

OLDER CHILD ADOPTION PROGRAM

PWNL STAFFING UPDATES



We would like to welcome our new Program Assistant, Jenny Beers, to the PWNL team! Jenny joins Barker all the way from Indiana after finishing a Criminal Justice degree from Indiana University. She has a passion for kids and has worked with kids of all ages

as a counselor at summer camps for the past 3 years. In her free time, you can find Jenny hiking, cooking, or getting to know Bethesda. Jenny is looking forward to getting to know each and every one of our families and helping them through the entire adoption process. She has jumped in with both feet, and is already proving to be an asset to the program. Please join us in welcoming Jenny!

C.A.S.E.'s New Teen Group

CASE (Center for Adoption Support & Education) is offering a 6-week teen group that will utilize activities and discussion to allow teens to explore issues related to identity, birth family, adoptive family & peer relationships.

Where: C.A.S.E. Annandale, Virginia office, 7857 Heritage Drive, Annandale, VA 22003

When: Tuesdays, 7-9 pm, April 25 - May 30

For More Information: Contact Mari Itzkowitz at itzkowitz@adoptionssupport.org or call 703-256-3820

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Website:

www.barkeradoptionfoundation.org

<http://tinyurl.com/PWNLBLOG>

CONTACT PWNL



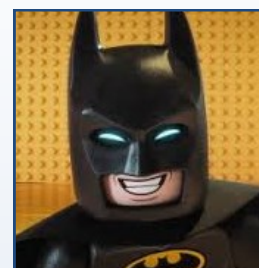
TRIGGERS

Lego Batman Movie:

Adoption Connections & Themes to Consider

Recently one of our PWNL families brought this movie to our attention as being potentially full of triggers for kids who came to their families through adoption. We wanted to share what we found online with you.

Before taking kids to see the new Lego Batman Movie, adoptive parents should consider the negative adoption messages that are pervasive throughout the movie.



You may wonder how bad a "Lego" movie can be? Read below for some of the messaging in the movie.

Bruce, "Batman" takes in a young orphan named Dick. Dick asks Bruce, "Do you have any advice on how to get adopted?" He goes on to list several things he could do to become more likely to be adopted including learning a foreign language and having "experimental surgery to make my eyes larger and more vulnerable looking."

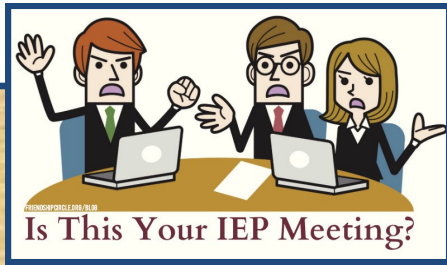
Upon learning that he has adopted Dick, Bruce tells Alfred to "put that kid on the next jet to the orphanage."

Bruce refuses to allow Dick to call him "dad". He even flatly denies that Dick is his son at one point, and only acknowledges that Dick is his son because another character suggests that it would be "weirder" if a grown man was with a boy who was not his son.

Even if you choose to take your kids to see this movie, there are some questions you can discuss after it ends:

1. What did adoption mean to Dick? What could Bruce have done better when Dick asked to be adopted?
2. Bruce adopted Dick without realizing he was doing it – how do you think adoptions happen in the real world?
3. Discuss what adoption means to you, and how your family differs from the one displayed in the movie.

Read more at adoptionlcs.com



Is This Your IEP Meeting?

Often when faced with the pressure of advocating on behalf of their children, parents can become overwhelmed and don't know what to expect or how to prepare for an IEP meeting. Here are

some helpful tips for preparing for your next IEP meeting. Following these tips can help you feel more confident going into your next IEP meeting, and in the long term can help you ensure that your children get the attention they need to be successful at school.

Before the Meeting:

1. Observe in your child's current classroom setting.
2. Reread their expiring IEP if they already have one. Do you feel their academic and behavioral goals have been met? Be prepared to share your thoughts.
3. Make a list of concerns and a list of accomplishments. What is going well? What is still a challenge?
4. Research the academic standards for your child's grade level. Consider where they currently fall in terms of those standards. They may need support still, and that's totally fine. But the more you've thought about these long-term goals, the more prepared you'll be to speak to them and to listen to the team.

During the Meeting, Ask the Important Questions:

1. How can I contact you? Ask each member of the IEP team (classroom teacher, resource teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist, etc.) the *best* way to contact them. Let them know you'll be checking in regularly. Set progress reporting meetings.
2. What do you see as my child's strengths? How can I support and encourage them? An IEP meeting shouldn't be all about weaknesses or discrepancies. Ask how you can support your child's strengths and passions. Those things are what will make your kiddo successful as an adult.
3. What can I do at home to support our goals? For students to make the most progress (emotionally or academically), goals need to be fluid between school and home. Ask the team: What can I do at home? Ask for specific suggestions. If it doesn't make sense, ask for more information.
4. How will we measure progress? How will we communicate about this with my child? Progress towards goals (both academic and behavioral) can be measured in many ways. Will the team be using test scores? A running record with observations of the child? A tally system of behaviors being exhibited (or not exhibited)?
5. What do these supports look like on a daily basis? How will my child's day look?
6. Who will provide these supports? How will my child's classroom teacher be provided with resources and assistance to implement these supports?
7. What would you do if this were your child? An IEP meeting can often be all business. In the end, what would I want to know? If this were your own family member, what would you suggest? Trust me, you'll get some pretty honest answers.

*This article originally appeared on the blog Lipgloss and Crayons.
To read the article in its entirety, visit:
<http://lipglossandcrayons.com/2016/07/iep-meeting/>*

FREE

TRAINING

"Advocating for Your Child's Special Educational Needs"

When:

April 5th at 7PM

Where:

Barker's Bethesda Office

Cost:

FREE (PWNL families only)

This session will explore how parents of children with special academic needs and learning challenges can best advocate for their children to receive the services required for them to reach their full academic potential. **Topics to be covered will include:**

When to seek an evaluation for a child's educational needs and learning issues

Developing and implementing an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

Developing appropriate educational frameworks that help each child prepare for further education, meaningful employment and independent living

Partnering with the school, and advocating effectively to assure the required services are provided

Actions parents can take if they believe their children are not receiving the appropriate support services required within the current education framework

Follow the link:

<https://goo.gl/tFg160>

Use code PWNL for free registration!