

[00:00:01.050] - Lisa Qualls

This episode is sponsored by the Adoption Connection Village, a place where you can connect with other adoptive moms who get it and be surrounded with support so you know you're not alone.

[00:00:11.150] - Melissa Corkum

We are really excited about The Village because adoptive and foster parenting really brings unique challenges to families and a lot of people around us don't understand. And so we need to be surrounded by people who get us.

[00:00:24.150] - Lisa Qualls

Yes, that is isolation is really the breeding ground for shame and guilt. And both of us have been to these dark places. I mean, I don't think either of us could have anticipated what this journey would cost us in our relationships, sometimes even with friends and family. It's very hard for people to understand what we're going through.

[00:00:45.260] - Melissa Corkum

Absolutely. But we do get it and we want to have a special place where we can really connect in a much deeper way, as close as we can to actually be in person. So obviously we can't all gather around Lisa's kitchen island, but we have created something called virtual coffee chats and these happen over video chat and it's a whole group of us and it's been really fun to see your faces, get to know your stories and connect with you on a much deeper level. We do these coffee chats in the Village three to four times a month, and we focus at least one of them a month on specifically the challenges of teens and young adults, because we have heard from you guys that that is a space that needs a little extra TLC and support.

[00:01:33.630] - Lisa Qualls

So the Village is for you if you feel like you need more people in your life who understand you, you crave authentic and intimate community, and especially if you don't have Facebook or you want to limit your time there. So you don't want to be in a group maybe that's based on Facebook. And I think the thing that's so important is that we know you are pouring your hearts and your souls into your kids and maybe nobody is pouring back into you, but we want to do that.

[00:02:03.180] - Melissa Corkum

Besides the coffee chats, we have a discussion forum that's kind of like a Facebook group on steroids, that really helps connect you with topics that are relevant to your story and folks who are local to you. We also release monthly premium content such as deeper dives into what connected parenting really looks like in real life. And there's even a monthly Enneagram Connection video where we help you better understand yourself and your family's dynamics. The Village really is your one stop shop for personalized support. We want this to be accessible to as many parents as possible. So it's just \$24.99 a month. There's no commitment. You can cancel at any time. Go to theadoptionconnection.com/VILLAGE to find out more or get started.

[00:02:44.150] - Lisa Qualls

Welcome to the Adoption Connection podcast, where we share resources by and for adoptive and foster moms. I'm Lisa Qualls

[00:02:52.060] - Melissa Corkum

And this is Melissa Corkum. Don't worry, we get it. And we're here for you.

[00:02:57.690] - Lisa Qualls

Welcome to episode 101 of the Adoption Connection podcast. Today we're talking about adoption sensitive classrooms. And when we were chatting about this in preparation for today's interview, we both were thinking about the most dreaded classroom assignment for adoptive families, the one that nobody wants to do. So, Melissa, as an adoptee, I would love to hear, did you ever experience having to do a family tree, and how did your parents handle it? What do you remember?

[00:03:33.590] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah, I remember thinking, well, which family tree should I do? Realizing that there were two options, and realizing that my biological family tree wasn't really actually an option because I really didn't know anything. But then also feeling like my adoptive family tree wasn't really my true family tree, because so much of the assignment was clearly based on genetics. But it's funny when I speak on stages about my story, it's so funny because parents get so worked up in a tizzy about this assignment. What should I do? How is it going to make my kids feel? What if we don't know about their family and all of these different things? And it occurred to me while I was prepping for a talk last year that our teachers actually don't know the right answers to these things. There's no answer key to this assignment. So it's so interesting that we get ourselves all in a tizzy, and really, it does not matter what your child turns in, because there is no right or wrong answer. And so then I had this freeing thought that I wish I had had 30 some odd years ago, which is adoptees in some ways, and maybe this is the adventurous seven in me coming out...

[00:04:51.470] - Lisa Qualls
That's enneagram seven.

