



ALABAMA
PRE/POST
ADOPTION
CONNECTIONS
CHILDRENSAID.ORG/APAC

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF ALABAMA
AND THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCES.

APAC

ALABAMA'S RESOURCE FOR ADOPTION
EDUCATION AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SUMMER 2019

ISSUE 57

SWEET SUMMERTIME



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

DIRECTOR'S NOTE 2

COVER STORY CONTINUED 2

SUMMER FREEDOM 3

ALABAMA'S WAITING KIDS 4

COUNSELOR'S CORNER 5

SAFE SCREEN TIME 6

UPCOMING TRAINING 7

ADOPTIVE FAMILY GROUPS 7

Swimming and sunshine and watermelon, oh my! Summertime has graced us with its presence once again. There is something about summer that causes a person to slow down and enjoy the day ahead. Maybe it is the longer days or the smell of fresh cut grass, but summer does something for our soul. It is almost as if it is summer's job to help us slow down, breathe, and notice all of the good that is going on around us. Although summer vacation to you may mean scrambling to find adequate childcare, don't forget what other opportunities summer presents.

REST. School is out, sports are on pause, and the beach is calling your name. Summer is

perfectly designed for a time of rest. It is a time to put extra responsibilities on pause and focus on the important things in life. What can you and your family cut back on in order to have extra time to rest? What does rest look like to you? To your family? Maybe rest is spending more time at the pool or maybe it means planning more family movie nights. Rest has no rules other than to enjoy it!

REFLECTION. In the still moments of a hot morning on the porch...in the shelter of your cozy hammock...in the hideaway of your favorite retreat destination, take time to reflect. Reflect on what the year has held so far and how everything has fallen into place despite thinking

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 —

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Happy summer from all of us at Children's Aid Society of Alabama. Welcome to another edition of our APAC Newsletter.

Summer brings a break from the hectic schedule of school and extra curricula activities, which gives us the opportunity to spend more purposeful time together. Imagine catching lightning bugs, blowing bubbles or taking a trip to the local Farmer's Market for fresh fruit and produce; family time can be anything you and your family want it to be. Another way to connect with each other is to unplug; create "technology free time" as a family to explore all that summer has to offer. We hope you and your family enjoy creating lasting memories together this summer.

We want to thank our partners, the Alabama Department of Human Resources Office of Permanency, Heart Gallery and AFAPA. We express our gratitude for the sixty-seven county DHR offices we have the honor of working with as we all serve the precious children of our state.

Be a part of finding forever families for Alabama's waiting children. You might know someone who is thinking about adoption or you would like some brochures to share. Contact us at apac@childrensaid.org, or call 866-803-2722.



- Suzie Diamond, LICSW, PIP
APAC Program Director



—CONTINUED FROM COVER STORY:

that it never could. Take time to practice gratefulness for all of the good that has come your way. You have made it to another summer. Create a scrapbook with your family members, or hold a party to celebrate both the hard and the good that has come to you this year!

CONNECTION. The slow pace of summer opens endless possibilities of connecting with those who are most important to you. Grab your pen and paper and make a list of people who you want to intentionally make time for in this season. Carve out time for these people and have them over for lemonade, take them on a sunset hike, play tag, or catch lightning bugs. Put the to-do list aside and fight for the moments where it is just you, the ones you love, and maybe a melted popsicle too.

Sweet summertime offers us the perfect environment to slow down and connect with ourselves and the people around us. We hope that this newsletter inspires you to do just that!

- Jessica Dieken, LMSW,
APAC Family Advocate

APAC RESOURCE LIBRARY

Check out our new summer resources that have just arrived and are now stocked on our shelves ready for check out!

The largest resource collection in Alabama for Foster/Adoptive Families and Professionals with over 4,000 resources is available for free on loan! Call us, or visit our website to get connected:

childrensaid.org/apaclibrary

SUMMER FREEDOM THROUGH SUMMER SCHEDULES



Your out-of-office reply is active and you feel a sense of excitement, anticipation, and freedom as you leave for your upcoming vacation. This feeling of freedom does require intentional planning to ensure maximum enjoyment while keeping everyone sane at the same time. Without some element of structure and consideration of your children's needs, you will likely all need your own vacation after you get back! This can be even more pronounced for our children as they are continuing to develop executive functioning and self-regulation abilities.

