



Family Resource Center
Annual Report 2007

Dear Friends,

On September 30th we closed the books on fiscal year 2007, and as I look back over that twelve month period I see a year that was filled with change, challenge, and hope. It was a year of renewed commitment to our core values and our mission of helping children around the world through adoption.

During fiscal 2007, FRC ended its affiliation with the Cradle and the Cradle Foundation (CFRC). Through the affiliation we came to recognize and appreciate our unique strengths and culture while discovering opportunities for improvement and growth.

In our domestic program we had the privilege of working with and supporting 84 courageous birthparents, 42 of whom chose to proceed with their adoption plans. Although the process of adopting from China slowed down in 2007, we completed three trips, bringing home 23 beautiful baby girls. We also conducted 144 home studies for families in Illinois hoping to adopt, and offered assistance to more than 40 individuals who had worked with FRC in years past and sought our help with search and reunion.

I know I speak for everyone at Family Resource Center when I say we share a profound sense of gratitude for all that we have, and respect for all those we work with and serve. We recognize and appreciate that what we do deeply impacts the lives of and hearts of the families we touch.

We admire and respect the birthparents that come to us for support. The decision to place a child for adoption is a deeply personal one, and it is an honor to be a part of that process. Likewise we feel privileged to work with the many wonderful families who hope to bring children into their lives through adoption.

We acknowledge and appreciate all the volunteers who generously donate their time and talent, whether it be answering phones after hours, serving food or painting faces at our annual picnic, providing temporary care for children in transition, soliciting items for our silent auction, and helping to organize and run the Spring Gala.

I would like to personally express my deep gratitude to all the donors who give so generously to FRC. Without the financial support of these wonderful people we would not be able to continue the work that we do.

This September Family Resource Center will celebrate its 20th Anniversary. As we prepare to mark this momentous milestone, we look back on our history with pride, and look forward to our future with enthusiasm.

Warm regards,

Richard Pearlman



Dear Friends

Family Resource Center



Kelly was just 16 when she realized she was pregnant. She hid the pregnancy from friends, family, and even from herself for the first six months – wearing baggy sweatshirts even as the weather turned hot. When school let out for the summer she realized she had to do something. She was relieved when she finally told her parents and discovered that they were incredibly supportive. They asked her “what do YOU want to do?”

Even though her boyfriend’s family was pushing her to raise the baby, Kelly knew in her heart that she was too young. She began looking into adoption, and contacted FRC. She instantly felt comfortable talking with Kendra, who became her birthparent counselor. Kendra explained the process of adoption and the many choices a birthmother can make. Kelly liked the idea that she could choose the adoptive family, but was undecided about how much contact she wanted to have after the baby was born. At their next visit Kendra toted a suitcase full of albums for Kelly to review.

When Kelly opened the second album and saw the photos of Mike and Julie, she said “that’s them.” As she read the profile she became even more convinced, but Kendra insisted she go through at least twenty more. Kendra suggested that Kelly choose two families, because the first couple was strongly in favor of an open adoption. Kelly chose a second couple who wanted limited contact, only letters and photos, and she agreed to meet both.

Kendra first set up a meeting with Mike and Julie that included their case worker, Kelly and her parents, and the birth father and his parents. When Kelly met Mike and Julie, she felt sure they were the right choice, and she made her decision. They met several more times before Kelly’s due date, and she invited them to be at the hospital for the birth. When Matthew came into the world, he was welcomed by Kelly’s parents, the birth father and his family, Kendra, Mike and Julie.

There were many tears when it was time to leave. Matthew went home with Julie and Mike, while Kelly went home with her parents. Since then she has graduated from high school and started attending college. Matthew is now two, and Kelly, Julie and Mike have agreed to stay in touch. Kelly visits with Matthew often - at least once a month. Being too young to understand the concept of birthmother, he knows her simply as “Kelly.” When he does understand, he will also know that she loved him so much – she gave him the gift of a stable, caring, forever family.



A Birthmother's Tale

A Christmas Angel

Even before Penny and George got married, they both liked the idea of adoption. When it came time to actively pursue the idea, Penny's nurse practitioner steered her toward FRC saying "if you're considering adoption, I know a great agency..." The couple attended an Intro session and immediately liked the agency's straightforward approach. Richard made it clear that "FRC is not here to find you a child; we are here to support birthmothers and find children loving homes." FRC's philosophy of empowering birthmothers to make choices resonated with both Penny and George, and they decided to enter the Domestic Adoption Program.

The hardest part of the process was creating their parent profile and writing the birthmother letter. How do you communicate who you are and what you have to offer in a way that is compelling and realistic; that differentiates you from all the other families? Ben Friedman's advice was simple: "Be yourselves". No one can predict what a birthmother will find appealing. It may be the fact that you play the flute and they always wanted to; it may be that you both love dogs; it could be that she simply likes your picture and feels an instant connection.

