



post adoption PARENT GUIDE

December 2021 | Issue 9

Hello Families,

Happy December! Where has the 2021 year gone?

It appears the holidays have fast approached with Thanksgiving last month, Christmas and Hanukkah this month, and 2022 right around the corner. We hope December arrives with snow and family time as the year winds down. Below, you'll find resources and events taking place across our state.

We wish you and your family a safe and fun filled Holiday season!

We are excited to continue building rapport and relationships with post-permanency families.



Who Is Rise

RISE, Inc is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1987. RISE provides a range of services to adults, children, and families in Utah, Oregon, Arizona, Texas, and Idaho.

RISE provides services such as foster care, after-school and summer programs, early intervention, mental health therapy, behavioral supports, respite, and disability services. RISE, Inc. recently acquired the Idaho chapter formally known as Community Partnerships of Idaho.

IARE Staff Update:



We have a new email address!

Recently, our email address changed, so if you did not hear back from us, we apologize.

Please reach out via email at **id-adoptsupport@riservicesinc.org** or 208-252-6117.

We look forward to answering questions and working with your family!

[Visit our website](#)



We have a new team member that we are excited to share with our post-permanency families. Justine is joining our team as our Administrative Specialist. She will become the first voice / person you interact with when you reach out to us at RISE, Post Permanency Services. We are excited for her to join our team and look forward to her work with our families!

Justine has worked in the Social Services Industry for the past three years. She began in the HR Department and is excited to begin a new adventure with RISE! She graduated from Capital High School in 2003. She is the proud mom of a 17-year-old son! In her free time, she enjoys cooking, spending time with her family, and shopping at thrift stores!

UPDATE



Subsidy Renegotiations!

Just a reminder that if you have NOT returned your Annual Idaho Adoption and Guardianship Assistance form(s), please submit those at your earliest convenience to id-adoptsupport@riseservicesinc.org

Please do not worry if you have not turned in your documents as of this date. We are continuing to work with families who are sending their subsidy forms in. At this time, your subsidy will not be impacted, but please turn in your forms as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you and working with your families.

CONFERENCES



Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Conference

Just a reminder that on December 8, 2021, NACAC is presenting a virtual conference on FASD. Below is the registration link where you can learn more about the one day conference.

Registration is \$50 per person (or couple viewing sessions together) for NACAC members, or \$60 for non-members. Attendees can participate live or listen to a recorded version of workshops. To register and learn more about the conference, visit **NACAC FASD Conference**.

*Additionally, if you are interested in the training and worried about funding, please reach out to us at **id-adoptsupport@riseservicesinc.org**, and we can discuss applying for a grant to cover the expense of this and other training applicable to adoptive families.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Winter Wonderland Indian Creek Plaza, Caldwell, ID

Every year, the City of Caldwell decorates Indian Creek in downtown Caldwell with over a million lights! Winter Wonderland Festival is hosted by Destination Caldwell & Indian Creek Plaza and is completely free to attend — you can visit Santa, go ice

skating, eat your favorite treat, or start your holiday shopping with a variety of vendors. We have everything you need to kick off the holidays right here in downtown Caldwell!

To learn more, visit [Winter Wonderland](#)

Scentsy Commons Christmas Lights

Location: Scentsy Headquarters
2701 E. Pine Ave. Meridian, ID 83642

724,000 of them when they're all lit. That's 43 miles of lights, decorating 450 trees. The Tunnel of Lights features an additional 67,000 lights.

Christmas Lights Drive-Thru

Edgemere Grange #355
3272 Brandy Rd. Priest River, ID.

2nd Annual Drive-thru Christmas Lights event! This year, it will be a 2-Day event! Saturday, December 18th and Sunday, December 19th. Event opens at 4PM and goes until 9PM both days! We will have light displays set up at our Grange, along with Christmas music. Kids 12 and under will receive a gift (while supplies last). Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there to say hello as well! Stop by without having to get out of the car! This is a FREE event! For more information, visit [Christmas Lights Drive-Thru 2-Day Event! *FREE*](#)

Additionally, to see more light displays in the Treasure Valley, visit [Boise Christmas Lights](#) as they create a map yearly of homes putting on synchronized Christmas lights!