There is an inherent need for structure with our kids' summer activities, which can be very tricky during times of leisure and relaxation. Children thrive with clear boundaries, expectations, and familiarity but unfortunately, children cannot fully plan out their summer days on their own. As with vacation, we as parents have to assist with providing some structure so kids can have the *freedom* to have a successful summer.

Although every family is unique, there are a few essential components that can help all children have a fun, yet balanced summer break while continuing to promote healthy development and attachment. Consider viewing your child's summer days through this lens and see if you're hitting on each of these daily. They will often overlap and are not age-specific.

Active, high-energy, physical play: This could be as simple as playing outside, swimming, running or any other type of physical activity. Fun is key!

Low-energy, downtime: Time to reset, relax, and recover from high-stimulating activities. This could include reading, puzzles, or drawing. Alternating high and low-energy activities is important for maintaining regulation. Sufficient sleep is included in this.

Creative Exploration: It's been said that creativity is the most basic human need and simply the act of creating is not only life-giving but also a wonderful avenue for self-expression. This could include art, music, skits or puppet shows, building forts, coming up with jokes, and making creations from recycled objects.

Together time: Do any of the above together as a family and/or one-on-one. Typically, the downtime and creative activities lend themselves to more conversation but all of these can promote attachment.

Contributing to the family and others: This includes basic home chores but also other means of giving back and serving others. Doing something nice for someone is a common item on many summer daily checklists.

You can find tons of summer schedules as well as attachment-promoting activities online but please reach out to APAC if you need assistance or want to discuss your own individual family's needs.

- Brock C. Sellers, LICSW, PIP
APAC Training Coordinator

ALABAMA'S WAITING CHILDREN



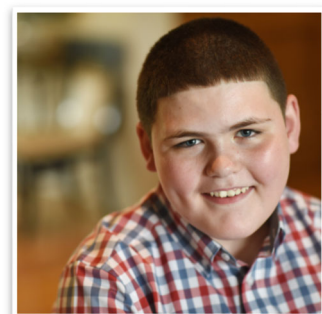
Isis, born March 2001, loves to write poetry and songs. She enjoys singing both in a choir and on her own. She also loves to play basketball and is very active in the church youth group. Isis likes to be with her friends and hang out. Isis is looking for a two-parent home where she is the only child in the home, as she desires one on one attention. Isis wants to go to college and become a doctor

to help other people. Isis is currently in honor classes. She is charming and a joy to be around.



Cason, born May 2009, is a very lovable child. He loves music and is very curious about learning things. Cason loves to play the harmonica and with his tablet. He is very comfortable in his surroundings, once he learns them. Cason needs a home with someone who will take time to offer guidance. He has been diagnosed with Autism and has visual

impairments. He easily bonds well with others. Cason enjoys school, especially music time in class.



Jesse was born in October of 2006. He is a caring and loving child who desires plenty of hugs and is often smiling. Jesse is an active young man who enjoys church and watching movies.

He also likes to shop and buy toys. He desires to have a dog and enjoys being around

animals. Jesse does have special needs and requires 24/7 supervision. Jesse would like to remain in contact with his older sister when he finds his forever home. Jesse is looking forward to a patient and understanding forever family who will love him unconditionally.



Joshawa, born October 2003, enjoys helping others, especially if he sees that someone is having a difficult time with something. He enjoys playing computer games and making up fun games to play outside with is peers. Joshawa likes to assist the teachers with tasks in the classroom and is viewed as a helper. Joshawa would

function best in a two-parent home that provides structure and where he is the only child.



Rebecca, born September 2000, is a caring child that is also very personable. Rebecca enjoys trying new activities and has recently participated in swimming lessons and Future Business Leaders of America. She also enjoys drawing and football. Overall, she is doing well academically. She desires

to be with a family that will love and nurture her.



Kanila, born April 2004, is a busy child who enjoys crafts, singing, and playing in the band at school. She likes to be outdoors and playing softball.

Dalyn, born March 2005, is an adventurous child who has a great sense of humor and loves to try new things.

Kamaree, born July 2006, is a sweet child with a great sense of humor just like her siblings. She enjoys coloring, playing with toys and eating sweets. She and her siblings long to be in a forever family together.



