

MCMAHON COUNSELING & CONSULTATION LLC

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TRANSITION PLAN FOR BABY GIRL VERONICA Deena McMahon MSW LICSW

OVERVIEW

I am a licensed individual clinical social worker with over 30 years of experience working in the child welfare field. (See my curriculum vitae attached) Specifically, I have worked in the field of transition planning for children involved in contested custody and adoption cases. While I have been contacted by the adopting couple's legal team to prepare this report, I view my focus to be Veronica, and to offer an appropriate, best practice recommendation for a proposed transition of Veronica from her birth father to her adoptive parents. If the court accepts this proposed transition plan, Ms. Chalmers (see below) and I would view our clients to be Dusten, Melanie and Matt and Veronica.

I understand the facts of this case to be that Veronica was placed with her adopting parents in the first days of her life and remained there for approximately 27 months. Thereafter, she spent the last 18 months with her biological father. It is my understanding that the South Carolina Supreme Court may order a transition from the biological father to the adoptive parents. This report offers a child-focused recommendation for that transfer, should the Supreme Court order such a transfer.

I am keenly aware of the high sensitivities in this case. I am sympathetic to the difficulty that Veronica, Dusten, Matt and Melanie will all face during this transition and pledge my best efforts to assist them. I am willing to participate in at least the first days of this transition process. In addition, we have also identified an additional resource, Catherine O'Reilly Chalmers, MA, LPC, NCC, LMFT, with an excellent skill-set to assist in this transition, if necessary. (See Ms. Chalmers curriculum vitae attached) I recommend a seven day transition period to take place in Oklahoma.

Given the sensitivities of this case and the involvement of the Cherokee Nation, I would like to note that I have previously been retained by Indian tribes to do similar transition work and Ms. Chalmers is a member of the Cherokee Nation.

WHO IS INVOLVED

➤ Therapist or Supervisor for Exchanges

Because this will be an emotionally-laden process for Veronica, for her father Dusten, and for her adoptive parents Matt and Melanie, having support from a professional who is familiar with this sort of experience is recommended. This could be a therapist or someone familiar with doing exchanges in a supervised setting. This person would be available for the initial visit and at a minimum, the next 2-3 days of exchanges. This person would be available to offer feedback to both parties that will be supportive to the child's transition. This person would have the capacity to intervene if an exchange becomes overly difficult or problematic. In this case, both Catherine Chalmers and/or I will serve that role.

This person would have the professional expertise to know if the timeframe needs to be abbreviated based on anxiety or distress of the parties.

➤ Dusten

Dusten should be as involved and engaged as he is able. It is recognized that this process will take tremendous courage on his part. If he is not able to spend time looking at pictures or discussing Veronica's adoptive family or planning in an optimistic way, then he will need a proxy.

➤ Proxy for Father

This person could be available to help Dusten manage the exchanges and act as the sending parent, in his stead. This would be someone whom Veronica knows and who Dusten is comfortable having in his home. This could be a friend, relative or community member Veronica is familiar with.

➤ Matt and Melanie

The family will agree to bear the travel costs for the transition. They will be flexible in terms of the scheduling process and can seek the advice of the assigned professional during this process.

PREPARATION

Dusten should be encouraged to find and use support to help him manage this grief-filled experience. This person may be his proxy, a mental health provider, or community member. The better Dusten is able to cope, at least outwardly when with Veronica, the better Veronica will do. He can perhaps make lists of things to serve as reminders to offer the adoptive family.

He can plan a farewell celebration with his community, which should be done prior to the transition period.

He can gather photos and memorabilia of his life with Veronica and of his own family and community and have them organized to send with Veronica.

He can write Veronica a letter that celebrates their time together and speaks of her importance to him for her future reading.

He can pack up any belongings that Veronica will find useful in her transition. This would include Veronica's pillow, blanket, and favorite toys, books, and clothes. As much as he may want to retain these, sending them along with Veronica will provide continuity and comfort for her.

Dusten or his proxy should sit down regularly with Veronica to look at photos of the adoptive family and talk about them. Familiarity with Matt and Melanie will decrease Veronica's anxiety when she sees them.