[00:04:53.320] - Melissa Corkum
Yeah, enneagram seven. This is a fantastic assignment for adoptees because it is so much less work for adoptive families, because you all can make up whatever you want. And, I mean, clearly, birth families could do the same thing, but adoptive families would have a really good reason to do it. And your child, you can make this, right? This is all about positioning, right? I think a lot of times as adoptive families, we think about all the grief and all the loss, but there's a way to spin this assignment. Not that like, oh, woe is me, I don't know where my family came from, or I don't have the information I need to create an accurate biological family tree. But that this is a fantastic assignment for adoptees because you get to use your imagination, and you get to make up whatever the heck you want, and it's okay.

[00:05:42.250] - Lisa Qualls
Well, I love this about you, Melissa, because I'd probably be all angsty and trying to figure out, how do I do this right? Yeah, I love hearing that. Well, this is, of course, the beginning of a very unusual school year. For those of you listening, when this episode comes out in the fall of 2020, you know, we're in the middle of trying to navigate school with COVID. So everybody's doing different things. But I think that this interview is so helpful and encouraging. No matter where we're schooling, our kids, if they're like, my kids are going to be hybrid. If your kids are full time in school, whatever's happening, this is a really interesting conversation. So will you tell us about our guest Melissa?

[00:06:23.220] - Melissa Corkum
Sure. So this week we have Joelle Broberg, and she is an adoptive mom to a little girl from India. She's also a lifelong educator. We actually recorded this interview before COVID and, right before COVID, but then shelved it because when it was meant to come out, it was way more important for us to deal with kind of the drastic changes we were all going through. But COVID has been around for a while. We've all adjusted as much as we're going to. We're jumping back into a new school year. And even though we have all of these kind of COVID related issues, we're still adoptive families, and there will still be these adoption related issues that our children are facing in their classrooms, whether they're in person or virtual. And so this just felt like a really good time to revisit this interview with Joelle. We know that teachers have a lot going on, and they may not feel like they can handle anything else. But one of the beautiful things about what Joelle has to offer is, as an educator, she was able to put together a course on creating adoption sensitive classrooms for teachers, and she was able to have this course count for teachers for CEUs. So even though teachers feel like they can't do one more thing,

[00:07:43.510] - Lisa Qualls
And they probably can't right now.

[00:07:45.030] - Melissa Corkum
Yeah, and they legit can't. But they will have to complete some CEUs this year. And so this is a way to kind of kill two birds with one stone, to really a resource that you could offer them that allows them to

serve your child and other children in the classroom that may have experienced trauma better while also checking off that little CEU box.

[00:08:06.350] - Lisa Qualls
Let's hear your conversation with Joelle.

[00:08:12.350] - Melissa Corkum
Well, Joelle, welcome to the Adoption Connection podcast. I'm so glad you're here.

[00:08:16.990] - Joelle Broberg
Thank you so much for having me. I'm excited.

[00:08:19.790] - Melissa Corkum
Start off. So we're going to talk about kind of how two of your worlds collided. You are an adoptive mom, and you're also an educator, so we're going to get around to that. But I thought it might be fun to have you just tell our audience a little bit about your adoption story, so you can kind of paint the background. Can you just tell us, did you always want to adopt or kind of what brought you to the world of adoption?

[00:08:44.150] - Joelle Broberg
It's kind of funny you frame it that way. The two worlds colliding with adoption and education, because those are like two things that I always wanted to do. Just kind of from a really early age, those are just things I knew I was interested in. I'm not exactly sure why the adoption piece crept in so early. I think I knew some kids or I was just exposed to it early on. And then as I got older, probably around age 20, I did a lot of traveling and just going, being in the rest of the world, being in our own world, just realizing that there were a lot of children who needed families everywhere, just really resonated with me. And I just knew that if I was going to have children, I would want to do it via adoption. And I felt pretty strongly about international adoption, which mine is. So I think that's kind of how I came to that. It's just something that was always deep seated, just as deep seated as wanting to be an educator. They were kind of equal.

[00:09:38.560] - Melissa Corkum
That's so interesting. So what was the first step you took when you decided it was a good time for you to start pursuing adoption?

