

# **PREPARING ADOPTION PROFESSIONALS FOR PRACTICE WITH YOUNG ADULT ADOPTEEES**

**BIBIANA KOH, AUGSBURG COLLEGE  
RUTH MCROY, BOSTON COLLEGE  
JAERAN KIM, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

**2015 Rudd  
New Worlds of  
Adoption  
Conference,  
Friday, April  
17<sup>th</sup>**

**3:45-4:45 PM**

# AGENDA

## FRIDAY, APRIL 17<sup>TH</sup>

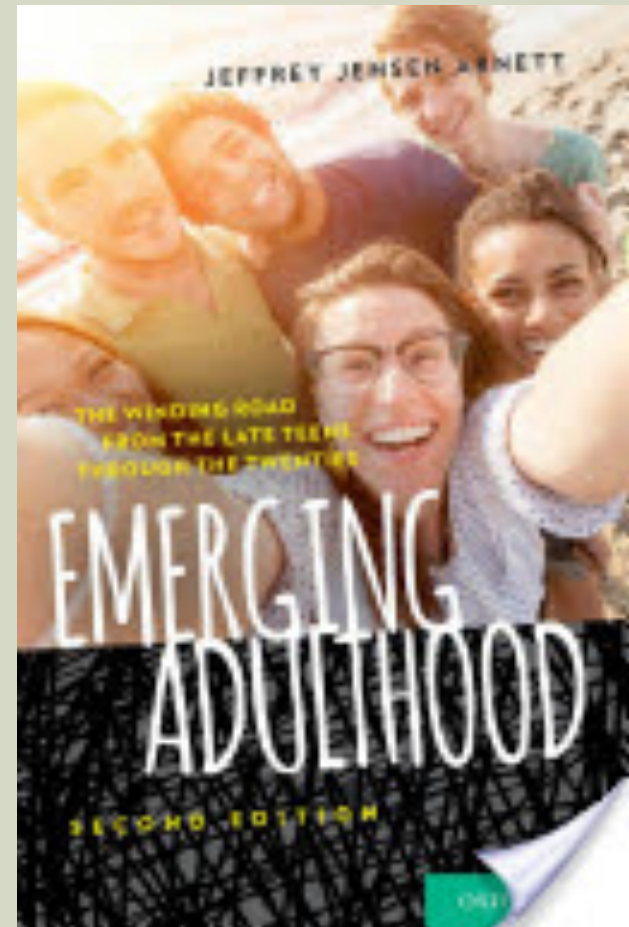


**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
follow the  
AGENDA**

- Who are we?
- Young adults
- Adoption curricula: Overview of current findings
- Training certificate/programs
- Federal and state funding to support curricula and training
- Discussion

# ARNETT: EMERGING ADULTS

- Arnett (2000) – argues for a distinct, newly emerging demographic
- 18 to 25 years
  - Exploration of intimate relationships, career, and worldviews



# SIGNIFICANCE OF ADOPTION TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Among approximately 24 million young adults over 18, **2.3%** (approximately 5.5 million) are young adult adoptees (2010 U.S. Census Bureau)
- Half of the 2.3% are between the ages of **18 and 24 years** (Kreider and Lofquist, 2014)



# SIGNIFICANCE OF ADOPTION TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Nearly two-thirds of Americans report having one of the following: (Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption with the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, 2002)
  1. an adopted family member
  2. a close friend with an adopted family member
  3. relinquished a child for adoption



