

Books, Movies and Websites for Typical and Adopted Children

By Arleta James, PCC

Adoptive families and professionals are at a wonderful advantage in today's information age. Pre- and post-adoption resources abound to talk to the typical kids and the adoptees about all facets of adoptive family life. However, the fast pace of life can often make it difficult to sift through the Internet, library, catalogs, etc. to find just the right book, movie, article or website. So, I took some time to gather a few websites, books and movies you and your kids will find helpful. Mothers, fathers, therapists and social workers can spend more time with the children!



Websites:

[Adoption Clubhouse](#) is a program of the National Adoption Center and is designed to meet children's adoption needs. Through the activities and information on this site children can experience a sense of belonging to a wider adoption community of peers. The site includes a library of books and movies, responses to questions kids get asked about being adopted, advice on completing school projects—family tree, bringing in a baby picture, genetics—and a lot more.

[Foster Club](#), the national network for young people in foster care, links foster kids from all across the country. The site offers a wealth of information about abuse, adoption, abandonment, maintaining connections with birth family members and so on. Adoptees and parents will gain insight and healing by connecting to the stories and information that fill this packed with articles and personal stories site.

The award-winning [KidsHealth](#) has separate areas for kids, teens, and parents — each with its own design, age-appropriate content, and tone. There are literally hundreds of in-depth features, articles, animations, games, and resources—all original and all developed by experts in the health of children and teens. This website is simply a wealth of information about everything – medical illnesses, mental health issues, school issues, child development,

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dating, peer pressure, anger-management, coping skills and so on—the topics are just endless! Parents and professionals can select articles—written in kid language—and talk to any teen or child about anything!

Movies:

Many great movies exist to bring discussion of adoption into the family's living room or to a group therapy session. "[Wonder...](#)" [Teenagers Talk about Adoption](#) is a diverse group of adolescent adoptees sharing their thoughts on various aspects of adoption—"What does adoption mean?", "How often do you think about adoption?", "What member of your birth family would you most like to meet?", "When do you think about adoption?" and also these teens address issues of transcultural adoption as do the young adults featured in, [Struggle for Identity: Issues in Transracial Adoption](#). This movie is a starkly realistic account of the transracial adoption experience. Narrated by young adults who were adopted as children, this 20-minute film examines the effects of transcultural adoption on the adoptees, their family members and society. [Adopted](#) "reveals the grit rather than the glamour" of transracial adoption. The film features two families—one pre-adoptive and one post-adoptive—whose stories are riveting and demonstrate that love isn't always enough.

Family movie night or as a pre-adoptive training tool, [Martian Child](#) is a warm, engaging and true story of a single father's experience raising a son adopted from the child welfare system. Their journey of forming a relationship demonstrates the challenges any family may expect when the new arrival has a history of trauma. Of course, the long-time favorite [Pinocchio](#), demonstrates to young adoptees, brothers and sisters that an array of behavioral difficulties are to be expected along the way to becoming a real boy. Lastly, older children can relate to [Antwone Fisher's](#) journey of becoming a man. Raised in foster care, being sexually and physically abused, he ultimately moves beyond his anger and sadness for his traumas by embracing new relationships.

Your family may also enjoy [The Blind Side](#), [Despicable Me](#), [Meet the Robinsons](#), [Ice Age](#) and [Toy Story 3](#).

Books:

Children's books are still a favorite way for parents to spend quality time with their kids of all ages. Pre- or post-adoption, the following books help to explain the changes in parental time and attention that occur as the family expands via adoption:

- [A Pocket Full of Kisses](#)
- [The Lapsnatcher](#)
- [Emma's Yucky Brother](#)
- [Seeds of Love: For Brothers and Sisters of International Adoption](#)

Helping adopted children cope with their trauma, or in order to help the typical kids understand why their new brother or sister acts differently or has poor emotional regulation may come from titles like,

- [Zachary's New Home](#)
- [Feeling Better: A Kid's Book about Therapy](#)
- [The Words Hurt: Helping Children Cope with Verbal Abuse](#)
- [The House that Crack Built](#)
- [Borya and the Burps: An Eastern European Adoption Story \(suitable for institutionalization in any country\)](#)

- [A Place in My Heart](#)
- [Families Change: A Book for Children Experiencing Termination of Parental Rights](#)
- [Please Tell: A Child's Story about Sexual Abuse](#)

Or, for adolescents,

- [Finding Fish: A Memoir](#)
- [Like Family: Growing Up in Other People's Houses](#)
- [Pieces of Me: Who do I want to be?](#)

here are also many books for young children and teens designed to help them develop skills,

- [What to Do when You Dread Your Bed](#)
- [What to Do when Your Temper Flares](#)
- [What to Do when Your Brain Gets Stuck](#)
- [What to Do when You Worry so Much](#)
- [When I Feel Scared](#) (There is also a book for jealous, angry, and sad)
- [When I Feel Good about Myself](#)
- [The Coping Skills Workbook](#)
- [If You had to Choose? What Would You Do?](#)
- [What Do You Stand For: Character Building](#) (teen or young children version)?
- [Don't Tell a Whopper on Fridays!](#) (Companion books include: Don't Feed the Monster on Tuesdays and Don't Rant and Rave on Wednesdays!)