[00:09:45.450] - Joelle Broberg
Well, that's hard to say. So I came about it even though it's something I always knew I wanted, it was something that I kind of had to push aside for a while, just based on my life circumstances at the time. It wasn't really accessible to me at that point in time, I'll put it that way. And then I was involved with a dance group, of all things, an Indian dance group. In this dance group, one of their major things that they would do every year is they are part of an Indian Nepalese heritage camp, and they would go up and teach dance to Indian and Nepalese adoptees. And I would go up with them not for any other reason, but to teach dance. But it was around all of these other adoptive families, and it just resonated so strongly with me. It just brought back that fire that I wanted to do. And so that was a huge part of the spark. But it still took me many years to get my life into the place where that was going to be the path that I could take. And then once my life was aligned in that particular way, I just jumped right in. The second I was kind of in a place to do it, I did it. And then you start following all of the international adoption procedures and so on, and then it's just that whole crazy ride from there.

[00:10:55.060] - Melissa Corkum
Yeah. So you have a daughter. Where was she born?

[00:10:59.490] - Joelle Broberg
She was born just outside of Lucknow, India, which is in the northern part of India, pretty close to the border with Nepal. And she's been with me... She was almost seven when she came home, about six and three quarters, so to speak. And she's been home a little over four years now. So she's ten and doing great.

[00:11:19.400] - Melissa Corkum

Amazing. So what would you say has been part of your greatest joy in that journey of parenting your daughter?

[00:11:28.170] - Joelle Broberg

Wow. In all honesty, some of my greatest joy has come from some of our greatest challenges too. There was that original joy of just becoming a mom for the first time and us coming together and things going really, really well, and kind of textbook, and fairy tale, and all of that kind of stuff. And then we had this crazy medical situation. She was born with a limb difference and so came to the United States with a limb difference. But about a year after being here, she was having some surgery done to be both proactive and corrective and so on, and things went really horribly wrong. So we went into this phase of life where we were hospitalized for - it was two months in a hospital, a month out, back and forth every day and then having to actually be aero-vac'd to another hospital to finalize care for another couple of months. And so it was this really crazy time where all of our priorities, my priorities, shifted. And so it was a very challenging time, but it also totally reestablished all of my way, I look at the world. And what I wanted to do and how I wanted to interact with it and it really introduced me to kind of this whole other side of myself and of adoption, to be honest.

[00:12:49.190] - Melissa Corkum

Yes. So what would you say were your biggest takeaways from that? Like, practically, what has that looked like from that transformation point?

[00:12:57.430] - Joelle Broberg

It's a good question. From a practical sense, I had to leave the world of education, which is something I loved. And I had already changed my role in education after my daughter came home. But after this whole medical thing happened, we were full in working on attachment and trauma and medical stuff, and all of that. So it changed from that standpoint, it changed my priorities completely, as far as what mattered most and what I needed to do. From another standpoint. I learned a lot of lessons about listening to myself, believing myself, believing her, just having to look at the world in a very different way than what I thought adoption and parenting was. And then what I even had experienced in that first little bit of time than what was our new reality was. Totally answers your question.

[00:13:53.210] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah. I think a lot of us who are listening have experienced a transformation through adoption. And I think it looks a little bit different for everyone. But the fact of the matter is, when we can merge our lives with somebody else's, especially when they come to us from a different culture, whether it be because of international adoption or maybe just a different socioeconomic culture within the United States, it forces us to come face to face with a lot of our deeply held beliefs. And we have two different people with two different sets of deeply held beliefs. And now we have to learn how to live together.

[00:14:32.310] - Joelle Broberg

Yeah. So there's all of that. And then when you add kind of going back to that original pairing, for me, it really transformed how I look at education, educators, education as a whole. And all of that also was transformed. So it was a lot of shifting.

[00:14:51.370] - Melissa Corkum

How long were you in a classroom or in education for a profession before you adopted?

[00:14:57.870] - Joelle Broberg

So I was a classroom teacher for about ten years, a little over ten years. And then I became a school counselor. And I was a counselor at the middle school level. So when I taught, I did middle and high school, and then I did middle school counseling, and then I became an administrator. And I was a high school assistant principal, and then a middle school principal, and that's my daughter came home when I was a principal. I realized really quickly, pretty much when I came back from maternity, I was like, no, this is probably not going to work. And I was going to try to tough it out and make it happen.

