



Transforming Children's Care

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WEBINAR #4: CHILD'S RIGHT TO IDENTITY IN ALTERNATIVE CARE

1 JULY 2021



WELCOME

- This webinar is part of a series of webinars from the Transforming Children's Care Global Collaborative Platform
- The platform establishes more strategic sector-wide collaboration
- Sign up at the link in the chat to join the platform and receive updates about future webinars



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HOUSEKEEPING

- This webinar is being recorded and the recording will be made available to you (with Spanish and French subtitles).
- Introduce yourself in the chat (select “Panelists and Attendees” when sending a message so everyone can see it)
- Use the Q & A to ask questions and upvote and comment on the questions of other attendees.



MODERATOR

Maud de Boer-Buquicchio,
President of Child Identity
Protection



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AGENDA

- Introduction to the webinar and the issue of children's right to identity - Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, President of Child Identity Protection
- Panelist presentations/discussions
 - Cornelius Williams, Programme Division UNICEF
 - David Smolin, Center for Children, Law, and Ethics, at Cumberland Law School, Samford University
 - Maeve O'Rourke, Irish Centre for Human Rights, School of Law, National University of Ireland Galway
 - Lynelle Long, InterCountry Adoptee Voices (ICAV)
 - Ann Skelton, University of Pretoria and CRC Committee member
- Q & A



CHILD IDENTITY PROTECTION (CHIP)

www.child-identity.org

- Every year millions of children are deprived of their identity. Millions are not registered at birth and even when they are, fundamental information is missing about their origins, such as who is the child's mother or father.
- Article 8 of the CRC and history (Argentina)
- Article 8(1) right to identity including name, nationality and family relations
 - Name (birth registration)
 - Nationality (prevention of statelessness)
 - Family relations "added" (broad interpretation "family")
- Article 8(2) States have an obligation to speedily restore missing and/or falsified elements
- Right to identity provides protective lens whenever child is separated from family relations - child soldiers, child marriage, child labour, alternative care, adoption, ART etc.



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IDENTITY
PROTECTION
Knowing origins is a right

CHILD IDENTITY PROTECTION (CHIP)

www.child-identity.org

- Alternative care and adoption
 - even if children grow up in a loving family, something fundamental missing, if they do not know their origins
 - preserve identity by considering solutions that allow continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background (Article 20(3))
 - maintain family ties through prevention, family reunification etc (e.g.. Articles 7, 9-10)).
- Session one: Article 8(1) preservation of identity in alternative care
 - ensure all families have access to birth registration
 - recording all information during birth registration.
 - prevent child laundering and “paper orphans” in residential care
 - adoption is a profound modification of child's identity – not to be prioritised in emergency situations
- Session two: Article 8(2) restoration of missing and/or falsified identity
 - enquiries, archives, apologies and remedies etc.
 - complaint mechanisms



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PANEL DISCUSSION



**CORNELIUS
WILLIAMS**

Associate Director & Global
Chief of Child Protection,
Programme Division
UNICEF



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The importance of
birth registration and
recording all
information about a
child's family relations



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**DAVID
SMOLIN**

Harwell G. Davis Professor
of Constitutional Law, and
Director, Center for
Children, Law, and Ethics, at
Cumberland Law School,
Samford University



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The ways in which
actors may be involved
in falsifying a child's
identity so that they
become "paper
orphans"



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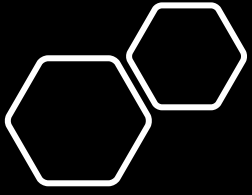
**LYNELLE
LONG**

Vietnamese adoptee born
in the early 70s, Founder of
InterCountry Adoptee
Voices (ICAV)



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Lifelong Impacts Of Identity Loss

InterCountry Adoptee Voices (ICAV)



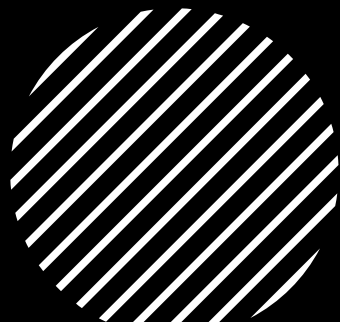
Inter Country Adoptee Voices





Stateless adoptee from Iran

I'm stateless with no country. I have never felt grounded or a sense of stability. Never felt like I fit in anywhere.... I struggle with relationships & dating due to fear of abandonment.