# ISSUES IMPACTING YOUNG ADULT ADOPTEES

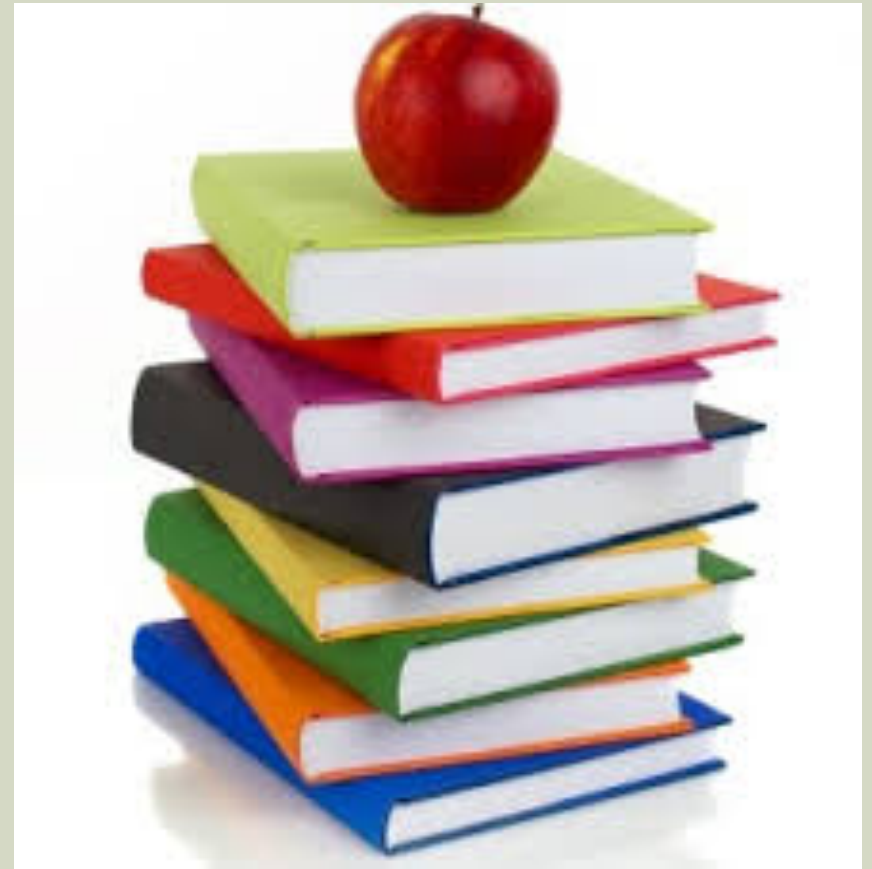
Consider the following:

- Age at adoption
- Experiences before adoption
  - Grief
  - Loss
  - Trauma
- Type of Adoption
  - Adoption from foster care
  - Transracial
  - Intercountry
  - Open/closed
  - Relative adoption/non-relative
  - Placement with siblings or without
- Experiences since adoption



# OVERVIEW OF STUDY

- **Research question:** Are we adequately preparing adoption professionals?
- **Purpose:** To gain knowledge about adoption-specific curricula in undergraduate and graduate social service degree programs (e.g., Social Work, Family Studies, Psychology)
- **Design:** Curricular review
- **Sample:** Convenience sampling



# STUDY OF ADOPTION SPECIFIC COURSES: RESEARCH METHODS

## Methods

- Purposeful, convenience sampling (for adoption course syllabi)
  - Listervs (Baccalaureate Program Directors, Master of Social Work, Title-IV-E)
  - NCFR Adoption Focus Group
  - Council of Social Work Education
  - Adoption researchers contacted directly (13)

## Our request (via email):

- *“...adoption-specific courses that you have taught in your program. Adoption-specific content may include domestic and/or intercountry adoption, permanency planning, adoption research and/or or policy, and other topics related to the field of adoption.”*





# ADOPTION CURRICULUM: OVERVIEW OF OUR FINDINGS

Total number of syllabi received = 16

- Schools represented (12)
  1. University of Massachusetts, Amherst
  2. St. Mary's University
  3. University of Minnesota
  4. Western Texas A & M University
  5. Concordia University
  6. University of Georgia
  7. Campbellsville University
  8. Rhode Island College
  9. Iowa State University
  10. Macalester College
  11. Kent State University
  12. University of Washington



# ADOPTION CURRICULA: OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

## Results

- Total number of syllabi = 16
  - Disciplines represented (5)

Discipline	No# courses
Social Work	8
Psychology	3
Marriage & Family Therapy (MFT)	1
Family Studies	3
Human Services	1
Total	16

# ADOPTION CURRICULA: OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

## Results

- Overview of courses

Discipline	# Courses	Undergraduate vs Graduate			# Credits	
		UG	UG/G	G	1	3
Social Work	8	3	–	5	–	8
Psychology	3	2	1	–	–	3
MFT	1	–	–	1	1	–
Family Studies	3	3	–	–	3	–
Human Services	1	1	–	–	1	–
		9	1	6	5	11
Totals	16	16			16	

# FINDINGS

- How many courses focused exclusively on adoption?