But knowing that my daughter had a big surgery coming up and knowing there were things happening, I didn't feel it was right for either my school or my daughter to be so stretched in different directions. So I had already taken a step back, and I stepped out of the principal role and into a more kind of back, more into the counseling-ish type of role. And then all of her medical stuff happened, and I stepped away one day thinking I was going to be missing a week of school for her surgery, and never came back. Didn't go back for three years.

[00:16:00.370] - Melissa Corkum
It's a big transition.

[00:16:02.290] - Joelle Broberg
Yeah. You just sometimes don't see these things coming. I knew that becoming a parent would change things, but I just never saw that on the horizon.

[00:16:11.180] - Melissa Corkum
Yeah, well, and that's a pretty dramatic shift. Not every family is faced with such a dramatic medical need or a need to shift for those reasons.

[00:16:22.670] - Joelle Broberg
Yeah, it was definitely a crazy ride.

[00:16:25.630] - Melissa Corkum
You're kind of like the educator that we kind of all wish our kids had, because you are an experienced educator and now you have this experience as an adoptive mom. And so you are being able to look through a couple of different lenses. Looking back over your education experience and now thinking about what you know as an adoptive mom, what would you tell your former educator self?

[00:16:54.870] - Joelle Broberg
Oh, my gosh, I've written so much about that in the course that I've written so many things. I realized I was pretty arrogantly ignorant about a lot of things. And I made a lot of assumptions about kids and families, thinking I really knew best. I always had what I thought was a kid's self interest in mind of all of my students, but I just didn't realize quite how much I was missing the boat and how much equal is not equitable. Like, I could say it, I could rationalize it, but it didn't live it. And so it hasn't been until I lived it that I could help both myself and other educators. And now I'm also finding other parents. Like find that place where everyone feels heard, and feels okay in dealing with some of the harder educational stuff. I think that's been one of the biggest things that I've learned from all of this, is just that empathy towards parents and also trying to help parents empathize with teachers, too. I'm not sure that totally goes where you wanted to go, but...

[00:18:01.550] - Melissa Corkum
No, I love that because I think that often because we feel like the stakes are so high, and teachers and educators are already so stressed and they're managing a lot of different personalities and students and caseloads and whatnot. A lot of times we do come to the table feeling like we're on opposite sides rather than on the same team.

[00:18:24.400] - Joelle Broberg
Yeah, very much so. I like to think of it as, and I know this is a metaphor that's used often, but we're living in the fight, and I think we get so used to being in the fight for our kids, whether it's fighting in my case, it was fighting the judicial system in India to allow them to release her to come home. And then fighting doctors and medical professionals, so that by the time you get to the schools and you feel like something's not going right, it's just like our kids in trauma, right? You're already so escalated that you can be so easily triggered into the fight or flight mode. That's where you go, because we've just become so conditioned to it. And then you go into an educational situation and feel like your child's needs aren't being met, and it can just lead to a whole lot of not positive stuff.

[00:19:13.600] - Melissa Corkum
Yeah. Now, what has your experience been on the flip side of the coin, now that you're a parent on this

side, what has that experience been like for you, going into advocating for your daughter in her education setting?

[00:19:28.700] - Joelle Broberg

What I find, and this is something else that I have worked now with teachers who are also parents, but what I found for myself is I was very reticent to say or do certain things. I was always so careful and then tender footed because I didn't want to be that parent. I didn't want to be the helicopter parent, right? Because I know those parents, and I know those parents that I would hide from, or I would have there's like, secretaries, okay, run and hide because this person is coming and you can't be around. It's sad, but it's true. It happens in the school sometimes. And so I didn't want to become that parent. So I think the pendulum swung too far, and I probably didn't advocate enough for my child, in one situation in particular that just still makes me angry. My other self now knows I should have just walked out of that meeting, take my daughter and left the school. That would have been the overly dramatic thing to do. But yet now that I look at it, that probably would have been the right thing. In that case, that was probably the appropriate response. Instead, I kind of sat back, let things go, and she's in a different school this year. How it affects me is that for me personally, I think I'm actually a little bit overly sensitive and maybe worried about being that parent too much.

[00:20:49.810] - Melissa Corkum

Well, I confess I've probably been that parent.

