CONFERENCE 2018

THE FUTURE OF ADOPTION:
MOVING BEYOND SAFETY TO WELL-BEING

FRIDAY APRIL 13, 2018 8AM - 5PM
CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM UMASS AMHERST
Dear Friends,

Welcome to this year’s Rudd Adoption Conference: “The Future of Adoption: Moving Beyond Safety to Well-Being.” As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Rudd Adoption Research Program, today provides an opportunity to reflect on what we have learned, but more importantly, where we need to go, with the well-being of adopted persons as our guiding “north star.”

Today’s speakers present richly diverse perspectives – diversity of disciplines, diversity of racial and cultural backgrounds, diversity of adoption stories, and diversity of personal and professional connections to adoption. At the end of the day, we hope that you will take home new perspectives and practices to guide your personal and/or professional work. We know you will share them with others as well.

As always, we express our continuing thanks for their generosity to Andrew and Virginia Rudd, to Scott Chaplin, and to our growing number of individual donors and organizational funding partners who make our work possible every day. Please take special note of our sponsors whose logos appear on the cover, and thank them for their role in making today’s conference possible.

Sincerely,

Harold Grotevant, PhD
Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology, UMass Amherst

About the Rudd Adoption Research Program

Multiple gifts from Andrew and Virginia Rudd established the Rudd Family Foundation Chair and the Rudd Family Visiting Professorship at UMass Amherst. Their gifts reflect their personal commitment to stimulate the development, translation, and dissemination of new knowledge about adoption in order to benefit adoption practice and policy.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program, located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, seeks to develop synergy among scientists, practitioners, and policymakers from varied disciplines who share interests in topics relevant to adoption. The ultimate goal of these activities is to contribute to evidence-informed practice in adoption and to provide research-based information that will influence policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

The Rudd Program has four goals:

- to advance knowledge about the psychology of adoption
- to provide evidence-based knowledge to inform adoption policy and practice
- to engage with community partners at the local and national levels to incubate, implement, and evaluate innovative programs that have potential for broad impact
- to mentor the next generation of adoption-competent scholars

The program is directed by Harold D. Grotevant, Ph.D., who holds the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst and founded the Rudd Adoption Research Program in 2008. His research focuses on relationships in adoptive families, and on identity development in adolescents and young adults. In the mid 1980s, he and Dr. Ruth McRoy (Boston College) initiated the Minnesota / Texas Adoption Research Project, which examines outcomes for adopted children whose families vary in terms of contact with their birth relatives. This longitudinal study has followed the children, their families, and birth mothers for over 30 years. His work has resulted in over 140 articles and chapters as well as several books, including Openness in Adoption: Exploring Family Connections (with Ruth McRoy, Sage Publications, 1998). He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the National Council on Family Relations and recipient of the Minnesota/Ft. Worth Research Award of the Southern States Psychological Association. In 2016, he was awarded the Chancellor’s Medal, the highest recognition given to UMass faculty. In 2017, he received the national Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award for mentoring.

Harold Grotevant, PhD
Rudd Family Foundation Chair

PROGRAM of EVENTS

8:00   REGISTRATION, CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST and POSTER SESSION
   • CAMPUS CENTER CONCOURSE, LEVEL 1

9:00   WELCOME and INTRODUCTION
   • OPENING REMARKS – CHANCELLOR KUMBLE SUBBASWAMY, UMASS AMHERST
   • INTRODUCTION – HAROLD GROTEVANT, RUDD FAMILY FOUNDATION CHAIR IN PSYCHOLOGY, UMASS AMHERST
   • CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 1

9:15 to 10:15   KEYNOTE PRESENTATION
   • TRUTH, CONSEQUENCES AND REFORM: RETHINKING ADOPTION IN THE 21ST CENTURY
   • GARY MALLON, DSW JULIA LATHROP PROFESSOR OF CHILD WELFARE, SILBERMAN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, HUNTER COLLEGE
   • CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 1

10:30 to 11:45   PANEL DISCUSSION
   • PANEL CHAIR: APRIL DINWOODIE, CREATOR, ADOPTMENT
   • PANEL MEMBERS: ELLIOTTE HARRINGTON, DANA JOHNSON, AMNONI MYERS, RIDGHUSA, KIM STEVENS
   • CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 1

12:00 to 1:15   LUNCH, POSTER SESSION & RUDD 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
   • LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD PRESENTATION: DANA E. JOHNSON, MD, PhD
   • OUSTANDING POSTER AWARD PRESENTATION: NANCY ROLOCK and COLLEAGUES
   • CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 1

1:30 to 2:45   AFTERNOON CONCURRENT SESSIONS, I
   • PLEASE CHECK SESSION DESCRIPTION FOR LOCATION.