<b>Adoption only focus (5)</b>	<b>Adoption/Foster Care (5)</b>	<b>Child Welfare (5)</b>	<b>Other (1)</b>
<b>The Psychology of Adoption (2)</b>	<b>Adoption/FC Issues in Family Therapy</b>	<b>SW with Abusing/Neglecting Families</b>	<b>Perspectives on Grief /Loss</b>
<b>Adoptive Families in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>	<b>Adoption &amp; Foster Families</b>	<b>Family/Child Welfare, FC, &amp; Adoption</b>	
<b>Adoption</b>	<b>Foster Care/Adoption</b>	<b>Child Welfare Practice</b>	
<b>Understanding Adoption</b>	<b>Psychology of Foster Care/Adoption</b>	<b>Social Services to Children &amp; Families</b>	
	<b>Permanency in CW</b>	<b>Child &amp; Family Policy &amp; Services</b>	

# FINDINGS

## ■ Disciplines of adoption-only courses (5)

Family Studies	Social Work	Psychology	Human Services
Adoptive Families in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	—	The Psychology Adoption (2)	Adoption
Understanding Adoption			

# YOUNG ADULTS: CURRICULAR CONTENT

- No modules devoted to young adult content
- Option for focus on “adults” for assignments in three adoption-only content courses (391AD, MFT 660, and FSoS 4104)
- Readings that focus on young adulthood:
  - Grotevant, H. D., Rueter, M., Von Korff, L., & Gonzalez, C. (2011). Post-adoption contact, adoption communicative openness, and satisfaction with contact as predictors of externalizing behavior in adolescence and emerging adulthood. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 52, 529 – 536.
  - Samuels, G.M. (2009). Ambiguous loss of home: The experience of familial (im)permanence among young adults with foster care backgrounds. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31:12, 1229-1239.

# CENTER FOR ADOPTION SUPPORT AND EDUCATION: FEDERAL FUNDING 2014-2019



## National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI)

- \$9 million grant from US Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families (AFC)
  - Will develop web-based, evidence-based competency curricula for mental health and child welfare service providers working in adoption and permanency planning
  - Will build upon CASE's TAC program (currently implemented in 13 states)

# STATE FUNDING: CALIFORNIA, 2014

## AB-1790

### Assembly Bill 1790: Foster Children – Mental Health Services

- Legislation requires DSS to identify barriers to the provision of mental health services from mental health practitioners (who have received specialized training in adoption or permanency issues) to children receiving those medically necessary specialty mental health services.





# ADOPTION CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS: AN OVERVIEW

- Total programs currently offered: 6

Program	Location	Type	Format	Cost	CEUs
<b>(1) CASE</b> Training on Adoption Competency (TAC)	12 states (13 sites)	Post- graduate	12 sessions (+12-18 hours)	Varies	72
<b>(2) Kinship Center</b> <b>ACT</b> – An Adoption and Permanency Curriculum for Child Welfare & Mental Health Professionals	California	Post- graduate	8 days – 48 hours	NA	NA
<b>(3) Advanced Practice</b> <b>Certificate Program in</b> Adoption and Foster Care	Louisiana	Post- graduate	10 classes	NA	90

# ADOPTION CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS: AN OVERVIEW, CONT.

- Total programs currently offered: 6

Program	Location	Type	Format	Cost	CEUs
<b>(4) AFCC Adoption &amp; Foster Care Certificate Program</b>	Rhode Island College	Open to all	3 core + 1 elective	?? \$15 for certificate	NA
<b>(5) Adoption Certificate Program</b>	Michigan State University	NA	3 courses (2 req, 1 elective)	\$362 + \$15 for certificate	15
<b>(6) Colorado Adoption Certificate Program</b>	University of Denver	Post- graduate	6 days + 3 mos. Bi- weekly supervision	\$1180	45