[00:20:54.530] - Joelle Broberg

I have too, now.

[00:20:56.690] - Melissa Corkum

You have the inside scoop of being an educator. So talk to us parents, who have a tendency maybe to be a little bomb of bearish we are conditioned into, in my case, fight. What would you tell us as an educator, knowing what you know and being able to empathize with - I'll be kind of dramatic here - the plight of the adoptive parent, right, in education advocacy.

[00:21:24.330] - Joelle Broberg

It's totally fair.

[00:21:26.650] - Melissa Corkum

So can you give us some tips and pointers in terms of how we can best approach schools, and how we can work together to be that team, from a parent perspective? Because we're going to talk about your course in a second. And I know that that's geared a little bit more towards educators and we'll talk about kind of how to bridge that. But for parents, what would you tell us?

[00:21:49.570] - Joelle Broberg

I've been thinking about this a lot from the parent side. I think it's about building trust. From a parent side try as much as possible to assume that the educators are trying to do their very best, because in most cases they are. They may just not be informed. And that to me, is where I see a need, is that for the educators to understand and be more informed. And so it may become your role to help inform them, versus fight against them. I think that parents bringing in materials or just saying, hey, did you know about? Or can I offer you this information about my child? This may apply to some other children in a similar circumstance. I think coming from that posture and assuming that the teacher isn't trying to do harm. Because they're really usually not. Teachers, just like us as parents, can get kind of set in a certain way of thinking. And they really think they're doing what's best for students. And to approach it from a gentle standpoint is usually going to get you further versus coming from, you are doing this to my child, how dare you do this to my child, and what's wrong with you? And how can you not know better? I do find that that is more effective.

[00:23:04.790] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah. How do we convince already overtaxed and busy teachers that there's a benefit to continuing to become more informed.

[00:23:13.480] - Joelle Broberg

So here's a mantra that I've been using a lot, because now I have gone back to work into a school and I'm in a more alternative education setting, and so working with a pretty different group of kids and situations and so on. But my mantra applies to the question that you asked as well, and it's pay me now, pay me later. And if educators are willing to invest in understanding what's going on with their students from a root cause, if they do that at the forefront, or they listen from the forefront, they're going to save themselves and the students and the families so much more time, energy, and drama down the line. And so I think the way to sell that to an educator is I can save you a lot of time butting heads with my child, if you can put a little bit of time into understanding this, almost guaranteed. If you can hear these pieces and understand these pieces, you're going to get a different student out of my student. And I think that's probably the strongest and most effective way. It doesn't mean every teacher is going to hear it, and I know that. And then there's other methods to go about trying to get your students needs met, but I think from a starting point, that's always a good place to start.

[00:24:28.460] - Melissa Corkum

I think that's such wise words in terms of the investment that teachers can make and the benefit. And I think sometimes we miss when we're talking to educators about going to the benefit for them and even the bigger benefit. So becoming more informed isn't just about my kid, it's about a lot of kids in the classroom, right? This is an investment not just to be me or for my specific situation, that this really applies across so many other things and could sow seeds of benefit for years and decades to come.

[00:25:14.210] - Joelle Broberg

Yeah, exactly. And I think anytime you can illustrate to them, this isn't about my child, and I'm not asking for special favors for my child. This is global, this is universal. And understanding my daughter might help you understand 15 more kids that come your way in the next few years. So I think that's another way to help teachers understand and give it relevance.

[00:25:40.750] - Melissa Corkum

Talk about your course. What are some of the things that you're talking about in your course to teachers? What are you wanting them to know about our kids?

[00:25:50.110] - Joelle Broberg

Yeah, well, I'll go backwards, if I can, because I ended up creating this course purely out of need. I kept hearing so many adoptive parents saying, talking about their struggles in the classroom. And there was usually kind of a pattern to what it was that teachers weren't understanding, or expressing their frustrations with the school, whatever it was. And I just kept thinking, gosh, if there was just a way to help the teachers understand this more from the get go. And you can give somebody, oh, here's a packet that you can give to the teacher about trauma. Or here's this little pamphlet about how to make your classroom assignments more sensitive to adoption. That's great. And teachers will sometimes use it, sometimes not, because teachers are busy and overwhelmed and overworked and don't have time. And so I came up with this idea of creating a course so that teachers could get continuing education credit for learning those things that we desperately really want them to know and understand. And so it took a little looking and doing, but I did finally find somebody who was willing to partner and help me get the course offered through the right channels to be able to get the credits that were needed. Luckily, because of the training that I have and the degrees that I have, I'm able to be the instructor of that. And so just found the right partnership to create this course. It was wonderful.

