adoptive parents to meet other adoptive parents who are parenting African-American children.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Make new friends, catch up with old ones, and have some fun

Spence-Chapin hosts a variety of events throughout the year for individuals and families at all stages of their adoption journeys.

Cocktails and Conversation

We facilitate conversations on specific topics with different members of the adoption triad throughout the year to foster community, support, and camaraderie. Recent events have included: Raising Black Children Through Adoption, LGBTQ Parenting Through Adoption, and an evening of conversation celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.

Voices of Adoption

This event series offer community-building and conversation for adult adoptees in various locations across New York City. Topics include search and reunion, identity, open and closed adoption, and more.

Birth Mother Gathering

An annual gathering for birth parents come together in a supportive community for frank decisions about the challenges and benefits of adoption.

Halloween Party

Our Annual Halloween Party provides spooky, scary fun for the whole family! Children wear costumes, do crafts, and play.

Pride March

Spence-Chapin is a leader in LGBTQ+ adoption. As a recipient of the Human Rights Campaign's "All Children - All Families" Innovator Seal of Recognition, Spence-Chapin is committed to equality in adoption and is proud of the many children we have placed in loving, stable, same-sex households. Join us as we march every year with our proud families and staff.



PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

We provide a wide range of in-depth, hands-on trainings that promote knowledge and understanding of the adoptive family so they are better served and supported in your agency or organization.

For Child Welfare Agencies

We offer onsite trainings to agencies throughout New York City. Our staff has experience working in child welfare, and they have created a curriculum to deepen an agency's approach to adoption, providing insight into the challenges adoptive parents, adoptees, and birth parents face. Some common themes we cover are:

- Openness in Adoption
- The Choice of Permanency
- Short- and Long-term Effects of Trauma
- Bonding and Attachment

We can provide a training at your agency from 2 to 23 hours as well as half day and whole day presentations, depending on your topic. We also craft trainings to fit your agency's specific needs.

For Schools

Teachers and school personnel play a crucial role in a child's life and are integral in ensuring that children feel understood, respected and safe. We offer trainings at schools on ways to create an inclusive community for adopted students, on how to tailor assignments so they are sensitive to all family structures—including LGBTQ+ and transracial families—and how to respond to bullying. We also provide workshops for parents and students. Our training topics include:

- Adoption in Schools: Creating a Supportive Environment
- Finding the Right Words for Tough Conversations
- How to Talk About Diverse Families
- Building Resilience in Adopted Children

Meet Our Therapists



Tasha Blaine
LMSW

Tasha has worked extensively with all members of the adoption community, offering counseling and support to those who are struggling in their relationships, facing behavioral challenges and experiencing grief and loss.



Mark Lacava
LCSW-R

Mark has worked extensively with individuals, adolescents, and families. His expertise is in LGBTQ+ issues, trauma, behavioral problems and loss. He starts where you are and helps you reach for where you want to go.



Christine Tangel
LCSW

Christine specializes in providing emotional and educational support to all members of the adoption community. She brings more than 10 years of experience to her work. Christine incorporates attachment- and trauma-informed frameworks into her approach.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Talking About Adoption:

- *W.I.S.E. Up Powerbook* (C.A.S.E.)
- *Telling the Truth to Your Adopted or Foster Child* by Betsy Keefer and Jayne Schooler
- *The Primal Wound: Understanding the Adopted Child* by Nancy Newton Verrier
- *Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parents Knew* by Sherrie Eldridge

Children's Books About Adoption:

- *The Family Book* by Todd Parr
- *We Belong Together* by Todd Parr
- *A Mother for Choco* by Keiko Kasza

About Feelings and Self-Regulation:

- *In My Heart: A Book of Feelings* by Jo Witek
- *B is for Breathe: The ABCs of Coping with Fussy and Frustrating Feelings* by Dr. Melissa Munro Boyd
- *Listening with My Heart: A story of kindness and self-compassion* by Gabi Garcia

About Skin Color/Race:

- *The Skin You Live In* by Michael Tyler
- *The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz

Behavior Management:

- *The Connected Child* by Karyn Purvis, David Cross, and Wendy Lyons
- *Parenting the Hurt Child* by Gregory Keck and Regina Kupecky
- *Creating Loving Attachments: Parenting with PACE to Nurture*
- *Confidence and Security in the Troubled Child* by Daniel Hughes and Kim Golding

Age Specific:

- *Toddler Adoption: The Weaver's Craft* by Mary Hopkins-Best
- *The Emotional Life of the Toddler* by Alicia Lieberman
- *Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens* by Debbie Riley and John Meeks
- *Parenting in the Eye of the Storm* by Katie Naftzger

PRE AND POST ADOPTION RESOURCES



Whether you are looking to build community, seeking counseling, in need of coaching or want to understand more about adoption, Spence-Chapin is here for you.

For updated information, please visit our website:

www.spence-chapin.org



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Services to Families and Children

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646-539-2167