3:00 to 4:15   AFTERNOON CONCURRENT SESSIONS, II
   • PLEASE CHECK SESSION DESCRIPTION FOR LOCATION.

4:30 to 5:00   WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
   • FACILITATOR: KIRBY DEATER-DECKARD, PROFESSOR, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES, UMASS AMHERST
   • CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 1

5:00   END
“The Lifetime Achievement Award is given in honor of the career of Dr. Dana E. Johnson, in which he has been widely regarded as the founder of the field of adoption medicine. Through a lifetime of exceptional accomplishment as mentor, researcher, teacher, and physician, Dr. Johnson has profoundly influenced thousands of students, professionals, and families worldwide and made lasting contributions to our understanding of adoption. In keeping with the mission of the Rudd Adoption Research Program, we are pleased to honor Dr. Johnson’s career of excellence in the field of adoption.”

About Dr. Dana E. Johnson

Dr. Dana Johnson is a Professor of Pediatrics and member of the Divisions of Neonatology and Global Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota where Dr. Johnson co-founded the International Adoption Program in 1986. His research interests include the effects of early institutionalization on growth and development and the outcomes of internationally adopted children. He has authored numerous scholarly works including co-editing Adoption Medicine published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

He has received the Distinguished Service Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award from Joint Council for International Children’s Services, the Friend of Children Award from the Rudd Adoption Research Program, and the Harry Holt Award from Holt International. He serves on the Editorial Advisory Board of Adoptive Families and the Advisory Board of the Rudd Adoption Program in 1986. His research interests include the effects of early institutionalization on growth and development and the outcomes of internationally adopted children. He has authored numerous scholarly works including co-editing Adoption Medicine published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

2018 Outstanding Poster Presentation Award

“Using Administrative Data to Understand Longitudinal Post-Adoption Outcomes”

First Author

Nancy Rolock, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Co-Authors

Rowena Fong, Kevin White, Kerrie Ocasio, Lixia Zhang, Michael J. MacKenzie

2018 Lifetime Achievement Award

Dana E. Johnson, MD, PhD

Professor of Pediatrics, Department of Neonatology

Center for Neurobehavioral Development

University of Minnesota Medical Schools

2018 Lifetime Achievement Award

Steve Kalb and Angela Tucker - Campus Center Auditorium

Programs that enhance the well-being of Adoptees continue to evolve with our growing understanding of the Adoptee experience. Antiquated models of birth culture primacy and “Love conquers all” have given way to community building and open dialogue about the challenges of adoption. Through multimedia, lecture, and discussion, we’ll explore the limitations of current support programming and examine the importance of Adoptee voice in the development of current and future programs.

Meeting the Complex Mental Health Needs of Children Moving Through Adoption and Guardianship:

A Review of the National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative for Child Welfare and Mental Health Professionals

Debbie Riley and Dawn Wilson - Room 163C

Children and youth who are moving toward or have achieved adoption often have diverse unmet mental health needs. Adoptive parents cite competent mental health services as one of their greatest unmet needs. Child welfare/adoption social workers and mental health therapists serving these children and their families often have limited understanding of the complex issues around adoption, including identity and many other issues that complicate or contribute to common mental health problems. This presentation will highlight the need for adoption mental health competency training for child welfare professionals and mental health practitioners, and present the state of the art training initiative: the newly developed web-based National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NHTI), developed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) and funded through a Cooperative Agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services Administration of Children, Youth and Families Children’s Bureau # 90C01112. This presentation will include discussion of the need for adoption competency, overview of the training initiative and pilot in 9 pilot sites, demonstration of the web-based training, discussion of implementation experiences in pilot sites, and a review of evaluation results from the pilot of the curriculum for Child Professionals and Supervisors.

