



**Viet
Irish
Support
Newsletter
2008**

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1 Introduction

Welcome to Viet Irish support Newsletter for 2008.

Viet Irish Support gives our children, their parents and extended families the opportunity to meet on a regular basis and celebrate our children's Vietnamese heritage. Most kids do not like to be different so our group gives them a chance to meet with others who look the same and who share a similar past. Over the last few years the Support Group has grown and developed, we now have more than 250 member families.

In 2006 we set up a new website for our members or anyone interested in adopting from Vietnam, www.vietirishsupport.net. It has been a resounding success and provides a huge amount of information for families. It has everything from a kids section to the latest changes or requirements in the adoption process.

We run information evenings for adoptive parents. These are a marvellous way to educate applicants on some of the most important issues that will affect them and their children in the future. Some of the topics we have covered are:

- Making a Lifebook for your adopted child
- Sight Sounds and smells of Vietnam -A guide for prospective parents on Vietnam its culture and traditions
- Presentation from Montessori teacher
- Baby Massage
- Hot topics in adoption

We help prepare parents for some of the health issues their children may have when coming from an orphanage and how to combat these. Also from meeting and talking to other members we have been able to compile a list of items that can be purchased in Vietnam for all the family. These items will help them celebrate and create an awareness of their child's culture living here in Ireland.

Our Vietnamese language classes at Mahon Family Resource Centre have been a huge success especially with the inclusion of a special section for parents. While our children are now Irish and integrating very well experience from adult adoptees has shown they would have loved the opportunity to learn the language of their Birth Country. Our children will never be fluent but they do take great pride in being able to speak a little Vietnamese.

We celebrate all the major Vietnamese Festivals, the most important of which is Tet (Vietnamese New Year).

Chúc ừNg Năm Mới .

2 Committee Members

The voluntary committee are as follows:

Marie Coughlan Chairperson
Ann Marie Barbado Secretary
Mary Lambkin Treasurer

John Savage, Carol O' Brien
Marna Carey, Liz Stafford
Raph Ryan, Mandy Cotter
Deirdre Hennessey, Ann Williams

We would like to welcome all the new committee members and extend thanks to George Power and Angela Keohane our outgoing committee members.

We can be contacted at
Email : Vietirishsupport@eircom.net
Website www.vietirishsupport.net
Mobile: 086 8244296

3 New Diary Dates

3.1 Mid Autumn Festival 2008

SUNDAY 17TH AUGUST 2008
VENUE: MALLOW GAA COMPLEX,
MALLOW, CO. CORK
Time:1-5pm:

The cost of the outing is as follows:-

Family - €25 (children over 1 years of age)
Couple - €15 (to include a child under 1 year)

The price includes food and drink as listed below.

The day will include the use of:
Indoor astroturf ,Outdoor Astroturf,
Bouncy Castle, Parachute Games,
Soccer, Kwik Cricket, Uni Hoc

Also there will be Party Games eg stuck in the mud, tails, velcro bat and ball.

There will be a break at approx. 3pm for refreshments and food
Chicken goujons, cocktail sausages and chips including orange squash for Children. Sandwiches, tea and coffee for the adults.
As space is limited to reserve your place please e-mail:
vietirishsupport@eircom.net
with your name, no. adults, no. of children (to include children's age)
Entrance fee will be payable at the door on the day.

You can view Mallow GAA Sports Complex for directions etc
www.mallowgaasportscomplex.com

3.2 Language classes

Language classes shall take place later in the year dates to be organised.
Please let us know if you are interested.

3.3 TET 2009

Venue for TET is Charleville Park Hotel on the 24 Jan 2009

Details shall be made available later in the year for Tet 2009 celebrations.

4 Whats being going on -Past Events

Below is a brief overview of the events since last year.

4.1 Language classes 2007-2008

This year we had two classes: under fives and over fives. Once again they were a huge success and we would like to thank Helena and Hien for their hard work and dedication in making these classes possible.

4.2 TET Feb 2008

TET celebrations were held in the Silversprings Hotel on 9th Feb the numbers were up again from last year with over 400 attending and the day was enjoyed by all. It is so fantastic to see so many families meeting up to celebrate the biggest day in the Vietnamese calendar.



4.3 Barnardos New Post Adoption Service

Barnardos is an independent children's charity established in Ireland since 1962. On 13th March 2008 they launched a new post adoption service for intercountry adopted children and their families.