[00:27:06.230] - Melissa Corkum

Which is brilliant, because like you said, there is an additional benefit that's really practical and transactional, right? This is something that teachers have to do in terms of continuing education. And so you're connecting with them in part of their pipeline and inserting the information exactly where they're going to be needing it and looking for it.

[00:27:30.270] - Joelle Broberg

Right. I wanted to value their time. I absolutely wanted to get the information out there in a way that I

felt valued their time as well. Because then I think you come to it more willingly, and there's not resistance to learning these things. So to go back to your original question, that's how I came to it. And then unfortunately, I can't remember exactly where we were going with that question, but I knew I wanted to back up and explain why it was I felt important to put it into a course format.

[00:27:58.790] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah. So can you talk a little bit about the topics in the course? What are teachers going to get?

[00:28:04.890] - Joelle Broberg

Yeah, so what I did was I just started thinking through, what do teachers need to know, what do they need to become more sensitive to? And the course itself is called the Adoption Sensitive Course classroom. I'm pretty clear about it from the very beginning. That's what it's called. But it's very applicable to foster families, foster situations, any of these types of things. And so I decided to break it into several, broken into modules. And so I started off with just what is adoption? There's so many different ways that people come to adoption to foster care, and I talk about all of the different types of adoptions that there are in the history of it. I move then into adoption myths and I talk about things like the lucky Adoptee, the grateful adoptee, Saviorism, the Great White hope, and all of those kind of things, because I really believe that educators are likely believing in the myth, right? I give them scenarios so that they can know. How could they possibly deal with something a little bit differently, if it comes up in the classroom? So I move on from the kind of adoption what it is. I talk about adoption positive language, and that's all just kind of setting the stage for the first part of the course.

[00:29:13.220] - Joelle Broberg

In the second part, I talk a lot about trauma, and I talk about a trauma informed classroom. What is trauma? Is it adoption? Is it trauma? Is it both? A lot of brain science, because even though trauma informed classrooms are much more the thing that people are talking about much more now, a lot of people still don't get to the root of the brain science with it. And I think for educators to truly embrace it, they have to see some of that research and understand it. So there's a lot of that. I move on to just what does trauma look like in the classroom, and give them a lot of practical tools and things to be looking for and how to deal with it. Then I move on to talking about disability. Why there's a disproportionate amount of students who have different disabilities, ESL, ELL, and different impacts are another thing that of course are a big deal in the classroom.

[00:30:15.920] - Joelle Broberg

So the last two pieces are... The last two sections are pretty heavy hitting. There's a cultural sensitivity, identity and mental health, where we talk a lot about multiculturalism, white privilege, non-adoptee privilege and things like that. And then really the last part of the course talks about how do you make your classroom more sensitive, what are the tools you use, what are some very specific things that you can do to make sure your classroom is more adoption sensitive? And then it brings it back to that triad of teacher, student, parents, and how to create a healthy relationship among all three of them.

[00:30:46.750] - Melissa Corkum

So valuable. And thank you for I mean, it just must have taken hours of research and work and it sounds like you've really, really dug deep into some really important issues. And so I can very much see how this would set the stage for a much more positive interaction between an adoptive family and an educator who had all of this extra knowledge under their belt.

[00:31:11.230] - Joelle Broberg

That's the goal. I know it's a tall order and I know not every educator will be able to take the course, or will need to take the course, or will feel drawn to it. I'm hoping it at least plants some seeds here and there for maybe some collegial conversations or things like, oh, I never knew this or did you know about this? And maybe it just spreads in that way. I do hope eventually to have some other resources available that would be more digestible than a big giant weighty course. But for those teachers so for those ready to dive in and do that, it's a great way to honor their time and learning.

