

Children's Bridge

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION CONSULTANTS



making families happen

"No act of kindness no matter how small is ever wasted." - Aesop

To Cathy,

On the 28th of June 2018, after quite a few years, Cathy Murphy will be leaving The Children's Bridge as Chief Executive Officer. This is a big change for The Children's Bridge as Cathy has been involved since the early days of the agency! Although change is not unusual for an organization, Cathy will be greatly missed as she has touched many families lives and has been a fantastic example of optimism within a beautiful empathetic spirit. Cathy's commitment and perseverance in helping the children of the world has been inspirational.

As a fellow adoptive parent and friend, I have known Cathy for approximately 22 years! When I was asked to put together a tribute to Cathy for this newsletter, many, many ideas went through my head! It is hard to know where to start! I decided to make this tribute a collection of shared memories. Memories of my own, memories from Cathy's friends and co-workers, both from The Children's Bridge and The Children's Bridge Foundation. I have also included snippets from Cathy's social media platforms. (Yes, I "borrowed" them!) They convey messages that Cathy holds close to her heart and that she embodies in her everyday actions.

So many families have been touched by Cathy's beautiful kind spirit and her amazing professional abilities. Before becoming involved at The Children's Bridge, Cathy studied and worked at Algonquin College (Early Childhood Education Instructor/Field Placement Supervisor). Cathy worked at The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa-Carleton and was a former Integration Advisor and Trainer at The Children's Integration Support Services of Ottawa.

Cathy assumed many different roles at The Children's Bridge, starting out as a volunteer. Cathy became Manager of Adoption Resources, Program Management and in 2009 became Executive Director. Cathy is also involved as a volunteer Director at The Children's Bridge Foundation. I have no doubt that Cathy's future interests will involve helping children and families in some way!

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Cathy Murphy

"There is always room for hope no matter how hard or impossible it feels"

~Anonymous
specialneeds www.parentingspecialneeds.org
Art Courtesy © Sergey/Pestov/photoxpress.com

Cathy recruited me as a Regional Coordinator in 2001. I vividly remember Cathy and Bonnie McGregor approaching me at one of the CB Playgroup in Spring of 2001, Luka wasn't even home yet. The offer was presented and I honorably accepted. Cathy certainly is unique, always taking on "the extra", with grace and her usual positivity. I can't justify in words how much she will be missed by those she touched through her tireless work in each of her responsibilities at CB.

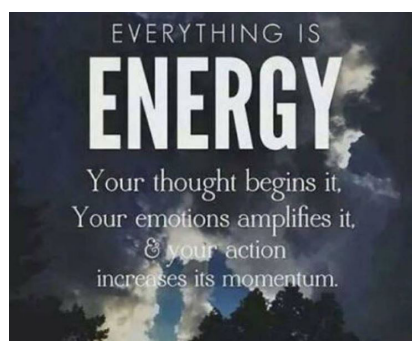
*- Maria
(The Children's Bridge)*

Way back in the early days in 1996 my husband and I were on our journey to adopt our first child from China. Cathy was also on that path, hoping to adopt their second child. (Cathy and her husband Jim had previously welcomed their son from Canada). What a time that was! Changes were happening in the world and China was "re-structuring" their adoption system. It was a challenging time and it was hard not to lose hope that our adoption would actually happen. Many circumstances were out of our control. That was when I really felt Cathy's eternal optimism and positive attitude. Not to say things were always easy, but anyone that knows Cathy, knows she believes in taking things day by day and never losing hope!

We eventually travelled to China with our adoption group in spring of 1997. When we were returned home from China with our precious first daughter, we actually met Cathy and Jim in transfer at the Vancouver airport: They were on their way to China to adopt!! What an exciting time!

Time flew by as we formed friendships with adoptive families in Ottawa. We all enjoyed time spent with the little ones, taking them to playgroups, Children's Bridge events and learning from each other. Cathy was always willing to share her thoughts and experiences and was an amazing support if we were struggling. With so much experience in the field of child development, we all benefited from Cathy's gentle encouragement. It was a special time. We all were open to helping each other in this new world of parenting.

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Cathy may be shorter and younger than I am, but, boy, do I look up to her! She is the kind of "take-charge" person who makes this world work. She juggles multiple, complex balls and still manages to push projects forward and get them completed. I've known Cathy for probably 20 years, while we were both going through the agonizing, nerve-racking process of international adoption. I crashed and burned several times and despite the fact that Cathy was experiencing the same angst, she was always there, encouraging us, helping us to stay positive. If there is one word to describe this wonderful woman, it is "positive." I treasure her words of wisdom, her emotional support and most of all, her friendship.

- Joanne

"It's funny how, when things seem the darkest, moments of beauty present themselves in the most unexpected places."