Dusten will need professional support in finding a way to explain to Veronica that she will be returning to the adoptive family. This work should be done prior to Veronica again meeting the adoptive parents.

Matt and Melanie should prepare a package of photos and send them immediately to Veronica. These should include images of family members, pets, the inside and outside of the home, Veronica's bedroom, and her play area.

If possible, it is recommended that Melanie and Matt have face time or Skype with Veronica a few times prior to being reintroduced. This can be facilitated by Dusten or his proxy.

Matt and Melanie should prepare a list of questions they would like to know more about in terms of Veronica's needs.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Ideally, the timeframe for this sort of exchange is short, approximately 7 days. Prolonging the transition creates anxiety for everyone concerned.

It is recommended that an 'immersion' experience may work best. This requires the receiving family to travel to the community of the relinquishing family.

1. If Dusten can accommodate this, Veronica will do best if she has an opportunity to see the two families greet each other and do the exchange. This will give Veronica a sense that Dusten endorses this family and gives permission for Veronica to visit and play with them. If possible, this first exchange would occur in Veronica's current home. After an initial greeting, and as Veronica warms up again to the adoptive family, Matt and Melanie can invite her to go with them. This may take no more than 30 minutes, or it may take a couple of hours.
2. Matt and Melanie would spend several hours with Veronica. The first two days of contact should be half days, in either the morning or afternoon, scheduled around Veronica's nap time. Prior to these visits, Dusten will have provided Matt and Melanie sufficient information about Veronica's comforts, nap schedule, eating habits, and preferred activities for play.
3. At the end of each first half day, Matt and Melanie will return Veronica directly to Dusten's home, with him being available to greet Veronica and providing feedback to either him or his proxy about how the visit went.
4. On the third day, Matt and Melanie can pick Veronica up and spend the entire day with her. At day's end, they will again return Veronica to Dusten and will again update him or his proxy about how the day was spent and how Veronica managed. It would be ideal if Dusten would be able to answer any questions.
5. The fourth day would include an overnight with Matt and Melanie. If Dusten is willing, a phone call to wish Veronica goodnight would be suggested.
6. On the fifth and sixth days, Matt and Melanie can spend the entire day with Veronica. If possible, it is suggested that Dusten meet Veronica, Matt, and Melanie for a meal or a short play time in the park so Veronica can check in with Dusten. This helps establish her sense of security and her knowledge that he is managing and is still available.
7. At the end of the week, Veronica should be prepared to move with some sense of familiarity, and Matt and Melanie will have some sense of her capacity to manage. If possible, a check-in between the two families is ideal, as it provides them both some reassurance. It also offers Matt and Melanie an opportunity to ask more questions about Veronica and to share information about her adjustment.

If the parties mutually agree, visits with Dusten should not occur for at least two months, to allow Veronica time to settle in. Routine phone calls, such as once or twice a week for the first few weeks, are suggested, but they should not last more than a few minutes. Veronica may not be interested in this, as developmentally children her age are more attuned to visual connection rather than phone contact. Instead, Skype or face time may be a positive experience for both Dusten and Veronica. Again, these would be short contacts.

If the parties mutually agree to physical contact within the first few months, it should not occur in Dusten's home, as this may cause distress and confusion for Veronica.

After six months, if the parties mutually agree, Veronica will be able to tolerate a visit to her father's home and can spend time with him. An overnight is not suggested with Dusten until a full year has passed but, if Veronica demonstrates no significant regression or negative impact from contact, visits on a regular basis could be accommodated during the day. If possible, Matt and Melanie should be present for some of this time to provide continuity of care and to prevent any confusion Veronica might have.

THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

HOW THE CHILD MIGHT THINK OR FEEL

Fearful, scared, anxious, confused. Veronica may become quiet and withdrawn and put herself to sleep; she may also become hyper, irritable, and fussy.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON FOR THE CHILD

- A thorough exchange of information between sending and receiving families is essential.
- Pay attention to Veronica's developmental stages. Determine what tasks she is in the process of mastering and start there.
- Try to maintain continuity in feeding, eating, diet, sleep and nap schedule. Familiar clothes, pillows and blankets for bedding are helpful for comfort. If possible, adhere to Veronica's old routine/schedule and introduce small changes as needed.
- Don't initiate new dietary changes or toilet training routines. Let Veronica provide the pace if possible.
- Learn Veronica's comfort rituals (rocking or music at bedtime, etc.), eating and drinking habits, sensitivities, and other preferences. If Veronica is using a sippy cup, allow her to have it for a few weeks.
- Minimize handling by social workers, visitors, friends, neighbors and babysitters for the first few weeks if possible. Ideally, Veronica should not go to daycare for the first few weeks or months after her move.

WHAT TO TELL THE CHILD

- Focus on the concrete and offer interesting distractions: She can have a cookie at her adoptive parents' house. Talk about games she can play when she gets there. Tell her she can watch her favorite video or cartoon when she returns to the adoptive parents' home. Talk about a long car ride or plane ride and what snack she can have on the way there. Talk about the seat she will sit in and the bed she will sleep in.
- In language Veronica can understand, help her realize she will be returning to the family she lived with when she was a little girl, to help take care of her, to keep her safe, to play with her, and to love her. This is the hardest part. Veronica must not believe she is being abandoned or rejected. She needs to feel she is gaining something and being welcomed. Tell her repeatedly that Dusten loves her very much. At this stage, children can understand the idea of two fathers.
- Remind her often that she will be fine and that she is loved.
- Smile—it helps everyone involved. Reassure Veronica that she will talk to her father soon.

HOW TO HELP

- Be patient, even though you are in a hurry. Do not rush through drop-offs or exchanges. The comfort level and body language of the adults is very important. This is true for facial expressions and tone of voice. Veronica will take her cues from the adults around her.
- Give messages of acceptability both in demeanor and appearance. Don't ask too many questions. Be clear about basics rules and expectations. Don't treat Veronica like a guest. Smile; be friendly, not worried or anxious.

- Stay mindful that this is a grief-filled experience for many of the participants. Allow time to grieve, but not in the presence of the child.
- Stay child-centered in all decisions. Work as a team with a common goal, which is to support a child in a complicated process. A poorly-managed or conflictual transition can be a traumatic, lifelong remembered event.

VARIABLES TO CONSIDER WITH EACH CHILD

1. Veronica has already been moved. As a result, she has less resiliency than the typical child her age. She should be treated as such.
2. If there is too much animosity or grief present between Dusten and Matt and Melanie, the transition process may have to be significantly shortened to avoid undue damage and distress to all concerned.
3. It is very harmful if either party makes disparaging comments about the other in front of Veronica.

GRIEF AND LOSS ISSUES

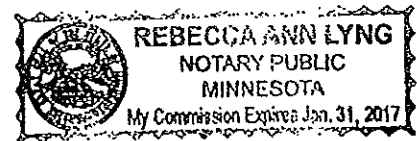
Veronica will likely demonstrate symptoms of grief, which often present as clingy, whiny or irritable behaviors. Her issues must always be the focus. Veronica is at a critical moment in life and needs unconditional regard for the fragile emotional tasks ahead of her. She may be faced with very positive opportunities but will still need to grieve her past losses, including coming to terms with previous failed family situations, feelings of rejection, and unanswered questions.

Veronica is one of the people cut adrift in the process of transition, but not the only one. Many people are affected by the planned or unplanned movement of a child. No one who cares for children in transition will be unaffected by important changes in their lives.

It is suggested that Dusten use formal or informal supports to help him attend to his losses in this process. The family who is having the child leave their home often struggles with issues of grief and loss. They are afraid for the child, worry that the child will not be loved or attended to, and feel angry that a transition happened. They worry that the child will miss them and are powerless to do anything about it.

Deena McMahon MSW LICSW
Deena McMahon MSW LICSW

SWORN to before me this
3rd day of July, 2013.



