

Bringing joy, humor, and hope to the support group experience

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Meet your presenters



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Goals for this webinar

- 1 Discuss the value gained from imbuing joy, humor, and hope into your support group.
- 2 Give guidance on how to tactfully use humor in tough circumstances.
- 3 Provide concrete strategies to reframe negativity and offer hope to group participants.

Before we begin



This webinar will be recorded and shared with you.



Submit your questions via Q&A. Engage with panelists and other attendees in chat.



Please complete our survey after the webinar.

Our mission



Raise public awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families for children in the public child welfare system



Assist US states, territories, and tribes to recruit, engage, develop and support foster and adoptive families



Why is this topic important?

Persistent negativity can kill a support group. Leading a group with joy, humor, and hope doesn't just happen. It takes skills and practice.



Defining joy

“It is not joy that makes us grateful. It is gratitude that makes us joyful.”

—David Steindl-Rast

Chat waterfall: What brings you joy?

Type your answer into chat,
but wait to press enter!



What brings Barb joy?



Relationships



Water—lakes, oceans, rivers, pools



Biking

What brings Kim joy?



Family



“Aha!” moments



Acceptance

“I’m too _____ to be happy.”

- Happiness reacts. Joy transcends.
- Happiness comes and goes. Joy is a practice and a behavior.
- Joy is deliberate and intentional.
- Joy endures hardship and trials. It connects with meaning and purpose.





Choosing joy

You have the power!

- Choice
- Transcendence
- Meaning

Help your group members shift perspectives

- Reframing is a necessary skill for group leaders.
- Help caregivers look for the meaning behind the behavior.
- Encourage caregivers to celebrate small victories.





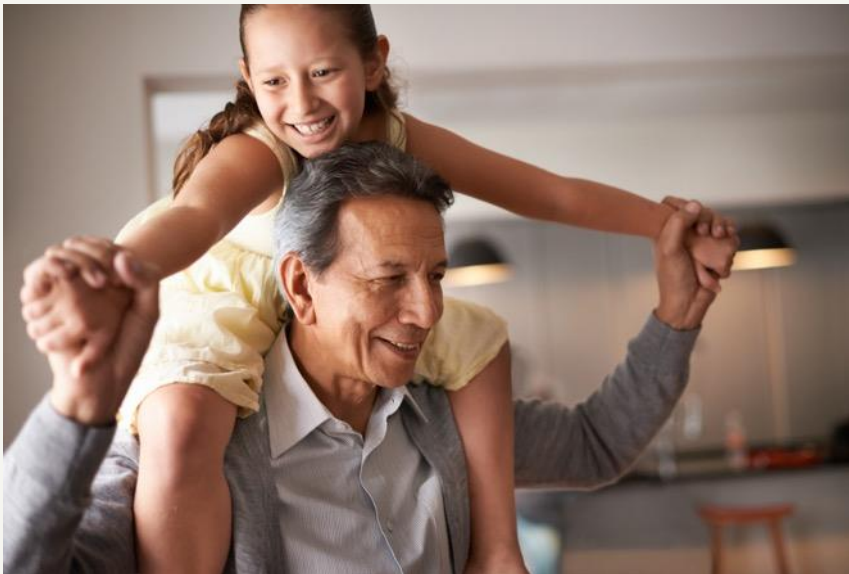
“Expectations are premeditated resentments.”

Unrealistic expectations can lead to extreme dissatisfaction. Group leaders can help caregivers adjust their expectations.



Relationship is key!

Value the child for who they are, not who you want them to become.



AdoptUSKids recorded webinar:
[Stabilizing placements through relationships](#)



Growing through discomfort

I wonder:

- What is different when it's not like this?
- What has changed for you?
- How do you think your child feels?

Prompts to invite joy



“Tell me a story from when she was little.”



“What was the last silly thing you did together?”



“How do you feel when you look at them sleeping?”

**We must deal
directly with the
hard stuff to find
joy within it.**



Mindfulness and meditation

- Intentionality
- Reframe by thinking deeply about the stress
- Seek to be in tune with what's going on physically and emotionally

How can we help group members learn how to practice mindfulness?



Sharing stories effectively

90-second
rule

Relevant
and
respectful

Bring hope

Tactful use of humor





No joke, laughter is important

- Literally helps us heal
- A social act that connects us
- Can take the power back from darker circumstances

Laughter heals



Reduces stress hormones and improves cardiac health



Lowers blood pressure



Triggers the release of endorphins



Laughter builds resilience

Role model laughing during hard times

Bringing the levity during tough meetings

- “Have you tried a sticker chart?”
- “And what’s wrong with that?”
- Have members share ridiculous parenting advice they’ve gotten recently.

What do you do to bring levity to your darker group discussions?





IT'S **NOT**
ABOUT
THE
NAIL

**What's your go-to way to laugh,
even in tough times?**



Belonging

Finding your people is critical to being able to weather hard times with hope. This is why support groups are so important for resource families. But support group leaders need this too!