[00:31:45.200] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah, I love that so much. So as we're wrapping up and we will have a link to your course in the show notes so that people can take it, copy it, pass it on to their educator friends, the educators of their children, the future educators of their children, if you can figure that out, right? Is there anything else that you would like to say to either teachers or parents?

[00:32:11.390] - Joelle Broberg

Be kind to each other as much as possible. Being back into the world of education now with my new lens, I hear a lot of educators who are jaded, and who are looking at that other side of the fence, and not always very kindly. And so that's been part of my work, is to try to help educators grow empathy on their side. And then the flip side of that is for parents to just understand teachers are generally not out to get their kid. I know there's those random, one off evil people, but they're not in. They're out there. I see them. But people come to education because they care about kids, and they may have become a little set in their ways. They may be not enlightened, but do your very best to assume that positive intention, and then work with the parents and then the students to really build those bridges. And just do so with empathy, because the teachers aren't out to get anybody, the parents aren't crazy. It's just finding that middle ground.

[00:33:15.660] - Melissa Corkum

I think, really in all parts of life, right? If we could just all be kind, start with being kind.

[00:33:22.560] - Joelle Broberg

It's all we need, but it's so hard to remember the daily grind of everything.

[00:33:27.570] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah. Well, thank you so much for your time, again, the time that you took to fill such a big gap for our kids, for the parents who are working with the education system. Thank you for your time to chat with us here on the Adoption Connection podcast. Hopefully we can be arm in arm with you in helping to spread this message, and create a world where there are more teachers who are adoption friendly and adoption sensitive.

[00:33:57.450] - Joelle Broberg

That's the dream, right? Thank you so much for allowing me the chance to just talk about it a little bit more, and let people know that there's a way we can make it happen. It's just going to just takes a little bit of time and education and patience.

[00:34:10.830] - Melissa Corkum

Yeah, lots of patience. All right, well, thank you so much, Joelle.

[00:34:14.620] - Joelle Broberg

All right, thanks.

[00:34:19.890] - Lisa Qualls

Well, like we mentioned earlier, we know that teachers are pretty maxed out right now. My sister is a teacher, and I know that she really has zero margin. But one of the things Joelle said in this interview that I thought was really good is that parents if, we need to approach it the right way, but if we go to a teacher and say, look, I can save you a lot of time and trouble with my child if I can explain a little bit to you. And knowing that whatever we share about our own child and how they are going to approach things, will actually help the teacher understand other kids too. I just thought that was such a good point. I think we do want to be really sensitive to teachers right now and not overload them. But I think helping our kids' teachers understand them in relationship to adoption and foster care is only going to help in the end.

[00:35:14.180] - Melissa Corkum

Absolutely. It's a lot like we talk about parenting our kids, right? We want to try to stay on the same team. So rather than it being you against your child's teacher, which honestly is kind of my default and where I've been with the public school system in the last couple of weeks with a child without special needs. But instead of being going to battle, kind of like that mama bear thing, that kind of happens,

right? If we can think, how can I bring a teacher onto my team and the two of us can battle the classroom disruption together, or something like that. Pick a different common enemy. One thing that can be helpful also is that sometimes teachers just need something quick. It doesn't need to be a long conversation. And so Joelle has generously provided a really quick printable positive Adoption Language Quick Reference guide. So that will be at the Show Notes, as well as a link to her course, Creating Adoption Sensitive Classrooms. Again, that is available for CEUs for teachers and there's actually university credit available with it at some universities. So you can find out more by going to that link. All of that, along with Joel's website, how to get a hold of her, will be at the Show Notes, which you can find at theadoptionconnection.com/101.

[00:36:39.010] - Lisa Qualls

Before you go, we'd love to connect with you on social media. You can find us on Facebook or Instagram as The Adoption Connection.

[00:36:46.650] - Melissa Corkum

Thanks so much for listening. We love having you. If you enjoyed this episode, please leave a quick review over on itunes. It will help us reach more moms who may be feeling alone.

[00:36:56.770] - Lisa Qualls

And remember, until next week, you're a good mom, doing good work, and we're here for you.

[00:37:03.890] - Speaker 3

The music for the podcast is called New Day and was created by Lee Rosevere.