

INSTITUTE *Insights*

A LOOK AT THE PEOPLE, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF
THE ST. LOUIS PSYCHOANALYTIC INSTITUTE

MEET CHESTER SMITH — UNDERSTANDING ADOPTED CHILDREN

BY SUNDEEP JAYAPRABHU, M.D.

Parents of a newly adopted child have numerous questions. How do I develop a healthy attachment with my child? How will it be different from having a biologically conceived child? What concerns should I have over adopting an older child? How do I talk to my child about their birth parents and when? Do adopted children have special issues and challenges? Chester Smith, M.Ed., a psychotherapist on the staff of the Institute's Schiele Clinic, can offer two perspectives for such questions – one as a psychotherapist specializing in the treatment of adopted children and the other as an adoptive parent.

Mr. Smith is a graduate of the University of Missouri and holds a Masters degree in counseling. His early interest in adult psychotherapy led him to train in the Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Program. Later, his interests expanded to include child and adolescent issues, which led him to complete the Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Program at the Institute. He has also been accepted for analytic training which will begin in the fall of 2008.

Adopted children have backgrounds that create special developmental and therapeutic challenges. These

include relinquishment by the child's birth parents and often a multitude of other significant losses. Because of these and other forms of trauma often encountered, adopted children can experience a wide range of difficulties in areas such as attachment, regulation of emotions, and anxiety that may be manifested in behavioral and academic problems.

Mr. Smith teaches seminars to adoptive parents and

provides training to adoption professionals on topics that include attachment, separation, and loss. While he treats adopted children, he is also concerned that adoptive parents develop an understanding of the impact that early pre-adoption experiences have on their children.

Treatment typically involves individual psychotherapy for children and accompanying work with the parents. Mr. Smith finds this work to be very rewarding because it not only assists adoptive children in working with their inner turmoil but also helps adoptive parents to be more attuned to their children's inner experiences and emotional needs.



*Chester Smith, M.Ed., LPC,
is the Child & Adolescent
Psychotherapist with the Herbert
S. Schiele Clinic of the St. Louis
Psychoanalytic Institute*

The Herbert S. Schiele Clinic provides high quality, in-depth assessment and treatment for children, adolescents, and adults for a fee based on the client's ability to pay.

Dr. Nathan M. Simon is the clinic director.

Clinic Services – Adults 314.361.7075, x444

Clinic Services – Children 314.361.7075, x318

Clinic Director – 314.361.7075, x315

Sundeep Jayaprabhu, M.D., is a volunteer writer for the St. Louis Psychoanalytic Institute. He is a 3rd year psychiatry resident at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. He is currently enrolled in the Institute's Advanced Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (APP) program and is interested in pursuing psychoanalytic training in the future.