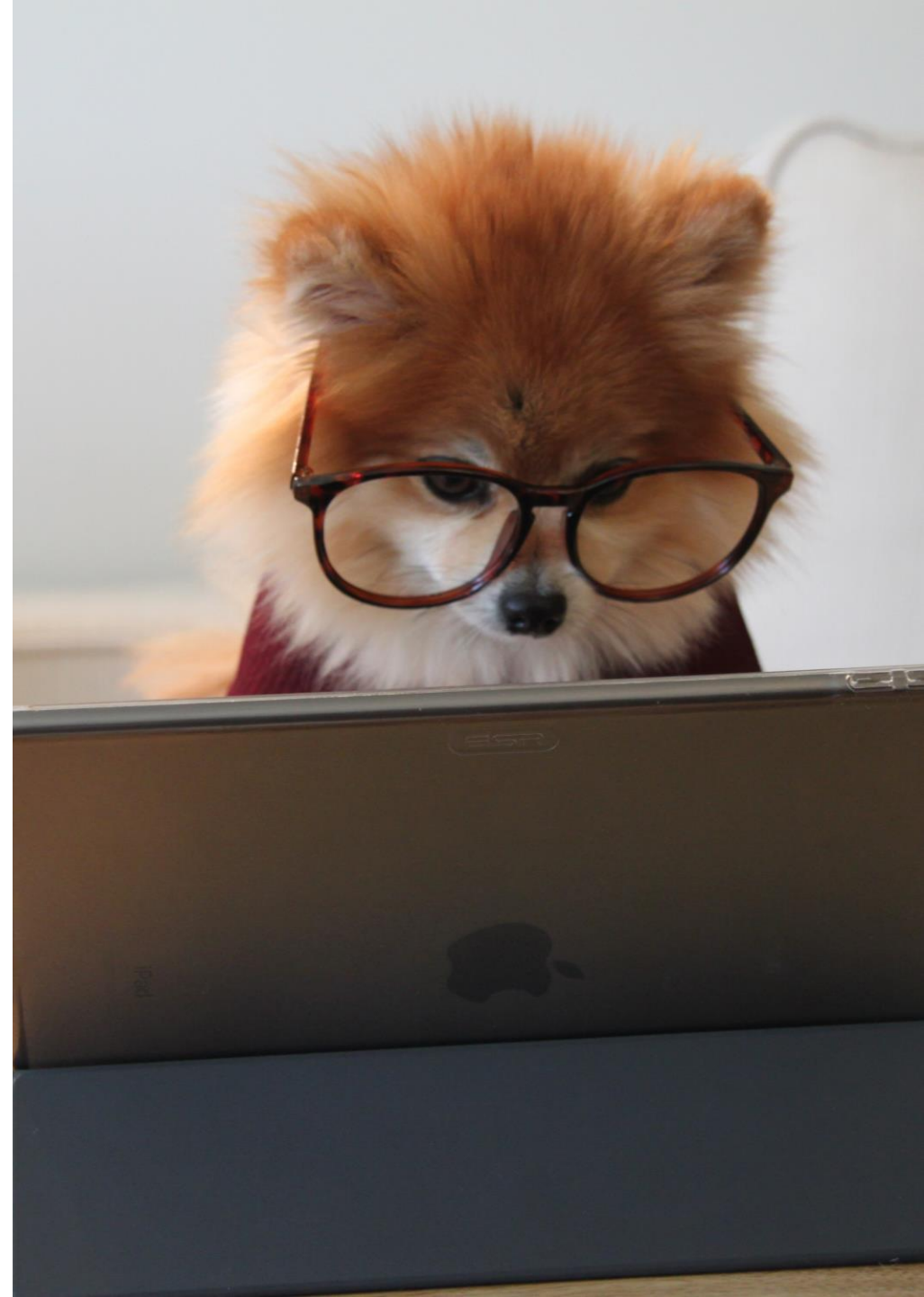
Questions?

Continue the conversation

Join us for a peer meeting on this topic on Sept. 12 at 3:00 eastern.

[Register for the meeting here.](#)

Come ready to learn from and help your peers bring joy, humor, and hope to their support groups. And come ready to laugh!





Contact information

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More resources for parent group leaders

- Article: [Bringing joy to the support group experience](#)
- Recorded webinar: [Rejuvenating your support group](#)
- Recorded webinar: [Helping caregivers embrace trauma responsive parenting](#)
- Discussion guide: [The impact of trauma on children's behavior](#)
- Discussion guide: [Understanding parental grief and loss](#)



More resources for parent group leaders

Find many more resources for parent support group leaders at professionals.adoptuskids.org.

- Discussion guides
- Recorded webinars
- Tip sheets
- Articles
- 5-module curriculum for new group leaders



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