Generational Shifts: Adult Adoptee Scholars’ Perspective on Future Research and Practice

Hollie McGinnis, Amanda Baden, Jae Ran Kim, Adam Kim - Room 168C

Adult adoptees, largely adopted domestically as infants, began to organize and advocate about adoption issues in the 1970s and authored some of the first books by adoptees. Over the past 25 years, transracial and internationally adopted adults have also mobilized, reflecting the coming of age of this cohort of adoptees. Many worked to establish national and international organizations focusing on services, community-building, and advocacy. This latter cohort of adult adoptees has also increasingly entered professional careers as scholars, researchers, and academics. As institutions of higher education face a growing generational shift, what are the implications for adult adoptee scholars conducting adoption research? This panel will provide a lively discussion on future research and practice from the perspective of emerging and established adult adoptee scholars.

Well-Being: Well-being in the Context of Relationships for Adolescents

Susan Badeau - Room 174-76

Children and teens need families for a lifetime, skills for successful adulthood and resources to support their safety and well-being. Positive social, emotional and physical well-being is a core aspect of a young person's development. To be healthy and well, young people need to be able to develop and maintain relationships and social networks, effectively recognize, understand, and express emotions and maintain their physical health by making constructive life choices. This workshop will present a framework for well-being for older youth transitioning from foster care and highlight recommended strategies for improving the social, emotional and physical well-being of older youth.

How To Choose An Adoption Therapist

Joyce Maguire Pavao - Room 162

There are many excellent therapists. Many of them think that, if they are adoptive parents, or adopted persons, or have worked with anyone in the adoption triad, that they can help any adoptive parents. This is not true. There is a certain scope of reading, training, supervision in the wider field of adoption and complex families, that makes someone competent and specialized in adoption therapy.

Cultural Socialization and Preparation-for-Bias: Critical Tasks facing Adoptive Parents in Promoting the Well-Being of their Adopted Children

Ellen Pinderhughes - Room 165

Families raising adopted children of color, in same-race or transracial, domestic or intercountry placements, face the task of helping children develop a healthy adopted and ethnic/racial identity and deal with adoption- or race related stigma or bias. Research suggests that these are complex processes in which what parents do and don’t matter for adoptees. After discussing research on parents’ role in cultural socialization and preparation-for-bias, we will consider how parents can promote adoptees’ identity development and well-being and how professionals can (or even should) prepare/support parents.

Adoption Contracts and Deals as Plan B Parenthood

Martha Ertman - Room 904

Officially, law bans adoption contracts as baby-selling. But law professor Martha Ertman shows that people routinely enter entirely legal adoption contracts. Moreover, those contracts, and the mini-contracts that she calls “shacks” help birth and adoptive families tailor the agreements to their situation. Blending memoir and law, Ertman integrates small group exercises with law and history of American adoption agreements, arguing that a contractual framework treats types of adoption as complex processes in which what parents do and don’t do matter for adoptees. After discussing research on parents’ role in cultural socialization and preparation-for-bias, we will consider how parents can promote adoptees’ identity development and well-being and how professionals can (or even should) prepare/support parents.

The Project on Genomic Family Health History for Adopted Persons: Challenges, Progress, and Where We’d Like to Go

Thomas May - Room 903

This presentation will describe challenges faced in gaining support to study the potential utilization of genetic testing to fill gaps in Adoptees’ access to family history (FHx) information. In this context, I will describe how this collaborative project has addressed: 1. Skepticism who challenge the scientific ability to provide reliable FHx information through genetic testing; 2. Economic obstacles to the use of genetic testing to fill gaps in FHx for adopted persons; and 3. The importance of this information as much more than mere “curiosity” in the lives of many adopted persons.
Truth, Consequences and Reform: Rethinking Adoption in the 21st Century

Rethinking adoption in the 21st century requires that all of us—adopted people, birth parents, adoptive parents, researchers, practitioners and policy makers—consider all possibilities, even those which might make us feel uncomfortable. The truth, the consequences of that “truth,” and the need for reform will all be explored during this presentation. The conversation will continue during the panel discussion with colleagues who are most affected by these experiences and, also, hopefully, by the other workshop presenters and participants throughout the course of this conference.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

GARY MALLON, DSW, LCSW
Julia Lathrop Professor of Child Welfare and Associate Dean of Scholarship and Research
Silverman School of Social Work, Hunter College

Dr. Mallon has lectured and worked extensively throughout the United States and internationally in Australia, Canada, Cuba, Indonesia, Ireland and the United Kingdom. He earned his doctorate in Social Work from the City University of New York at Hunter College, was awarded an MSW from Fordham University and graduated with his BSW from Dominican College. Dr. Mallon has also been a foster parent and is an adoptive parent.