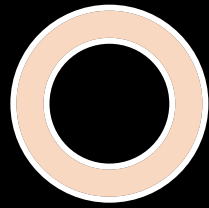
Marie Gardom

An absence of belonging, in particular, culturally. I will never fully belong to one culture or another. One family or another.



Susan Devan Harness

I feel like an imposter - we get it from all sides - for me - too white to be Indian; to Indian to be white. If I allow others to define me, I will never have a place to land. I'm still actively reminded by "real" Indians what I don't know, and therefore, cannot communicate about. As if "real" and "fake" are the only two descriptions that are acceptable.



Monica Dooner
Lindgren
(Colombian
adoptee)



Loss of identity is loss of self. Throughout our lives, we have been forced to find ourselves and re-claim our identities in a society where we are asked to choose one identity over the other. Loss of culture, language, history, norms take more than a lifetime to regain. Since my teen years, I have worked at reclaiming the identity of my birth culture, but I will never be able to completely re-claim it.



Paul Bonnell

Knowns and Unknowns.

Trying to determine whether this fragment of story and that fragment of document and this fragment of photograph and that fragment of history connect or disconnect or what? And whether it matters to try to figure out the connections and disconnections.

The overlapping and creating and dismantling and undoing and discovering of both personal and collective histories feels powerful and overwhelming,



Nandeeta J Ramsey

The person my mother gave birth to that day died when I was separated from my mother and then assumed a new identity. I'll never know the original version of myself. I feel broken because of my adoption. Everywhere I go I feel like I don't fit in.



Paula Sabbia

Entering senior citizenship with so many lingering questions about my adoption story, I wonder if I'll ever feel as if I fit in anywhere.



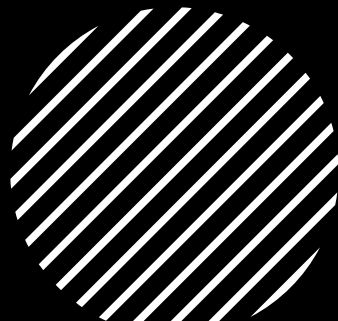
Kris Rao

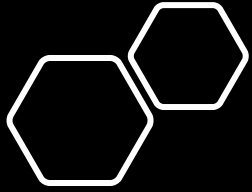
I didn't just lose an identity, I was given one that never fit.

As a late discovery adoptee, to finally know why it never fit was a relief. At the same time, whatever identity I had suddenly shattered.

It's difficult to put something back together when there's nothing there to grab a hold of. I don't know anything about my true and first identities. Where I'm from. Who I belong to. What I look like, etc. All things that would shape an identity.

The lifelong impact is that I will always have a hole in my identity from what is missing, and a part of it will always have a stain from the lies and deception.





Thank you for
listening!



Inter Country Adoptee Voices



Q&A



**MAEVE
O'ROURKE**

Barrister and Lecturer in
Human Rights at the Irish
Centre for Human Rights,
School of Law, National
University of Ireland Galway



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Why is archiving and
record keeping so
important in cases of
abuse in alternative
care?



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**ANN
SKELTON**

Professor of Law at the
University of Pretoria and
CRC Committee member



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Observations and
recommendations and
OPIC jurisprudence
related to alternative
care and identity



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Q&A



**THANK
YOU FOR
JOINING!**

Please see the chat box for a link to learn more about the [Transforming Children's Care Global Collaborative Platform](#) and find out how to join.

And visit www.child-identity.org to learn more about CHIP and their work.

We will be sending you a link to the webinar recording and slides in a follow-up email shortly. If you have questions, comments or recommendations for future webinar topics, please send them to:

contact@transformcare4children.org



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