

NOVEMBER 29, 2016

Congratulations!

IFAPA would like to congratulate all of the families that finalized their adoptions on National Adoption Day (and throughout all of 2016). We are so thankful for the endless love and lifetime commitment you have given to your children.

Two Sisters Adopt Sibling Group of Six on National Adoption Day

Source: WFAA-TV

Tracy and Sherrie Smith have done most everything together. So the 30-something sisters who share a Benbrook house together, and had dreams of becoming moms, decided why not do that together too.

On National Adoption Day, they did just that – six times.

Their house southwest of Fort Worth is a lot noisier than is used to be. Aaron, 6, is the oldest, Bayla his sister the kindergartener, Emma and Olivia are four-year-old twins, Franco is three and Jake 17-months. [CONTINUE READING & VIEW VIDEO](#)



STRUGGLING WITH AN ISSUE AT HOME?

The IFAPA website is filled with an abundance of resources to utilize throughout your parenting journey. Some of the topics on our website include:

- Caring for Children with Attachment Issues
- Parenting Challenging Behaviors
- Navigating Birth Family Relationships
- Discussing Adoption with Kids
- Preparing for a New Placement
- Parenting Transracially
- Maintaining Sibling Relationships
- Transitioning Teens to Adulthood
- Parenting Traumatized Children

[VIEW ARTICLES](#)

WE NEED TO CARE LESS ABOUT WHETHER OUR CHILDREN ARE ACADEMICALLY GIFTED & MORE ABOUT WHETHER THEY SIT WITH THE LONELY KID IN THE CAFETERIA.

Thank You for Remembering IFAPA on Giving Tuesday

This holiday season make a donation and help a child in need. IFAPA is seeking donations for our Friends of Children in Foster Care Program to help children in foster care participate in extra-curricular activities just like any other child. [DONATE HERE](#)



#GIVINGTUESDAY

11.29.2016

The Science of How Our Minds and Our Bodies Converge in the Healing of Trauma

By Maria Popova, BrainPickings.org

Dr. Bessel Van der Kolk Boston-based psychiatrist, pioneering PTSD researcher and author of [The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma](#) states:

“One does not have to be a combat soldier, or visit a refugee camp in Syria or the Congo to encounter trauma. Trauma happens to us, our friends, our families, and our neighbors. Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shown that one in five Americans was sexually molested as a child; one in four was beaten by a parent to the point of a mark being left on their body; and one in three couples engages in physical violence. A quarter of us grew up with alcoholic relatives, and one out of eight witnessed their mother being beaten or hit. It takes tremendous energy to keep functioning while carrying the memory of terror, and the shame of utter weakness and vulnerability.”

In trauma survivors, Van der Kolk notes, the parts of the brain that have evolved to monitor for danger remain overactivated and even the slightest sign of danger, real or misperceived, can trigger an acute stress response accompanied by intense unpleasant emotions and overwhelming sensations. Such posttraumatic reactions make it difficult for survivors to connect with other people, since closeness often triggers the sense of danger. And yet the very thing we come to most dread after experiencing trauma — close contact with other people — is also the thing we most need in order to regain psychoemotional solidity and begin healing. Van der Kolk writes:

“Being able to feel safe with other people is probably the single most important aspect of mental health; safe connections are fundamental to meaningful and satisfying lives.”

This, he points out, is why we've evolved a refined mechanism for detecting danger — we're incredibly attuned to even the subtlest emotional shifts in those around us and, even if we don't always heed these intuitive readings, we can read another person's friendliness or hostility on the basis of such imperceptible cues as brow tension, lip curvature, and body angles. But one of the most pernicious effects of trauma is that it disrupts this ability to accurately read others, rendering the trauma survivor either less able to detect danger or more likely to misperceive danger where there is none.

Paradoxically, what normalizes and repairs our ability to read danger and safety correctly is human connection. Van der Kolk writes:

Social support is not the same as merely being in the presence of others. The critical issue is reciprocity: being truly heard and seen by the people around us, feeling that we are held in someone else's mind and heart. For our physiology to calm down, heal, and grow we need a visceral feeling of safety. No doctor can write a prescription for friendship and love: These are complex and hard-earned capacities. You don't need a history of trauma to feel self-conscious and even panicked at a party with strangers — but trauma can turn the whole world into a gathering of aliens.

[**READ FULL ARTICLE**](#)

MY WHITE PARENTS ADOPTED AFRICAN- AMERICAN TWINS - HOW THEIR WORLD DIFFERS FROM MINE

By Elena Kennedy, Upworthy.com

In 1969, my white parents adopted twin, 4-month-old African-American and Mexican-American baby boys.

I was born a year later, making us three children under 3 years old. And, boy, were we a handful.

This was just two years after the landmark United States Supreme Court decision invalidating laws prohibiting interracial marriage, and just five short years after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on race, forbid racial discrimination in schools, and allowed people of color to drink from the same water fountains as white people.

Many people over the years have asked me what it was like growing up with my African-American brothers as my “real” brothers.

The boring truth is that this was my “normal.” My brothers and I bickered and fought like the close-in-age siblings we were.

Our circle of friends included other families who were also interracial. I didn't even notice at the time that I was the only white kid in my first grade class until years later when I saw my class picture, and there I was — the only white kid, with a white teacher.

[**CONTINUE READING**](#)