- Karen Marie Moning, Dreamfever

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf"

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Cathy was instrumental in building the volunteer regional coordinator role with The Children's Bridge. It was our dedicated Regional Coordinators who, over the years, coordinated and facilitated playgroups, Information Sessions, workshops and other events. They also mentored families in the beginning stages of the adoption process which was VERY important years ago when there wasn't easy internet access or social media. Cathy was the most enthusiastic and dedicated Regional Coordinator we had! In November of 2000, she stepped back from this role but continued to volunteer with CB in other capacities until she was hired as an employee by CB.

The Pre and Post Adoption Services team, led by Cathy, created and facilitated many wonderful programs and workshops for our families including the Child Guidance Workshop, Kids Like Me, Connect-a-Kid and in 2006, AdoptTALK. Most of the programs she created are still flourishing today.

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Cathy was also instrumental in opening and growing the China Waiting Children program.

Something that stands out for me, is that Cathy has always been the person in the organization to handle any emergency/critical situation whether it was her job or not!

Cathy is someone that we could all count on to support us professionally and personally.

Even during difficult times again, professionally or personally, Cathy could always rise to the occasion and smile about it too!

Cathy maintains a high level of professionalism in her day-to-day interactions with staff and clients. She is also a very warm and caring person making it a pleasure to work with her. She is open to feedback and ensures everyone's thoughts and opinions are given equal recognition.

Cathy is always available to offer assistance and encourages everyone to be the best they can be. I can always count on Cathy's support and that's very important to me.

- Darlene (The Children's Bridge)

Cathy supported and helped families, but especially the children. As our children grew into elementary school aged kids, young teens, then adults, our lives changed and challenges sometimes became bigger. Always ready to step in and "be there" when needed, Cathy was the one who would call or send a text late at night when everyone else was busy with their own lives. Cathy always remembered! When Cathy said she was thinking about your family, she meant it. Being able to listen well is a skill that Cathy has always excelled at. She makes you feel that your thoughts and feelings are justified and relevant. I'm so thankful for Cathy's friendship and strive to be as supportive with others as she has been with my family.

If you know Cathy, you know her laugh can light up a room. Fun-loving and adventurous, Cathy lives life to its fullest. Her love for her family is one of the most important aspects in her life. You can see that when she talks about them. It's amazing that Cathy finds time to volunteer for Habitat for humanity or other causes, being as busy as she is!

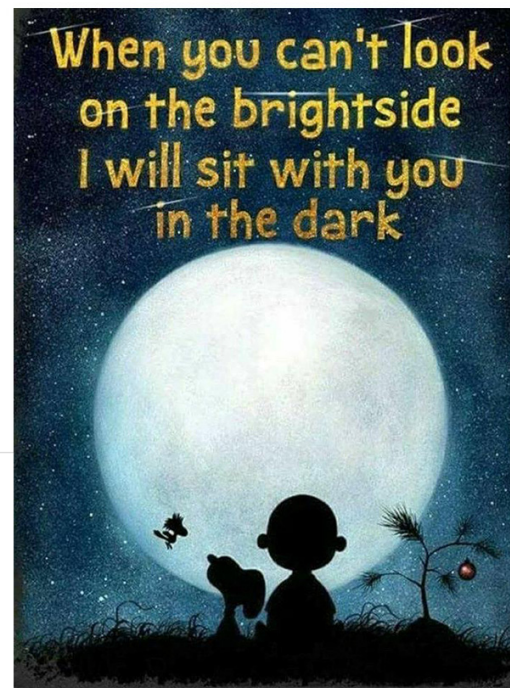
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My mission in life is not
merely to survive,
but to thrive, and to do so
with some passion,
some compassion,
some humor,
and some style.

MAYA ANGELOU

#BellLetsTalk

I am here for my friends and family today and every day



"The adventure of life
is to learn.

The purpose of life
is to grow.

The nature of life
is to change.

The challenge of life
is to overcome.

The essence of life
is to care.

The opportunity of life
is to serve.

The secret of life
is to dare.

The spice of life
is to befriend.

The beauty of life
is to give."