For more than 40 years, Dr. Mallon has been a child welfare practitioner, advocate, educator and researcher. He is the Senior Editor of the professional journal Child Welfare and the author and editor of more than twenty-three books. In his role as the Executive Director of the NCCWE, Dr. Mallon has traveled to all 50 states, territories and tribes to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families and to build organizational capacity with child welfare systems.

The Future of Adoption as Seen by UMass College Students Who Are Adopted
Ana Gremli, Victoria Griswold, Peter McGinn, Jenny Muten, Emma Sander — Room 163C

This session includes a panel of UMass college students who are adopted internationally and have been adoption educators, mentors and advocates during their academic career at UMass. The panel of thoughtful young adults will share some of their joys and challenges as it relates to being adopted. The panel will then offer ideas about what the adoption community needs to know about adoption. Specifically the students will address how to ensure well-being across the lifespan of those who are adopted. Recommendations for policies and practices that would facilitate well-being will be discussed. The panel will leave time for Q&A and discussion.

The Future of Intercountry Adoption: Adoptees and Coping with the Beginning of the End
Amanda Baden — Room 168C

As intercountry adoption has shifted from record high levels of adoptions from countries like China and Russia to the lowest numbers of adoptions in the past 35 years, the narratives of intercountry adoption has shifted dramatically. For adoptees, making connections to birth cultures and adoption histories take place within this context. This presentation will address identity and adjustment issues for intercountry adoptees and will offer therapeutic approaches to support development.

Family Relationship Processes and Youth Mental Health in the Context of Adoption and Foster Care: Revisiting the Developmental Interface Between Nature and Nurture
Gordon Harold — Room 162

The salience of family relationship influences (inter-parental/carer relationship quality, parent/carer-child relationship quality) for youth mental health and development is well recognised and has a long and established research and intervention-study history. However, understanding the relative role of genetic (nature) versus family relationship influences (nurture) on child and adolescent development has significant implications for the design of efficacious intervention and support programs aimed at vulnerable youth and families. This presentation will examine the role of family relationship processes (inter-parental/carer, parent/carer-child) and outcomes for youth (emotional, behavioural, academic) using an array of novel research designs that allow us to disentangle nature from nurture in examining the family process-youth development link. Examples of recent applications of this research to the development of evidence-based intervention programs specific to adoption and foster-care in the UK and internationally will also be presented.

A Need for Fundamental Change: The Role of Policy in Enabling Successful Families
Adam Pertman — Room 165

The basis for adoption-related policy in the U.S. is encapsulated in the mantra that every child deserves a safe, permanent and loving family. While this “child placement” focus is clearly vital, it’s also the case that the population of children and families served by adoption (as well as by the child welfare system more generally) has changed dramatically over the last several decades. As a result, many thousands of safe, permanent and loving families are struggling every day. This presentation will examine current policies of governments at all levels, child placement agencies, service providers and others who offer support to families – and will suggest that they need major reforms in order to give children and their families the wherewithal to succeed.

Achieving Well-Being for African American Children Adopted From Foster Care: A Successful Rural Model
Ruth McCoy, Kathleen Belanger and Joe Hayes — Room 904

Although African American youth represent 14.5% of the U.S. child population, they represent 23% or 25,510 of the 111,820 children in foster care waiting to be adopted in 2015. It is critical to study successful African American adoption models in an effort to potentially replicate them and increase positive adoption outcomes for African American children needing permanency. This presentation will provide findings from research on African American families in rural communities who have successfully adopted multiple African American children from foster care. Agency, community, religious, as well as child and familial factors that have led to the success of these adoptions, will be discussed.

