

Y A L E

pediatric UPDATE

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parenting seminar

The Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital Physician Letter

Yale International Adoption Clinic

The Yale International Adoption Clinic offers comprehensive services to adopting families, internationally adopted children and the community doctors who care for them.

"Americans seeking to adopt children are turning to Russia, China, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia and Central and South America," said Carol Weitzman, M.D., director of the clinic. "Those interested in adopting children from other countries need to be aware they bring with them unique and complex physical, developmental and emotional issues that have the potential to interfere with their adjustment to their new families.

"Prospective families are not generally provided with a lot of accurate information about these children," said Dr. Weitzman. This lack of knowledge raises concerns, such as:

- Has the child been exposed to infectious diseases?
- Will the child grow and develop to his or her full potential?
- Will the child readily adapt to a new home?
- What can you do to best prepare for the adoption?

The Yale International Adoption Clinic can help. "We offer a variety of services that prospective parents and pediatricians can access throughout the adoption process," said Michael Cappello, M.D., co-director of the Clinic. The Adoption Clinic staff is knowledgeable about the

unique medical and social conditions of children from other countries, is skilled in managing infectious diseases and understands the developmental and psychological impact of institutionalization and sensory deprivation.

The goal of the clinic is to assist families every step of the way; from providing guidance and information about pre-adoption records to performing a careful post-adoption assessment of [continued on page 2...](#)



The Yale International Adoption Clinic team includes (l-r): pediatric nurse practitioner Betsy Groth; Dr. Carol Weitzman, director, and Dr. Michael Cappello, co-director.

YNHCH celebrates Day of Hearts



Over 50 children with congenital heart defects, their parents and the Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital doctors and nurses who cared for them gathered on Valentine's Day to celebrate their very existence. One father, Derrick Pommills of Hamden, presented a plaque to the doctors who performed life-saving surgery on his three-year-old daughter, Christian, when she was still *in utero*. Shown (l-r) at the plaque presentation are: Alan Friedman, MD, Gary Kopf, MD, Pommills, George Porter, MD, and John Fahey, MD. Christian Pommills (right) and her twin brother, Derrick, Jr., helped their father present the plaque.

International Adoption Clinic, continued

an individual child's medical, developmental and psychosocial well-being.

Pre-adoption Services

- Identifying the special needs/limitations parents are willing to accept.
- Counseling about general risks of international adoptees.
- Evaluating videotapes, photographs and medical histories.
- Preparing adoptive parents for their trip abroad, including how to spot red flags and how to interpret information about the child.
- Providing telephone support for families during their stay abroad.
- Providing pre-adoptive seminars for parents.

"Being able to assess the information given about a child is essential," said Dr. Weitzman. "Even with very limited information, certain issues may present themselves. People tend to assume

everything is fixable. Not everything is, and we shepherd people through the worse-case scenarios based on the information we have."



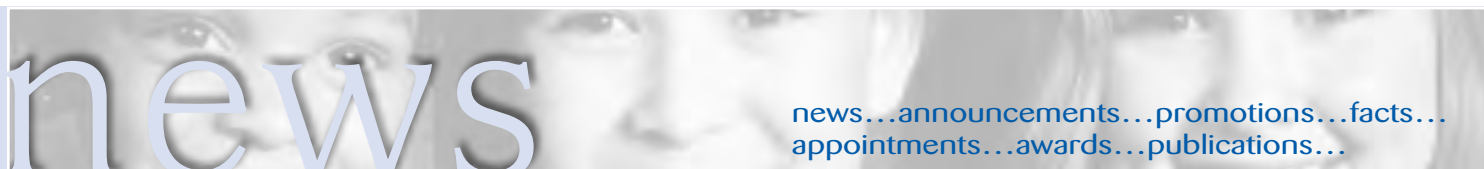
Caden Leavitt

The Leavitts of Easton turned to the Yale International Adoption program to help assess the sketchy medical records and video of a little boy from Khabarovsk, Siberia. "We heard about the program from our adoption agency," said Kirsten Leavitt. "Then once we had Caden home with us, we decided to attend the Yale parenting program. The classes have helped us recognize how Caden's behavior may differ from a typical toddler's because of his orphanage background, and it has given us some useful tools to help him transition into our home successfully. It's been a wonderful resource for us and provided the confidence we as new parents needed."