The project leader is Christine Hennessy. The service is being funded by the Eastern Section of H.S.E. Their support will include:

- A national post adoption helpline and email advice service to parents, adopted children and young people.
- Support and information meetings to parents living in Kildare, Dublin and Wicklow (HSE Eastern Region)
- Individual counselling for children and families living in the HSE eastern region.

The confidential helpline operates every Tuesday (10am – 2pm) and Thursday (10am – 2pm) on;

01 454 6388 or email their advice service on; adoption@barnardos.ie

Viet Irish Support welcomes and supports this new service. There are few resources for the families and children of Intercountry adoption in Ireland. Unfortunately, the only services available with Barnardos nationwide are the National Helpline and email advice service. On the positive side though, this is an independent and confidential service.

The launch was followed by a presentation by Dr. Perlita Harris and Ms Chris Atkins on Dr Harris's book:

“In Search of Belonging: Reflections by Transracially Adopted People” (published by BAAF 2006)

Dr Harris is a lecturer in Social Work at the University of Bristol and was herself transracially adopted. Ms Atkins works as an Adoption Support Worker and is a founder member of the U.K. network, The Transnational and Transracial Adoption Group. She was also adopted from abroad.

“In Search of Belonging” is a selection of stories, poems and reflections by people adopted from many countries around the world. Dr Harris is currently working on a new collection of writings by adopted children and young people.

4.4 Information Evening Apr 2008

The information evening consisted of update on recent conferences attended by committee members firstly the TCD research and secondly the Hague Convention.

1. TCD Children's Research Centre

- A conference on Intercountry adoption study and the international context of the study

carried out by the Trinity Children's Research Centre took place in Mar 2008.

- Details on the findings of the study are available on <http://www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre>
- The report is entitled [A Study of Intercountry Adoption Outcomes in Ireland](#) by Greene, S., Kelly, R., Nixon, E., Kelly, G., Borska, Z., Murphy, S., Daly, A., Whyte, J., Murphy, C. (2007)

This study is the first on intercountry adoption undertaken by the Adoption Board. We would recommend parents having a look at the report particularly the sections on quotes from the children. It certainly gives insight to what their experience and understanding of adoption is as they grow up.

2. Hague Convention Legislation.

- A meeting was held with other representatives from the various support groups at the offices of the Department of Health and Children in Dublin.
- Purpose of this meeting was to give us the opportunity to have clarified any concerns our groups may have with regard to the content of the new Legislation currently in the final stages of preparation which will see Ireland ratify The 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption.
- The Department hope to see the Legislation become law early in 2009

4.5 Parenting in Confidence Seminar Apr 2008.

Four members of the committee recently attended a One Day Seminar in Portlaoise Organised by the ICCG (Chinese support Group). The Title of this Seminar was "Parenting in Confidence".

The Seminar consisted of three main topics.

1. The Children's Research Centre, Trinity College, Dublin., - on the Topic of 'A study of Inter country Adoption outcomes in Ireland ' This study used a random sample of 180 children recruited from the Register of Foreign Adoptions. Fifteen different countries, from which children had been adopted, were represented in the study. For anyone interested in the findings, this report can be obtained from 'The Children's Research Centre, Trinity College, Dublin. Tel: 01 8962901
2. Parenting support for Adoptive Families on Understanding Attachment. The speakers, Nuala Healy and Martin Meyler, (both Psychotherapists) run courses which cover topics such as 'Understanding Attachment, A Child's view of loss and Grief, talking to Children about Adoption' etc. They also work with individual cases and can be contacted at 'martin.grow@gmail.com'
3. 'Connecting with your Child' Guest Speaker Mr. David Coleman

The speaker, we found most interesting and by far the most entertaining was Mr. David Coleman. David Coleman is a Clinical Psychologist who specializes in working with children and their Families. David a lot of you will know for his hugely popular RTE television shows

'Families in Trouble' and more recently '21 century children'.

David gave an excellent talk on issues of Building Self Esteem and Parenting Challenges. He also did a long question and answers session after his talk.

Some members have approached the committee on challenges they are now facing with their older children re adoption issues, - difficult questions etc., we as a committee would hope to run a similar day seminar/conference for our members sometime towards the end of the year, if you would like to see any relevant topics covered please contact the committee.

4.6 FOTA May 2008

Thanks to all those who braved the elements and came along to Fota yesterday!!! Despite the muck a great time was had by all particularly the kids.