# CENTER FOR ADOPTION SUPPORT & EDUCATION: C.A.S.E.

- Training on Adoption Competency (TAC) – (2010 to present)
  - 13 cites (NC, VA, MO, IA, CA, NE, MA, MI, OH, IN, CT, MN)
  - Adoption-competent mental health (18 competencies)
  - Intensive, competence-based training post-graduate certificate program for mental health professionals
  - 12-13 modules (based on location) + 12-18 hours clinical consultation
    - One TAC module on adopted adolescents & identity that includes 1-hour emerging adulthood content
  - University of Minnesota's *Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW)*
    - BSW + 5 years experience
    - \$1850 (scholarships & DHS funding available)
    - Completed by over 100 mental health professionals since 2012

# THE EDUCATION INSTITUTE OF KINSHIP CENTER



- ACT: An Adoption and Permanency Curriculum for Child Welfare and Mental Health Professionals (1992 – present)
- Post-graduate permanency “model curriculum for the industry” Completed by over 7,000 child welfare professionals
- 48-hour curriculum (8 days)

# LOUISIANA DCFS & HUNTER COLLEGE SSW

- The Advanced Practice Certificate Program in Adoption and Foster Care
  - Post-graduate or specifically outlined experience (min. 5 yrs.)
  - NASW (Louisiana funded)
  - 10 modules (90 CEUs)
  - Last offered (2011-2012)
  - Mental health providers who complete program are listed on *Hunter College SSW Adoption Certificate Registry*



# RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

## ■ Adoption and Foster Care Certificate (AFCC) Program

- Currently offered in 2015
- Competency-based vision and mission: “Adoption & foster care competent professional”
- Offered to all (even if not pursuing a certificate)
- Three required courses + one elective
- Certificate recipients
  - Entered in DCYF system
  - Attend peer consultation group with AFCC Program Coordinator



**RHODE  
ISLAND  
COLLEGE**

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## ■ The Adoption Certificate Program

- 3 adoption courses total (2 required + one elective, 15 CEUs)
- Last offered 2013
- Certificate program objectives:
  - Theoretical foundation for treatment & support
  - Treat common clinical issues
  - Develop sensitivity toward these issues in clinical treatment
  - Preventative approach to relinquishment



MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

## ■ The Colorado Adoption Certificate Program

- Collaborative partnership with UD, GSSW, Butler Institute for Families, the Adoption Exchange, and Colorado Department of Human Services
- Post-graduate program with developmental, theoretical, and clinical practice focus
- 45 CEUs
- \$1180 tuition



UNIVERSITY *of*  
DENVER



# OTHER POST-DEGREE PROGRAMS

- PACT – Pre/Post Adoption Counseling and Training
- Rutgers University – Adoption Certificate Program
- Washington State
- Portland State University – Therapy with Adoptive Families
- Hunter College – Certificate Program in Adoption Therapy
- University of Connecticut – Certificate Program in Adoption
- Case Western Reserve – Adoption Mental Health Service
- University of Toronto – Adoption Studies Certificate
- New Mexico – Certificate Program in Adoption/Foster Care Therapy

# DISCUSSION

- Do you work with adopted adults?
- What education and training have you received to prepare you for this specialized work with emerging adopted adults?
- Has this education and training been adequate?
- What have been some of your biggest challenges in working with this population?
- What else do you need to be prepared for your work?



# QUESTIONS?

Thank you for attending!

**Contacts:**

Bibiana Koh, Ph.D., LICSW

[koh@augsborg.edu](mailto:koh@augsborg.edu)

Ruth McRoy, Ph.D., LCSW

[ruth.mcroy@bc.edu](mailto:ruth.mcroy@bc.edu)

JaeRan Kim, Ph.D., LCSW

[jaeran@gmail.com](mailto:jaeran@gmail.com)