Visit heartgalleryalabama.com
to meet more kids waiting to be adopted or
to inquire about any of the children listed here.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

A little R&R—It's not just for adults anymore!

Most of you can agree with me when I say that rest and relaxation are important for all adults. I could tell you to picture yourself on the beach with the waves crashing nearby or up in the mountains with beautiful birds chirping around. Better yet, I wish I could write you a "prescription" to visit those places and give all your senses a boost. As a therapist that works primarily with children and adolescents, I am recognizing more and more just how important rest and relaxation are for that population as well. So many children come to me with anxiety, hyperactivity, or even just difficulty coping with every day stressors such as school and peer relationships. You have probably heard about things such as guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, and deep breathing; however, I would like to offer some family-centered crafts that you can do to encourage relaxation in your children. Many of these activities also work great for sensory-seeking children. Also, I utilize essential oils in some of these crafts - an element you can incorporate or omit as desired.

Stress "Balls"

- tube sock
- rice or lentils
- sandwich bags
- ribbon
- essential oils

Put a few drops of essential oils on the inside of the sock. Place rice or lentils in a sandwich bag. Tie the sandwich bag and place in the bottom of the sock. Use ribbon to tie off the sock. Allow your child to squeeze the sock to relieve tension.

JOIN OUR APAC FACEBOOK GROUP

Looking for other adoptive parents in Alabama just like you? Come join the conversation in the our Facebook community! APAC hosts a group specifically to support adoptive parents in Alabama. Join the group and jump in the conversation:

fb.me/apacadoptionsupport
(then click "Visit Group.")

Sugar Scrubs

- sugar
- olive, coconut, or almond oil
- essential oils
- small jar

Mix sugar with a few tablespoons of oil until you get a pasty consistency. Add a few drops of essential oils if desired. Have your child scrub their hands/feet with the paste, helping them develop mindfulness as they feel the gritty mixture, smell the scent, and then feel their soft skin.

Relaxation Bottles

- empty water bottle
- colored glitter
- glitter glue or clear craft glue

Put hot water in the bottle and then add some of the glue. Add colored glitter. Place the lid back on and shake to mix all ingredients. Have your child shake up the bottle and try to calm down as they watch the ingredients settle back down to the bottom.

Sand Trays

- shallow bin or tray
- sand
- various objects, toys, and trinkets

Place the sand in the bin or tray. Allow the child to hide and find the objects while they enjoy spreading, scooping, or running the mixture through their hands. You can even have the child tell a relaxing story with small objects.

- Kendra L. Alley, MS, LPC
Family Counselor



**ADOPTION
IS A BIG
STEP.**

LET APAC HELP.

WATCH OUR VIDEO

childrensaid.org/apacadoption



SAFE AND HEALTHY SCREEN TIME



SCREEN TIME FOR KIDS: new recommendations

The longtime "no screen time before 2" rule is out. Here are the latest recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

<p>18 months or younger</p> <p>No screens are still best. The exception is live video chat with family and friends.</p>	<p>18 months to 2 years</p> <p>Limit screen time and avoid solo use. Choose high-quality educational programming, and watch with kids to ensure understanding.</p>	<p>2 to 5 years</p> <p>Limit screen time to an hour a day. Parents should watch as well to ensure understanding and application to their world.</p>	<p>6 or older</p> <p>Place consistent limits on the time spent and types of media. Don't let screen time affect sleep, exercise or other behaviors.</p>
---	--	---	---

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

It is safe to say that all parents in our present generation have struggled with balancing their child's use of electronic devices. While we want our children to be literate with technology, we also want to protect them from overconsumption and threats to their safety. And what about the potential impact on children's health? Recent studies have shown a connection between excessive usage and changes in the brain.

So what is a parent to do? Parents need to understand that technology is not going away and that they play a critical role in guiding their child on managing electronic devices and navigating social media. Below are some factors to consider.

Screen time rules and limits. It is important to set limits with technology, such as technology-free zones, daily end time, and limits for weekly usage. Teach and monitor appropriate online behavior.

Provide alternatives to screen time. Help your child by encouraging them to plan activities-prioritize playtime with other children. Remember, children who have experienced trauma need connection with other people above anything else.