Breakfast with Santa

One of our case managers' family traditions growing up was having breakfast with Santa. Below are breakfast with Santa locations around the state:

Panhandle

The 35th Annual Shalena's Breakfast with Santa (Drive-Thru)

Date: Sunday, December 12, 2021

Time: 7:00 am — 1:00 pm

Location: Hauser Lake Fire Station (10728 N Hauser Lake Rd, Hauser, Idaho)

Eastern Idaho

Sing-Along Breakfast with Santa

Date: Saturday, December 4, 2021

Time: 8 AM — 12 PM

Location: Teton Valley Resort 1208 ID-31, Victor, ID

Central Idaho

Breakfast with Santa
Date: Saturday, December 18, 2021
Time: 8:00 – 10:30 AM
Location: Zoo Boise 355 Julia Davis Dr, Boise, ID

HOLIDAYS WITH AN ADOPTED OR FOSTER CHILD



As the holidays approach, our team has spent time researching and learning about the connection between adoption and holidays. As we shared in our October newsletter about Halloween, we were able to find a very similar article with the focus on holidays. Below is a short excerpt of our Program Supervisor, Jacqueline Shafer, and her insights from the articles. We hope you find this article helpful in offering tools to better understand how the holidays/traditions can impact children from a variety of backgrounds, particularly children with trauma histories. Enjoy the excerpt and full article!

Holidays with an Adopted or Foster Child

As we think of holidays, joy, and excitement arrive for children with the thought of Santa and presents. For parents, it is a busy time as you are beginning to plan trips,

Christmas parties, Hanukkah, or other holiday activities for your family. The holidays can always seem a bit chaotic and hectic, but for adoptive parents it can hold a more complicated story. For adoptive families, the unknown can create stress and lead to grief resurfacing for your children. We may not think that the holidays would lead to gloom, but when we think about children's past prior to your home, we may not know if they ever celebrated the holidays. The holiday memories that they may have experienced could include loneliness, lack of love and response from parents, no gifts, and uncertainty. The article *Holidays with An Adopted or Foster Child* has a variety of helpful tips that can be utilized as we are approaching the holiday season. Each child may respond differently to the holiday season as well. Some children will see the joy and excitement for the first time, while others may reflect back to their past. Be intentional about the holidays. Be mindful of what is going on for your child. Even if your family adopted ten years ago or six months ago, your child(ren) responses will all vary. Being intentional about the holidays will create a sense of understanding for yourself and your child.

The author suggested five things to put into place for a happier holiday. They are as follows:

1. Family and Friends

As stated in the article (as some may have realized in your own foster/adoption journey), our friends and family may not fully understand your child(ren) needs, as well as the newfound changes in your family dynamic. Adoption does not change the root of trauma but instills hope for children for a second (or even third chance) for a brighter future. "They don't see the hurdles that our adopted and foster children are trying to get over. They mean well, their intentions are good, but sometimes their comments and questions hurt" (Holidays with an Adopted Child). We know that some things they might say are not "intentional" but being aware of the intent it can have on our kids is huge. Educate them. Educate yourself. Advocate. Communicate about the changes beforehand (like a letter) as mentioned in the article.

2. Gifts

Giving gifts is a large component of holidays. As we know, some of our children may have never experienced Christmas morning with all the bells and whistles of a stack of presents under the Christmas tree. They may have been given one thing or nothing at all. So a gentle reminder (no matter the length of time between your adoption), a child may struggle or get easily overwhelmed with many gifts.

Here is a simple idea of gift giving from the article. One great idea is the Gifts of 4.

1. Something they want
2. Something they need
3. Something to wear
4. Something to read

Stockings can be stuffed with some fun snacks, sensory items, a new toothbrush, some cute socks... Know that it is okay if you give them less. All children respond differently may be excited about the simple joy Christmas brings. Don't base your expectations on others.

3. Food

Holidays (Christmas, Hanukkah or other holidays) include food of some type. For some children, food has been a huge insecurity. They may have gone without food on holidays, which impacts what they might think when they see all the yummy choices. Being intentional in understanding each child needs around food will be different, as will their responses. Some children may eat until they can't, or others will nibble or pocket food due to past insecurities. Some may not enjoy the special foods and not eat at all.

4. Traditions

As families, traditions are important. For adopted children, traditions are going to look vastly different, especially as it comes to the holidays. As a parent, we hope to instill traditions into our children that were part of our lives growing up. For a child who has been adopted, incorporating traditions from their birth families may be of utmost importance to them. It can lead to feelings of inclusion and acceptance. Additionally, creating new traditions as a family will be significant.

5. Self Care

Lastly, but just as significant, is your own self-care as a parent. *"You are juggling a lot. You have a lot on your plate. And to be able to pour into your family as much as you want to do, it is VITAL that you take care of yourself too.* So get out your calendar. Find some time when you can do self-care."

The full article can be read here: **[Holidays with an Adopted or Foster Child](#)**