- William Arthur Ward

KIND
always be

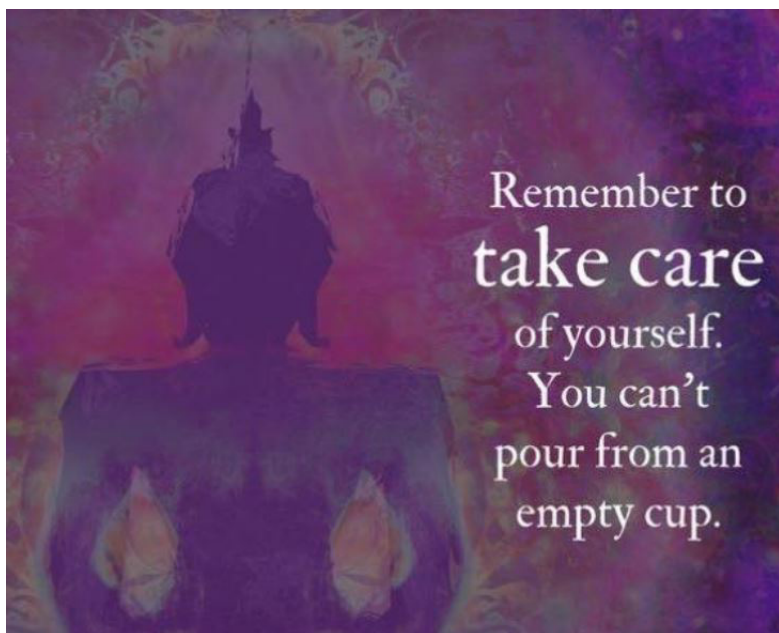
I met Cathy 2008, when I was asked to come speak as an adoptive parent during a session of AdoptTALK. We connected almost immediately, as I was struck by her passion for issues around adoption, educating families to best serve the needs of children, and her energy and enthusiasm for everything she took on. Since that day, I've worked closely with her for almost 10-years, and now understand that it is almost impossible to not get swept up in her positive attitude and enthusiasm when planning a project, or even planning a staff lunch. She cares deeply about people, their well-being, and understands that words and actions can effect everyone around you. This leads her to ensure her words are infused with a caring attitude that is felt by anyone who comes in contact with her

Her passion has always been with children, and you can see her light up whenever kids are around. This dedication to the well-being of children and families has led to some of the programs we, as an agency, are most proud of - programs like Kids Like Me, Connect-a-Kid, and AdoptTALK. This concern for others has also meant that as a staff, we are supported by Cathy no matter what we take on - always with a reminder from Cathy to "fill up our own tanks" and that we can't be of use to others when we are running on empty.

I don't have the words to express how deeply she will be missed at The Children's Bridge. Personally, one thing I will miss the most is her warm greeting every morning when I come into the office, and our 10-minute morning chats before the work day began. That being said, I think I can speak for all of the staff when we say we wish her nothing but the best moving forward wherever life may take her next. I have learned so much from working with her, and am excited to see what new ventures she takes on.

Hamba kahle Cathy (Go well, my friend), and I know I will see you on the patio in the Fall!

- Karyn (The Children's Bridge)



"We all should know
that diversity
makes for a rich tapestry,
and we must understand
that all the threads
of the tapestry
are equal in value
no matter what their color."
- Maya Angelou

"Life's most persistent
and urgent question is.
'What are you doing for others?'"
- #MartinLutherKing

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Sue & Cathy in China 1997

Cathy has been a friend, a support, a colleague and an inspiration for the last 21 years. I met Cathy when we were both prospective "China parents" back in 1996. It was a tumultuous time in the world of China adoption, and by the time we travelled to China together to bring home our daughters, we were close friends. Cathy volunteered with Children's Bridge for years before becoming Executive Director, and even back then, her knowledge of child development and adoption issues changed many CB families lives for the better. Once Cathy started working with the Children's Bridge in an official capacity, I had the pleasure of working with her on the newsletter team, as a regional coordinator and more recently on the Children's Bridge Foundation Board of Directors, where Cathy's passion for helping children and ensuring that those left behind in orphanages have the best chance possible at a productive life, is an inspiration to our team. She seems to possess unlimited energy, and compassion. I am so proud of you Cathy, and wish you the very best as you pursue your dreams in this next adventure!

- Sue (The Children's Bridge Foundation)

I met Cathy at a play group before we adopted our eldest in 1997. We worked together on the first CB picnic we attended in '96, and many more for years after. Cathy has been a friend, another adoptive mom to share things with, bounce things off of... she has been a very strong advocate for our kids, for families formed through adoption. She has a ready laugh, and a sympathetic ear. I am grateful that she has been a friend through the stages from toddlers to teenagers and now young adults getting ready to 'fly' solo. Congratulations Cathy as you close one chapter at CB and begin a new exciting one.

- Bonni

"Happiness is a gift
and the trick is
not to expect it,
but to delight in it
when it comes."
- Charles Dickens

I know nothing of hatred,
intolerance, racism, sexism,
bigotry, indoctrination,
homophobia, and prejudice.

I don't yet understand things
like compassion, integrity,
human decency, tolerance,
and truth.

For the first, most important
formative years of my life,
all I will know
IS WHAT YOU TEACH ME.

Choose well.



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Cathy, my friend, I thank you on behalf of all of the families and especially the children... thank you for all that you have done over these many years at The Children's Bridge. You are loved by many. We wish you peace and happiness on your next path to come.

