



bringing cutting edge education  
to all members of the adoption and  
foster constellation year after year

CALIFORNIA ADOPTION CONFERENCE

**Friday, March 24th – All workshops are eligible for CEUs**

**MORNING KEYNOTE**

**To Have & To Hold: Understanding Children’s Ability to Maintain Attachment**

**Holly van Gulden**

Professionals working with adopted and foster youth and their families sometimes notice that traditional mental health and social work interventions only scratch the surface. Children who have experienced loss, neglect, abuse, or trauma, missed some building blocks that are essential to a resilient sense of self. They need providers who understand the essence of normal child development, and can help their families provide missed experiences to develop the necessary skills to navigate life. Holly van Gulden’s training can help you help the families you serve achieve a deeper, more lasting change. She will provide practical tools to help children and their parents develop healthy attachments in a way that is nothing short of revolutionary. Participants will improve their skills in teaching parents about attachment, as well as providing parents with in-the-moment interventions they can use to strengthen permanency and constancy, two cornerstones of healthy attachment. Professionals and parents can work together to build up a resilient sense of self in the child, strengthening their capacity to receive, hold and offer to others a sense of safety, comfort, warmth, value and joy.

**AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS**

**1. Continuing the Conversation: To Have & To Hold with Holly van Gulden**

Join Holly for a case consultation about how to apply her techniques in specific clinical situations. There will be opportunities to explore strategies more in-depth and to get your clinical questions answered regarding current families on your caseload.

**2. Relationship Development Matching: An Essential Tool for Pairing Foster Youth and Families with Heather Bollier Yetter, MA and Sandy Sertyn, LMFT**

Relationship Development Matching (RDM) is the culmination of 9 years of work with special needs foster youth. These include children with Disabilities, Medical Needs, Large Sibling Groups, Teens, but predominately children still suffering the trauma reactive results from the situations that brought them into care. We have developed a comprehensive method that works well with these youth: Utilizing the relationship providers are able to establish with the youth, we bridge between potential parents and support the youth’s journey from introduction to finalization.

**3. Adoption...It’s Complicated! Raising Awareness for Service Providers About Expectant and First/Birth Parents with Susan Dusza Guerra Leksander, LMFT and Liz Wieking**

Does your organization provide counseling to women facing unplanned pregnancies? Is adoption one of the options you discuss with them? Do you feel confident about how to support women and families considering adoption? Or those whose children have already been placed into adoption or foster care? Would it benefit the clients you serve if your staff deepened their knowledge of the complex topic of adoption? This presentation draws on both firsthand, personal experiences, and the latest research, to help service providers discuss adoption with honesty, balance, and compassion. Workshop leaders are themselves first/birth parents whose children have been placed for adoption.