How to assess an international adoptee's medical record

Evaluate :

- Inconsistencies, gaps in time or missing information
- Presence of prenatal/perinatal risk factors such as maternal infection, maternal alcohol or drug use and extent of prenatal care
- Child's status at birth (e.g., prematurity, low birth weight)
- Current living arrangements of child
- Growth
- Presence of significant medical problems and prolonged hospitalizations
- Medical testing for hepatitis, HIV and syphilis
- Videos for:
 - Quality of the video
 - Quality of the overall environment
 - Development of the child
- Physical features based on photographs or videos



Latest HealthLINK focuses on syrup of ipecac

Once highly recommended as a home treatment for poisoning, syrup of ipecac is no longer considered effective and should not be used, according to a new study, which joins a growing body of evidence against its use. A recent edition of Yale-New Haven Hospital's Pediatric He@lthLINK



focuses on this topic and explores more effective steps to take should a child ingest a toxic substance.

To order free copies of "Throw Out Syrup of Ipecac" for your office, call Yale-New Haven Hospital at 203-688-2488.

"Color Me Pain Free" relieves presurgical anxiety

Brenda McClain, MD, director of Pediatric Pain Management at YNHCH, and Shu-Ming Wang, MD, assistant professor of anesthesiology, have

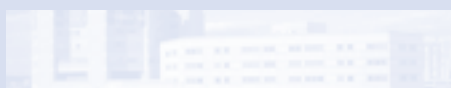
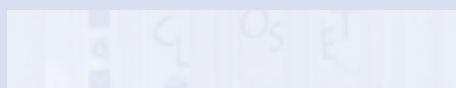
created a coloring and activity book for children scheduled for hospital procedures. The book, called "Color Me Pain Free" is designed to help children develop strategies to cope with anxiety associated with going to the hospital for treatments. Scenarios include visualization and diversion techniques to help children relax.



To order copies of the book, please call Yale-New Haven Hospital at 203-688-2488.

Second annual CME course info: save the date

The annual CME program will be held Friday evening, May 21, 5-9 p.m., and Saturday, May 22, 6:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m. The program will take place at the Hyatt Regency in Greenwich, Conn. Topics will include childhood obesity, issues in pediatric dermatology, limb abnormalities in children, stressors in adolescence, Lyme disease controversies, a Red Book update, children with multiple handicaps and a special seminar, "Staying current with the medical literature in the 21st Century." For more information, please call: 203-737-5929.



Post-adoption services

The Yale International Adoption Clinic offers comprehensive evaluations of newly adopted children every Monday in the Pediatric Specialty Clinic on the second floor of the Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital. The evaluation includes:

- Medical examination
- Developmental assessment
- Audiology and physical therapy evaluation
- Growth and nutrition screening
- Psychosocial development assessment
- Screening tests recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Counseling about potential health and developmental issues

"We find that with time and testing, most medical and developmental issues present themselves. What's often more difficult to determine are emotional problems," said Dr. Weitzman, "which may manifest themselves in tantrums, extreme clinginess, aggression, withdrawal, hyperactivity and/or depression."

Building intimate relationships with caregivers provides children with a framework of how to understand and interact with the world. Children who haven't had that may exhibit many behavioral symptoms that need to be assessed. The clinic staff can help pediatricians caring for children who may need specialized attention, and they can help parents figure out ways to help their child learn coping strategies.

Laboratory tests for internationally adopted children:

The following laboratory evaluation should be done for adopted children soon after their entry into the U.S.

- Chronic hepatitis panel
- CBC with differential
- HIV-1 antibody/RNA
- Lead
- VDRL/FTA
- Stools for ova and parasites
- Urinalysis
- PPD, when indicated



New mom Amy Dooling of Ivoryton and daughter Molly meet with Dr. Carol Weitzman to assess Molly's developmental progress.