Penny and George created a profile that was authentic and sincere, then tried to prepare themselves for all the risks that go along with domestic adoption: waiting years to be chosen; never being chosen; being chosen and then having the birthmother change her mind; worrying that taking a vacation could mean missing the opportunity to meet with a birthmother...

In mid-December, while visiting George's family in Connecticut, they received a call from their social worker, Gail, telling them to get back to Chicago! A birthmother had chosen their profile, and the baby boy had been born on December the 8th. She wanted to meet the couple and make a decision before Christmas. In a daze of joy, disbelief and apprehension they flew home – and ran around in a panic having the car seat installed, buying formula and praying that it would all go smoothly.

On December 19th, at 6:30 pm Penny and George held their son for the very first time.

They met his birth mother, her five year old son, and the baby's birth grandmother. It was an intensely emotional, moving experience for everyone. Penny and George, overwhelmed, looked into "the most beautiful face we ever saw". The birthmother tearfully expressed: "all I really want is for someone to love my baby." Looking at Penny and George gazing down in wonder at their precious son – she knew her baby boy would be cherished.

At that first meeting, the baby's birth grandmother suggested the name Gabriel. Penny and George thought about it overnight, and agreed it was the perfect name for the little angel who came into their lives at Christmas.



From China, With Love

Jeff and Jan met when they were each near 40, so early in the relationship they discussed the subject of children. Both wanted a family, and after marrying in 2003 they decided to “try” for a year or so, and then move on to the possibility of adoption. They attended a seminar hosted by Resolve where Jane Turner gave a general overview of adoption, comparing domestic and international, and covering the various countries and specific requirements.

Jeff and Jan were both sold on working with Jane and FRC, and decided to pursue international adoption through the China Program. A college friend of Jan’s had adopted two daughters from China, and the couple liked the predictability and fairness of the process. Fees were predetermined, and once you completed the home study and dossier preparation, it was just a matter of submitting the documents and waiting for a referral.

For most, that waiting period is grueling. Tracking the time frames on various websites, wondering if your child has already been born, hoping that she is being well cared for. During their 19 month wait, Jeff completed his first year as a teacher following a mid-life career change. The couple moved from a condo to a house, and tried to prepare for parenthood. On Saturday June 6, the day before their third anniversary, they received a call from Jane. Jan still laughs as she recalls Jane describing the referral photos: “She looks like a – nice - girl.” The couple raced to Jane’s house in Glenview to pick up their referral packet and pour over the photos. They describe the experience of sitting on the porch, surrounded by the song of cicadas, as spiritual, magical and moving.

Late in July, armed with suitcases full of formula, diapers, toys, scabies cream, lice shampoo, a host of “in case” medications - and an enormous amount of anticipation and trust - they boarded a plane for the 20 hour trip to China.

On July 29th Jeff, Jan and Zoe Ni Tai became a family in a noisy crowded room at the Jianxi Province Civil Affairs office in Nanchang, China. Five months later, they both agree they have the daughter they were meant to have. Zoe is healthy, playful, and a source of constant laughter and joy.



Jeff and Jan were thrilled to meet each other and fall in love. Both reveled in the feeling of warmth, connectedness and profound happiness that comes with being in love. Four years later, as they discuss parenthood, they describe it as “this whole other falling in love process.” It is a process filled with a giddy sense of amazement and a profound sense of gratitude. It is a process that will continue for a lifetime.

Search & Reunion

One of the areas of greatest opportunity and challenge for many adoption agencies is Search and Reunion. As FRC approaches its 20th anniversary a growing number of individuals, from both the adoptive family and birth family's side of the ledger, are asking for help obtaining information and assistance with intra-family contacts. In fiscal 2007 we had more inquires than ever before, and we expect that trend to continue.

Many adoptive families originally came to us thinking that they just wanted to adopt a child. They did not want to have anything to do with their child's birth mother, birth father, biological grandparents, or siblings. This is akin to getting married and saying "I want nothing to do with my spouse's parents, aunts, uncles or siblings." It may be possible, but it's not terribly realistic. When someone adopts, places a child (or abandons a child), or is adopted – their extended family network expands to encompass all the families connected through the adopted child.

At some point in their lives, it is natural for an adopted child to be interested in their biological roots. That interest may lead to a desire to connect with their birth family, as it did with a 14 year old girl this past spring. Her adoptive parents sought FRC's assistance in reuniting their daughter with her birth mother.

At the time she placed her daughter for adoption, birth mom was already raising a two year old son. Over the years she improved her circumstances through hard work and study, and was now happily married to a man who was not the father of her children. FRC was able to contact her and facilitated the exchange of e-mails. The adoptive parents gave their daughter direct access to her birth mother, and e-mails soon led to phone calls, and a decision on the part of all the parents to meet.