Notary Public for Cass County, Minnesota
My commission expires: January 31, 2017

Rebecca Ann Lyng

DEENA MCMAHON

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LICENSED INDIVIDUAL CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

- Skilled attachment therapist with proven success and 30 years of experience working with clients in an extensive array of child-welfare issues including childhood trauma, grief, adoption, parenting, attachment, children's mental health, child development, and physical, sexual, and chemical abuse.
- Experienced consultant and expert witness for contested placement cases with track record of providing highly reliable and in-depth forensic parenting, attachment, and sibling placement assessments to thoroughly address families' risks, needs, interventions, and recommendations.
- Nationally recognized professional speaker known for developing trainings, workshops, and seminars on a wide range of child-development topics in order to provide agencies, professionals, and parents with increased knowledge, realistic expectations, and effective strategies.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Adoption
- Attachment Assessment Tools
- Attunement
- Behavioral Interventions
- Chemical Abuse
- Children's Mental Health (ASD, Depression, Anxiety, ADHD, PTSD, FASD, ODD)
- Compassion Fatigue/Burnout
- Concurrent Planning
- Cultural Diversity Training
- DC-03
- Developmental Theories
- Domestic Violence
- DSM Diagnostic Criteria
- Dynamics of Sibling Groups
- Ecological Approach; Sexual Abuse Treatment
- Family Centered Practice
- Grief and Loss Issues
- Highly-resistant clients
- Knowledgeable about ICWA cultural parenting practices and active efforts
- Juvenile Protection
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution
- Parenting Assessment Tools
- Therapies: Play; Reality; Narrative; Brief Solution-Focused; Therapy; Structural Family; Systemic Family
- Reactive Attachment Disorder
- Reunification Strategies
- Social Learning Theories
- Trauma Affects and Therapy
- Treatment of Family and Multi-Generational Sexual Abuse

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MSW, Social Work, summa cum laude
Honors Student, Advanced Standing Placement

Minneapolis, MN
1992

CARROLL COLLEGE
BS, Social Work, magna cum laude
Concentrations: Child Welfare; Community Service
Minors: Sociology; Science

Waukesha, WI
1981

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MCMAHON COUNSELING & CONSULTATION
Owner/Therapist

St. Paul, MN
2008 - Present

- Provide in-home and office-based therapies to individuals, families, couples, and groups, with expertise in attachment, adoption, sexual/physical abuse, neglect, mental illness, trauma, family violence, grief/loss, crisis intervention, and cross-cultural issues.
- By request, conduct Forensic Parenting, Attachment, and Sibling Relationship assessments for court to determine family strengths/needs, interventions, and case-planning recommendations.
- Serve as consultant to numerous state and county child protection agencies, adoption agencies, and parent support groups, as well as the MN State Guardian Ad Litem Program.
- Develop and provide regional and national trainings/workshops/curriculums to state judges, public

- defenders, social services agencies, mental health professionals, Guardian Ad Litem, and parents on topics including attachment, abuse and neglect, trauma, grief and loss, and adoption.
- Supervise concurrent planning cases and facilitate weekly therapy group for parents in the Concurrent Planning Project. Develop an interdisciplinary team with county workers to intervene with complex poor prognosis cases to assist in successful reunification or permanent placement of children.
 - Provide expert testimony on contentious child welfare cases.
 - Served as consultant to Children's Justice Initiative of Chisago, Isanti, and Kanabec Counties.
 - Completed 'Child Development' chapter for Minnesota District Court Judges' Bench Book.
 - Developed children's mental health curriculum now required statewide for foster care licensing CEU (2012).