Xo Jill

I'll finish off by sharing one of your favorite poems by **Robert Frost**..



Cathy with her children.

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

"In ordinary life
we hardly realize
that we receive
a great deal more
than we give,
and that it is only
with gratitude
that life becomes
rich."

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Children's Bridge



Welcome

CHINA

Waiting Children Program

Welcome home to

Daniel Qiu Bao (Hebei Province, PR of China), son of Chris and Megan of Ottawa, Ontario

Welcome home to

Jonathan Tian Ci (Shanxi Province, PR of China), son of Bill and Helen of Richmond Hill, Ontario

Welcome home to

Willamena Ke Xin (Shaanxi Province, PR of China), daughter of David and Kim of Ottawa, Ontario.

SOUTH KOREA

Welcome Home from South Korea to:

Hope Jini, born November, 2016, daughter of Dale and Lorianne, Ottawa.

Eojin William, born August 9, 2016, son of Sherman and Karla, Ottawa.



Visit
The Children's Bridge
for more information
on Connect-A-Kid
activities!

Why I Volunteer for Connect-A-Kid

By Kiera F. (Kiera has been a volunteer with Connect-A-Kid for 3 years).

As an adoptee, I believe that each child who has also been adopted, should feel a sense of pride about their origins and be given the opportunity to meet other children who have had a similar experience as them.

The Children's Bridge Connect-A-Kid program is an absolutely fantastic program, as it provides many adoptees a safe place to converse and get to know each other. As a former Connect-a-Kid participant and current mentor in the program, I can confidently say that the children absolutely adore the monthly get together, whether it be engaging in the chosen activity or meeting new friends.

Volunteering as a mentor in Connect-A-Kid is a great place to help others while meeting other adoptees. In keeping with the program's objective to connect the kids (as the name says for itself), I also strive to help them feel connected with one another and ensure everyone is comfortable with the activity. Personally, being adopted is an extremely important part of my life because I wouldn't be who I am today without it. I believe, from my personal experience, that being supported by other adoptees, and acknowledging my adoption story creates a feeling of acceptance. I carry a strong sense of pride of not only being Chinese, but also being apart of the adoption community. Sharing this feeling of acceptance and pride will hopefully help others in the group feel comfortable about their own individual stories. The fact that I am able to help others is an experience on its own, but to help those who have had a similar story as myself is an absolute privilege. After all of my experience in this program, I am extremely thankful for the opportunities I have been given to share my ideas, to help others, to meet other adoptees, and to learn about their perspectives. I look forward to volunteering more in the coming years!



**Having fun at the March Connect-A-Kid event:
games, snacks & time capsule making!**

Kiera F. is second from the left.

Kara Eusebio, Coordinator of Connect-A-Kid
Ottawa is third from the right (standing in
the back with the gray sweater).

A Word From Cathy

Good-byes are never an easy thing, especially when you have nurtured an organization as though it were a child. Cathy Murphy's connection with The Children's Bridge (TCB) goes well beyond her role as Executive Director. She has adopted through the Bridge, helped facilitate thousands of adoptions, supported families post adoption and watched the Bridge, during her 17 years with the organization, become a professional and accountable success.

"I joined TCB because I truly believe every child can benefit from the support and love of a family," Cathy says, "Children need families to support and love them unconditionally. I believed that in 2001 and I still believe it today."

The Bridge has been through many challenges over the years and Cathy has helped navigate them with a focus on family and the heart.

"Legislation and laws changing continually is one of the greatest challenges. TCB looks for families for children not children for families. This is a huge philosophical difference from some other licensed adoption agencies, and a difference I am very proud of," Cathy adds.

Since joining TCB, first as Program Manager in the China WC Program, Cathy has helped the organization place more than 475 children with special medical needs. The children range in age from 3 years of age to 17 years of age.

"When I visit orphanages I am always struck by the number of children who continue to live in orphanages who are older children and children with special medical needs. Placing some of these children in families who can support them to achieve their greatest good is something I am very proud of."



Cathy at Elim Centre in Shaanxi Province, PR of China

Cathy is also proud of the Connect-A-Kid Program, which is run by adoptees for adoptees and Children's Bridge Foundation the charitable organization of which she is one of eleven volunteer Directors. The Foundation focuses on education and health supports for orphaned and abandoned children living in developing countries.

www.childrensbridgefoundation.com

"I hope to see The Children's Bridge continue to expand their pre and post adoption services and to continue to provide ethical adoption programs for families wanting to build their family through adoption."

Cathy is leaving the Children's Bridge to study pastoral care and to work as an advocate for adoptees and young people. And so, this is not good-bye for her.

"I look forward to the future and I am so very grateful for my time at TCB! Thank you! I don't like goodbyes so I will just say, "Until we meet again."

Written by Joanne Schnurr