General risks of institutionalized children

Children who have been institutionalized are generally a higher-risk group. Lack of stimulation, inconsistent caregivers and poor nutrition may result in developmental delays in critical areas such as speech acquisition and social skills. Physical growth may be affected. Infections such as intestinal parasites, tuberculosis, hepatitis B, syphilis, measles, chickenpox, etc., are also more common in institutional settings.

Red flags: Children at risk for future developmental difficulties and mental health problems

- Increased risk with increased length of institutional care
- Evidence of physical abuse or neglect
- Prenatal alcohol exposure
- Growth failure
- Multiple or prolonged hospitalizations
- Presence of multiple diagnoses on medical record
- Significant developmental delay or atypical development on videos
- History of mental illness or cognitive impairment in the birth parent

Can children recover? They can, but recovery takes time. The longer children are in orphanages, the longer it may take

Building the bonds of adoption: program for adoptive families

The Yale International Adoption Clinic offers an 11-week parenting program designed specifically for parents of internationally adopted children who are less than five years old. Each week, parents and a skilled facilitator come together to explore the complexities of building relationships between parents and children.

Every session focuses on a new topic and through weekly discussions and home-based activities, parents have an opportunity to:

- Reflect on their children's needs and behaviors with heightened sensitivity
- Discover new and effective ways to support their children
- Develop techniques to enhance their relationship with their child
- Celebrate the challenges and rewards of parenting

For more information about this program, please call Marcel Nabor, 203-737-1623.

for them to function within a normal range. "Each child is different," said Dr. Weitzman. "Some children are amazingly resilient; others may require more support. One of the most remarkable things about doing this work is watching kids who come out of difficult situations go on to flourish with the loving support of their new families."

If you would like more information about the international adoption clinic or would like to speak with one of the medical directors, please call: Marcel Nabors at 203-737-1623.

✓ Save the date

To learn more about the following Friends of Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital events, call 203-785-6935.

May 16
Go Topless Invitational

June 15
Annual Luncheon featuring Kelly Brownell, PhD,

on "Diet, Weight & America's Children"

July 26
Annual Golf & Tennis Open

September 19
Touch-a-Truck

October 31
The Spooky Sprint Race & Fitness Challenge



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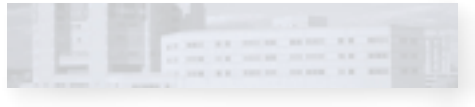
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203-688-3333

Trauma Referral
800-285-7775

Pediatric Chairman's Office
203-785-4638

Emergency Transports:
Newborns (NBSCU)
203-688-6513

Referral Assistance
for Physicians
203-785-KIDS (5437)

Children's Hospital Info
888-700-6543 (toll-free)
203-688-2000 (local)

Infants & Children (PICU)
203-688-2323

Patient Referral Assistance
888-700-6543 (toll-free)
203-688-2000 (local)

Dr. Joseph B. Warshaw In memoriam

Dr. Joseph Warshaw, dean of the University of Vermont (UVM) College of Medicine and a former Yale faculty member who was an expert on fetal growth and neonatal medical care, died Dec. 29 in Burlington, Vermont. He was 67.

A leader in pediatrics throughout his career with a strong interest in nurturing pediatric scientists, Dr. Warshaw is known for furthering understanding of the way organs mature in normal and diabetic pregnancies.

Prior to his appointment at UVM, Dr. Warshaw was professor and chair of pediatrics and deputy dean for clinical affairs at the Yale School of Medicine. He also served as physician-in-chief at the Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital.

Fairfield girl donates to Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital



Dr. Babar had a special smile for Kayla Scholz of Fairfield. Kayla recently contributed \$540 to benefit pediatric oncology at YNHCH. For her seventh and eighth birthday parties, she asked her friends to make a donation instead of giving her presents. The Peter Pan Birthday Club then matched Kayla's donations so she could make a larger contribution. Shown (l-r) are: Catherine Giaccone, director of annual giving; Kayla; Debbie Scholz, Kayla's mother; and Ellen Good, manager, Child Life.