Therapeutic Services Agency

Pine City, MN

Director of Intensive In-Home Services/Family Therapist

1988 - 2008

- Provided supervision, training, and ongoing support to 25+ family-based services therapists.
- Assisted therapists on case-related issues including custody decisions, placements, abuse/neglect indicators, interventions, paperwork, assessments, and determining intensity/frequency of clients' services.
- Researched and developed clinical approaches to working with highly-resistant therapy clients with an emphasis on respect for the individual.
- Maintained individual caseload and provided direct therapy to chronic, multi-problem families referred through child protection services.
- Provided case consult and recommendations for clients and county case managers in permanency cases.
- Coordinated services between referral source and client families while assuring quality service delivery; facilitated referrals for specialized care as needed.
- Assisted in development and implementation of Treatment Plans that include diagnostic assessments.
- Development of new services for referring agencies.
- Conducted Sibling Relationship, Attachment, and Forensic Parenting assessments; provided recommendations and intervention strategies within.
- Served as consultant to Alternative Response Team (Anoka Co.); Permanency Project Advisory Board (Anoka Co.); Child Protection Unit (Chisago Co.); and MN Association of Family-Based Service Providers.

Operation Denovo

Minneapolis, MN

Court Diversion Program

1984 - 1986

- Offered counseling services and community referrals for nonviolent offenders.

Gerard Schools of Iowa and Minnesota

MN; IA

Counselor

1981 - 1984

- Provided in-home counseling to families primarily referred through Child Protection Services.

Associations

- National Association of Social Workers
- Association for Treatment & Training in the Attachment of Children
- North American Council on Adoptable Children
- Theraplay Institute

Supplemental Education

- Psychotherapy Networker: *New Perspectives on Practice: 21st Century Trauma Treatment*
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges: *National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence*; Faculty Development Meeting; Denver
- Harris Forum Visiting Scholar Program: *Toxic Stress: Impact on Children and Families*; Minneapolis
- New School for Social Research: *Attachment Disorder and Adoption: Innovative use of video in clinical intervention*; Presented by Drs. George Downing and Miriam Steele; New York City
- Child Welfare Institute/Assessment in Child Welfare Cases: *National Symposium*
- Families Forever: *Supporting Lifelong Connections, Case Law & Sibling Connections*

CATHERINE O'REILLY CHALMERS, MA, LPC, NCC, LMFT
3857 East 72nd Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74136-5936
(918) 481-0026

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

1978 - 1982	M.A.	University of Nebraska; Lincoln, Nebraska
	Major:	Educational Psychology and Measurements
	Emphasis:	Agency Counseling
1974 - 1978	B.S.	Oklahoma State University
	Major:	Psychology
	Honors:	Dean's Honor Roll

LICENSURE

September 1991 -L.M.F.T. #72, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
October 1986 -L.P.C. #414, Licensed Professional Counselor
October 1988 -N.C.C. #21639, Nationally Certified Counselor

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Jan 2013-Present	Member, National Indian Child Welfare Association
Sept 2011-Present	Member, Oklahoma Bar Association, Family Law Section
Mar 1990 - Present	Founding Member of ATTACH- Association for Treatment and Training in the Attachment of Children (National) Board of Directors, 1990 - 1996 Secretary/Treasurer, 1995 - 1996
Jan 1993 -1999	Board of Directors of the Attachment Network (Local) President, Board of Directors 1995 - 1996
Nov 1990 - 1995	Board of Directors of CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocates (Local) Chairman - Program Evaluation Committee, 1992 - 1995

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- January 2002- Present **Private Practice**
Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Conducts adoption home studies, court assessments for children with attachment concerns, consultation and training regarding adoption and attachment issues. Qualified as expert witness in Tulsa County, Rogers County, Pawnee County and McIntosh County, Oklahoma.
- August 1995-January 2002 **Tulsa Developmental Pediatrics and Center for Family Psychology**
Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Child, adolescent, and family therapy; consultation; part-time work within a group practice including Developmental Pediatricians, Psychologists, and masters level therapists
- Aug 1991 – Aug 1995 **Private Practice**
Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Adoption home studies; Clinical supervision of L.P.C. candidates; child, adolescent, and family therapy; served on CASA and Attachment Network board of directors with work in areas of child advocacy, adoption, and attachment.
- June 1988 - Aug 1991 **Coordinator for Professional Development and Community Relations**
Shadow Mountain Institute; Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Developed this role as a half-time position until moving full-time in August 1989; identified potential referral sources with subsequent development and coordination of a referral team, including specific clinical liaison strategies; development, recruitment, and maintenance of an affiliate staff program as well as supportive orientation materials; clinical supervision of L.P.C. candidates; maintenance of clinical license through focused work - i.e., participation in a year long, 12 member attachment training group supervised by Foster Cline, M.D.