The reunion took place on a Saturday afternoon at Navy Pier in Chicago. When the daughter and her birth mother saw each other for the first time they approached one another and without speaking a word, embraced and wept. Over the next 48 hours sister got to know brother, mothers got to meet eye to eye, and both mothers and daughter learned new things about each other.

About six weeks after the meeting the FRC social worker contacted the adoptive family to see how things were going. The father reported that things were pretty much back to normal and shared his feelings about the event: "You know, I've been with my daughter since she was two days old. I love her from the bottom of my heart. She is the light of my life. And, over the years, I have seen her bursting with joy maybe ten times. I don't mean your every day kind of happy, I mean – really really happy. And seeing my daughter meet her birth mother was one of those times. As a father, nothing gives me greater joy than to see my daughter feeling happy. How could I feel anything but good, knowing that meeting her birth mother gave her such happiness?" He went on to say, "Now, maybe the experience was different for my wife – because our daughter was meeting her birth mother. Maybe, if she had been meeting her birth father, I would have had a different experience."



Family Resource Center remains committed to helping children and families navigate the life-long experience of adoption. In response to the growing number of search and reunion inquiries, this past year we designated two staff people to focus on this area and established a formal procedure to process and respond to requests. We are happy to assist anyone interested in exploring biological family connections.



Welcome to...

Family Resource Center



Jayanna	Gerard	Allison	Luke
Esteban	ZiGui	Thaila	Alexander
Temamnesh	Cynthia	Sean	John
John	Zoe	Kijan	Owen
Jillian	Holly	Thomas	Elizabeth
Laura	KaylieJade	Ryan	Evelyn
Kito	Grace	Neil	Nylah
Sophie	Daniel	Addison	Grace
Jillian	Maya	Grace	Jillian
Sarah	Emily	John "Jack"	Isabella
Sarah	Katherine	Alejandro	Madison
Jessica	Ella	Sitota	Charlotte
Conor	Athena	Madelyn	Skylar
Anthony	Callie	Jack	Gabriella
Ivy	Jesse	Elijah	Simon
Arianna	Matthew	Cameron	Lauren
Naomi	Alexander	Etienne	Cadyn
Mackenzie	Lily	Kai	Alexander
Carolyn	Anna	Briana	Gabriel
Corinne	Finn	Joseph	Kaitlyn
Daniel	Lily	Gabriella	Lindsey
Jai	Chloe	Aidan	Halle
Zachary	Molly	George	Zoe
Ryan	MaisieLuc	Sasha	
Charles	Lola	Chase	
Katlyn	Nora	Nicholas	

FRC gratefully acknowledges the generous support of all of our donors during fiscal year 2007.

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Larry Rosenzweig and Cindy Wong
Morris and Judith Rosenzweig



Thank you!



REVENUES

Public Support	TOTAL
Contributions	
Adoptive Parents and Others	\$174,333
Grants	-
Special Event Income	\$122,297
Trusts	-
Bequests	-
Donated Goods and Services	\$2,912
<i>Total Public Support</i>	\$299,542
Program Revenue	
Fee Income	\$1,234,088
Other Revenues, net	
Interest and Dividends	\$2,690
Realized/Unrealized Net Gains on Investments and Trusts	-
Change in Value of Split Interest Agreements	\$7,082
Administration Fee	-
Miscellaneous Revenue	-
<i>Total Other Revenues, net</i>	\$107
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$9,879
<i>Total Revenue and Other Support</i>	-
	\$1,543,508

EXPENSES

Program Services	
Social Service	\$1,287,618
Outreach and Communications	-
New Ventures	\$87
<i>Total Program Services</i>	\$1,287,705
Supporting Services	
Management and General	\$220,007
Fundraising	\$46,955
Special Events	\$48,557
Debt Service	-
<i>Total Supporting Services</i>	\$315,519
Bad Debt Loss	
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$1,603,224

NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS (\$59,316)

Net Assets, Beginning \$470,691

NET ASSETS, ENDING \$411,375



Families



Jim & Lisa with baby Sasha
born in June



Billy & Michael with baby Alex
born in July



Chris & Tammy with baby Addison
born in May



Paul & Lynn with baby Sean
born in August



Eric & Elizabeth with baby Simon
born in September



Sean & Trish with baby Anthony
born in April



Families



Ben & Sarah with baby Elijah
born in February



Karen, Mark & Jacksen with baby Jillian
born in May



Lee & Jill with baby Owen
born in May



Paolo & Becky with baby Kito
born in April



Dan & Andrea with baby Jillian
born in March



Jeff & Terri with baby Charlotte
born in April