Monitor screen time quality. Not all games, apps, and programs are created equal. Preview and monitor what your child is consuming online. Products such as Circle with Disney can monitor and filter content on electronic devices. Resources like Common Sense Media can also help parents determine if material is appropriate for their children.

So this summer, make it a priority to teach your child boundaries when it comes to electronics. Managing your child's use of electronic devices will be an ongoing challenge but oh so worth it!

- Robbie Shockey, MS
APAC Family Advocate

AFFORDABLE SUMMER FUN

This is the time of year that kids have been waiting for! As much fun as summer days with the family are, we know that finding activities to keep the kiddos entertained but that don't break the bank can be difficult. Here's some good news! There are some great affordable options out there! Some of our favorites are movie nights at the park, a day at the local splash pad, a trip to the museum or going on a hike. Did you know that movie theaters and bowling alleys will often run specials for kids during the summer? Also, be sure to check your community calendar or library for any events or festivals in your area. We have taken the time to find some of our favorite kid friendly events or activities across the state.

- ⇒ **Huntsville:** Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt
- ⇒ **Birmingham:** The Market at Pepper Place
- ⇒ **Montgomery:** Stars of the Riverfront
- ⇒ **Mobile:** Mobile Botanical Gardens

Enjoy your summer fun!

- Kayley Ward, LMSW
APAC Family Advocate

UPCOMING ONLINE TRAININGS

Contact our
APAC Training Team:
training@childrensaid.org
866-803-2722

August 21 & September 12

2 Part Webinar:

Supporting Children Through Grief

Understanding Children's Grief
and Loss Experiences

with Maureen Patterson-Fede

Register on our site: childrensaid.org/training

APAC Online Training

On-demand training courses for
Parents and Professionals

Sign up on our site:

childrensaid.org/onlinetraining

ADOPTIVE FAMILY GROUPS

APAC offers support groups that meet in person at various locations throughout the state, providing education and social interaction for adoptive parents and their children.

Baldwin County

2nd Thursday

6-7:30pm @ 3 Circle

Church, Daphne

Morgan County

2nd Thursday

6-7:30pm @ Central Park

Baptist Church, Decatur

Madison County

2nd Tuesday

6-7:30pm @ First United

Methodist Church,

Huntsville

River Region (Autauga,

Elmore, Montgomery)

3rd Tuesday

6:00-7:30 @ Vaughn

Forest Church,

Montgomery

Lee County

3rd Thursday

6-7:30pm @ Cornerstone

Church, Auburn

Shelby County

1st Tuesday

6:30-8:00p @ First United

Methodist, Alabaster

Mobile County

4th Friday

6-7:30pm @ Christ

Fellowship Baptist, Mobile

All Adoptive Family Groups
have parent sessions, child
groups, and childcare unless
otherwise indicated.

Trained Therapists Network

Save the Date!



Upcoming training event with Allison Davis Maxon

co-author of "7 Core Issues in Adoption"

4 LOCATIONS!

Huntsville: **November 6**

Mobile: **November 19**

Birmingham: **November 7**

Montgomery: **November 21**

5.5 Social Work & NBCC clock hours available!



childrensaid.org/apac



**Children's Aid
Society**
of Alabama

2141 14th Avenue South

Birmingham, AL 35205

P: 866.803.2722

F: 205.933.8152

E: apac@childrensaid.org

W: childrensaid.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1873
BIRMINGHAM, AL

CONNECT WITH APAC

Central Office &
Northern Region
Birmingham Area

2141 14th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35205
P: 205.949.2722
F: 205.933.8152

Southern Region
Montgomery &
Wiregrass Area

500 Interstate Park
Suite 508
Montgomery, AL 36109
P: 334.409.9477

Huntsville Area

103 Mountain Brook Blvd
Madison, AL 35758
P: 256.539.5828

Mobile Area

572 Azalea Road,
Suite 101
Mobile, AL 36609
P: 251.460.2727

Call: 866.803.2722
Email: apac@childrensaid.org
childrensaid.org/apac



fb.com/childrensaid



[@childrensaidorg](https://twitter.com/childrensaidorg)



[@childrensaid](https://www.instagram.com/childrensaid)