4.7 CAL Tour July 2008

Members recently attended a talk by the Chinese Adoptee links (CAL) teen tour in the Vienna Woods. The panel of adoptees ranged from 13 to 30 yrs. The honesty, openness and eloquence of the girls was inspiring and moved many to tears. A special thanks to the Irish Chinese Contact group (ICCG) for inviting us to participate.
<http://www.chineseadopteelinks.org/>

5 Membership

It is great to see our group growing all the time and we are thrilled to see so many beautiful babies joining their forever families and our Support Group. The Committee would like to welcome all our new families and we hope to see you all at some of the events and

information evenings we have planned for the coming year.

For those who have not renewed their membership the form is available on website www.vietirishsupport.net or forward €20 and details to

Mary Lambkin
An Radharc,
Mountain Rd.,
Kilmoney,
Carrigaline,
Co. Cork.

Membership runs from Tet each year.

6 HHAMA



Helping Hands Adoption Mediation Agency (HHAMA) updates for 2007-2008.

HHAMA began working with a third orphanage, Bac Ninh

-Vietnamese authorities no longer accept applications from applicants who receive a negative recommendation in their home study

-G.P. letters in applicants' dossiers now require to follow a specific format

-There is now a computerised database in Vietnam, whereby relevant information and paperwork regarding the children is inputted and can therefore be stored securely and accessed more readily

-There has been a new baby room built and opened in Thai Nguyen

-There is no longer an option to receive an express passport for the child after the Giving and Receiving ceremony. In exceptional circumstances applicants

can contact the Irish embassy in Hanoi to apply for an express passport. Supporting documentation in relation to the reasons for this application must be provided.

-Applicants can no longer post packs to HHAMA. An appointment is required at which time the pack can be delivered and will be reviewed with HHAMA and the applicant(s) together. We would advise applicants to have any questions or queries that they may have ready for this meeting.

7 Fundraising

We, as a committee have decided to incorporate fundraising into our agenda for the year.

We are presently sourcing a suitable project in Vietnam to support. Details of this project will be made known as soon as a decision is made.

We will be able as a committee, to apply to An Garda Siochana for two permits per year for this purpose. Table quizzes and Race nights for example would comply with these permits.



We are currently looking for members to take part in the Evening Echo ladies Mini Marathon which takes place on the 28 September, 2008. For further details and sponsorship cards please contact Mandy at mandymulcahycotter@gmail.com or Deirdre at johnniehennessy@hotmail.com.

At our last information evening we had a donation basket which members kindly contributed to. Total sum raised was E116.00. We were delighted with this and intend to continue this practice.

Also at Tet, we did an impromptu raffle raising a total of E500.00. We were overwhelmed with this response. We thank all members who contributed.

We are currently looking for any new and interesting fun ideas!!!!!! Please contact any member of the committee re same.

We look forward to seeing you all and hope you will support our fundraising events.

8 Book Reviews

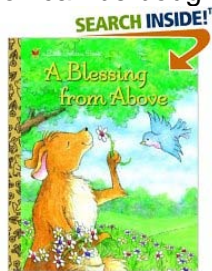
8.1 A Blessing from Above (Little Golden Book) (Hardcover)

By Patti Henderson (Author), Elizabeth Edge (Illustrator)

This book is a great "first book" to have for your adopted child. Great for children aged 2-5. I have biological children (2 boys) and an adopted little girl. It was great for my youngest boy to understand the idea of adoption and our little girl who has now turned two loves the book.

I don't think it would be appropriate for an older child as it would probably be considered too "babyish" but for a toddler and a little older I think it is perfect. I have looked for books to read to my kids to help them understand the reasons behind adoption, why their birth mother couldn't keep them, etc. Written from the perspective of the adoptive mother (a childless kangaroo), it provides beautiful and simple explanation for young children to understand.

The book can be bought on Amazon.



8.2 Seeds of Love By Mary Ebejer Petertyl

Book to help biological children understand the adoption of a child into their family.

This book is perfect to explain to biological children about your plan to adopt a child from another country. I was concerned about leaving our two boys and how they would feel and they absolutely loved this book and while we were away in Vietnam it became their nightly book read by their grandmother. It explains to them that everything will stay the same at home while you are away. Can be bought on Amazon.

Story

The story is about a big sister Carly looking forward to the arrival of her new baby sister, but she feels unsure about the changes in her life and her parent's pending journey. In this sweet book she learns a bit about adoption and dreams of the fun she will have with her new sister. Carly helps her mother pack for the trip and lays the preparations for her mother's absence. Her mother provides stickers to mark the calendar so that Carly can count down the days till her return. They also plant flower seeds. After her parents leave, Carly finds that even if she does things differently her grandmother can be fun. Several weeks pass and finally her parents return with

her new sister! The last scene shows the two sisters playing happily together in the garden.