Jan 1987 - Aug 1989

**Therapist/Treatment Coordinator-Latency Age Acute
Care Hospital**

Shadow Mountain Institute; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Therapist carrying a caseload of individual and family patients (primarily family); participated as co-therapist in multiple-family parenting groups; provided ongoing training to hospital milieu staff.

Jan 1982-Jan 1987

**Therapist/Treatment Coordinator --Adolescent
Residential Treatment**

Shadow Mountain Institute; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Conducted intake pre-admission interviews; developed treatment course and evaluated individual programs to remediate behavioral difficulties among an adolescent population; co-authored an assertiveness manual for adolescents, conducted assertiveness, process and social skills groups, and carried a caseload of patients in both individual and family therapy.

Oct 1980 -Jan 1982

Treatment Planning Coordinator

Shadow Mountain Institute; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Developed and defined the role, including development and revision of appropriate tools essential to this specialty. Responsible for writing all Interim Treatment Plan Review and Assessments for boys' residential treatment centers (30 beds); reorganized and chaired twice weekly staff meetings; translated treatment plans into behavioral interventions, making them accessible and understandable to milieu staff and residents; developed a training packet for senior counselors of reference materials for interim report writing; trained senior counselors to subsequently assume these responsibilities.

Feb 1980-Oct 1980

Residential Milieu Counselor

Dillon Family Services; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Responsible to provide a healthy, therapeutic environment in which residents can develop and grow; maintain structure of milieu; dispense medication as appropriate; supervise food preparation and daily activities.

Sept 1979 –Dec 1980

Field Placement/Team therapist

Pioneer Mental Health Center; Seward, Nebraska

Participated in consultation and educational programming of self-esteem building for third and fourth graders; individual supervision and therapy and co-therapy with a caseload of individuals and families, which was beneficial in acquiring an awareness of the unique needs and characteristics of a rural client population.

June 1979 – Aug 1979

Residential Staff Counselor

Dillon Family and Youth Services; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Provided a healthy, therapeutic environment as a front-line counselor; provided crisis intervention counseling; supervised and assisted in food preparation; dispensed medication; and supervised the milieu.

Jan 1979 – May 1979.

Counselor – Money Management Program

Pre-Trial Diversion; Lincoln, Nebraska

Carried a caseload of clients involved in misdemeanor offenses; trained clients in budgeting skills and money management.

Jan 1979 – May 1979

M.A. Counseling Practicum

Educational Psychology Clinic; Lincoln, Nebraska

Participated in twice weekly team meetings, 25 hours each of supervised and observed counseling with clinicians of varying theoretical perspectives.

Sept 1977 – Dec 1977

Counselor- Misdemeanants Training
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Carried an individual caseload and was co-therapist of a group of clients involved in misdemeanor offenses.

May 1977 – Dec 1977

National Science Foundation Researcher
Tulsa Boys' Home; Tulsa, Oklahoma

Served as a researcher in a federally funded project involved in examining longitudinal data, testing, evaluation of results, and subsequent report publication pertaining to increasing stress with an adolescent population.

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

Assertiveness Training for Young Adults, Training manual co-authored with Teryl O'Connor, OTR/L. Shadow Mountain Institute, 1981. Assertiveness Training for Young Adults; Poster session, National Occupational Therapy Association, Portland, Oregon, 1982.

Indicator of Increasing Adolescent Stress: A Longitudinal and Cross-sectional Study. Co-authored under National Science Foundation Grant #SMI-77-05128. Oklahoma State University, 1977.

Menopause Symptomology as a Function of Attitudes and Sex-Role Orientation. Senior paper, 1977.