Psychotherapy with Young Adopted and Pre-adoptive Children with Histories of Early Deprivation, Abuse and Disrupted Caretaking
Cynthia Monahan — Room 903

Young children with histories of serious early adversity placed in adoptive or pre-adoptive families are often referred for therapy based on behavioral challenges and parental worry. What in “therapy” can make a difference in the developmental trajectory of these children and their critical relationships with their adoptive and/or birth parent? What might be considered “best practices” from the perspective of professionals and parents reflecting on past treatments? This workshop will explore the complexity and diversity of therapeutic work with these vulnerable young children and their parents as well as factors associated with positive outcomes based on extensive clinical experience. The focus of this presentation will be on clinical practice but all are welcome.
OUTSTANDING POSTER

Using Administrative Data to Understand Longitudinal Post Adoption Outcomes
Nancy Rolock (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee), Rowena Fong, Kevin White, Kerrie Ocasio, Lixia Zhang, Michael J. MacKenzie

Psychological Presence of Adult Adoptees: Exploring Birth Mother Perspectives
Addie Wyman Battalen (Boston College School of Social Work), Christina Sellers, Krystal Cashen, Ruth McRoy, Harold Grotevant

Associations Between Peer Attachment and Positive Adoption Affect Throughout Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood
Dominique K. Altamari (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Krystal K. Cashen, Harold D. Grotevant

RESONANCE: Resilience and Early Brain Development
Jessica Hansratty (Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island), Viren D’Sa, Sean Deoni, Rebecca McLean, Vanja Klepac-Ceraj, Susan Carnell, Monique Lebourgeois

“Siblings Wish to Be Adopted Together”: An Exploratory Study of Descriptions of Sibling Relationship in State Photolistsings
Reihonna L. Frost (Clark University), Abbie E. Goldberg

A Translational Social Work Approach to Help Teens Tolerate Preadoption Transition
Rhys Gardiner, Ruth McRoy, Anni Keane, Michelle Chalmers, Victoria J., Lauren Frey

How is the Birth Father Relationship (or Lack Thereof) Related to Preoccupation with Adoption?
Haley LeRoux (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Maguette Mbengue, Marion Worley, Jessica A.K. Matthews, Harold Grotevant, Ruth McRoy

Expanding the Concept of Birthparent Loss to Orphans: Exploratory Findings of Adolescents in Institutions in South Korea
Hollee McGinnis (Virginia Commonwealth University)

How is Parent-Reported Family Race/Ethnicity Related to Parents’ Understanding and Explanation of Adoption Bias?
Xian Zhang (Tufts University), Rainy Shin, Anna Kimura, Alexandria Cinney, Kel Boland, Ana Jurca, Jenna Kupa

The Influence of Early Trauma on Children Adopted from Foster Care: Parents’ Perspectives
Emma W. Needles (Clark University), Reihonna L. Frost & Abbie E. Goldberg

Who Prefers Open and Who Prefers Closed Adoption?: Perspectives of Emerging Adult Adoptees
Krystal K. Cashen (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Dominique K. Altamari, Harold D. Grotevant

‘Moving to Adoption’: Developing a Practice Programme to Support Positive Moves from Foster Care to Adoption.
Elisabeth Neil (University of East Anglia), Mary Beek, Gillian Schofield

Waiting Child, Ready Parents: Parents’ Perceptions of Pre-Adoption Preparation for China’s Waiting Child Program and Child Well-Being
Sarah Elizabeth Neville (Education Development Center, Inc.), Ellen E. Pinderhughes

Connections of Adoption Emotions to Close Relationship Development
Holly Grant-Marsney (Bridgewater State University), Rachel Daley, Harold D. Grotevant

Adoptive Mothers’ and Fathers’ Psychological Distress: Parenting Teens Adopted from Birth
Christina Sellers (Boston College), Adeline Wyman Battalen, Lisa Fiorenzo, Ruth G. McRoy, Harold D. Grotevant

Infertility as a Reason for Adoption: A Descriptive Study
Jing Wang (University of California, Riverside), Misaki N. Natsuaki, Leslie D. Leve, Jenae M. Neiderhiser, Daniel Shaw, Jody Ganiban, and David Reiss

Ethics and Children’s Rights. The Role of Psychologists in Adoption Procedures.
Lucía Coler (University of Buenos Aires)

Adoption Status and Social Network Inequality: Disparities Among Adolescents in Foster Care
Richard Carbonaro (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

Adverse Relinquishment & Adoption Experiences (ARAEs)
Marie Dolfi

Building Peer to Peer Community
Diane Tomaz (Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange), Bridget Chiaruttini, Joe Sandagato