PRESENTATIONS

Chalmers, C.O. and Sadler, Mark, Understanding Attachment: Effects on the Parent-Child Relationship, Oklahoma Adoption Coalition, October, 2012

Chalmers, C.O., Attachment Strategies for Adoptive Parents, Catholic Charities, March, 2012

Chalmers, C.O., Critical Junctures: The Home Study as Tool for Transition from Birth to Adoptive Family, Dillon International Workshop for Contract Workers, October, 2010

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Chalmers, C.O., Critical Junctures: The Transition from Birth to Adoptive Family for Children, Adoptive Parents, and Birth Families, Life Adopted Workshop, Shadow Mountain Institute, November, 2010

Chalmers, C.O., Attachment Strategies for Adoptive Parents, Catholic Charities, April, 2009

Chalmers, C.O., Rila B., Pines, M.B., Goldwater, H., Adjudicated Attachments: Attachment Issues and the Judiciary Process. 19th Annual International ATTACH Conference, Providence, Rhode Island, October 2007

Chalmers, C.O., Rila B., Pines M.B., Attachment Therapy-From Control to Reciprocity: Creating a Safe Holding Environment. 18th Annual International ATTACH Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, October, 2006

Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B., Pines, M.B., Adjudicated Attachments: Attachment Issues and the Judiciary Process. 17th Annual International ATTACH Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 2005

Chalmers, C.O., Attachment and Adoption, Parent Workshop, China Heritage Camp, Dillon International, Tulsa, Oklahoma, July 16, 2005

Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B., Pines, M.B., Ruhe, B., Adjudicated Attachments: Attachment Issues and the Judiciary Process. 16th Annual International ATTACH Conference, Richmond, Virginia, October, 2004

Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B. Pines, M.B., Attachment Therapy: From Control to Reciprocity 15th Annual International ATTACH Conference on Attachment and Bonding, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September, 2003

Chalmers, C.O., From the Beginning: Assessing and Promoting Attachment, International Adoption: Process and Issues for the Home Study Provider, Dillon International Workshop, Tulsa, Oklahoma, October, 2003

Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B., Pines, M.B., Holding in the New Millennium, 15th Annual Conference on Bonding and Attachment, Costa Mesa, California, October, 2002

Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B., Pines, M.B., Evolution of the Attachment Therapist: Holding, Held and Letting Go, Training Institute presented at 13th Conference on Attachment and Bonding, Greenville, South Carolina, October, 2001

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Chalmers, C.O., Rila, B., Pines, M.B., Creating an Integrative Multi-disciplinary Approach to the Treatment of Attachment Disorder within a Private Practice Setting, 12th Annual International Conference on Attachment and Bonding, Minneapolis, Minnesota, October, 2000

Chalmers, C.O., Combs, D., Conversations: Basics and Underlying Theories of Attachment, 10th Annual International Conference on Attachment and Bonding, Tulsa, Oklahoma, October, 1998

Chalmers, C.O., From Loss to Attachment: Building Healthy Adoptive Families, Use of Lifebooks in Adoption, Children's Medical Center, November, 1997

Chalmers, C.O., Adoption Awareness Conference, Hillcrest Medical Center, November, 1996

Chalmers, C.O., Foster/Adopt Parent Pride Training, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, January-May, 1995

Chalmers, C.O., Iski, M., Attachment Disorder: Implications for Court, Brown Bag Lunch Series for Attorneys, Tulsa, Oklahoma,

Cathy Chalmers is married with two college age children. She has lived in Oklahoma all her life and is a member of the Cherokee Nation. Cathy currently conducts adoption home studies and advocates for the best interests of children through her work in permanency planning cases where attachment concerns are present. She has served on the Board of Directors of CASA, ATTACH, and the Attachment Network; was a founding member of ATTACH and conference planner for ATTACH's conference in Tulsa in 1997. Cathy has presented information on adoptive and attachment issues locally in Oklahoma to DHS staff, judges, attorneys, in-patient psychiatric staff at Shadow Mountain Institute and to social work staff at Dillon International. She has also trained professionals and parents regarding attachment issues throughout the United States. Cathy also conducts training for parents through Catholic Charities, Dillon International, and OKDHS.