



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Robin Beaman | rbeaman@beamaninc.com | 312-751-9689

The Cradle ‘Our Children Series’ to Offer Insights into Raising Black Boys *Roundtable discussion to focus on keeping youth safe, rearing strong men*

CHICAGO (January 20, 2016) – [The Cradle](#), an adoption agency in Evanston, IL, launches its new initiative, *Our Children: An Education and Empowerment Series*, with a roundtable event, "**Raising Black Boys**," on February 18 at Northern Trust at 50 S. LaSalle, 6th floor in the Assembly Room. The roundtable reflects an important national conversation on keeping African American youth safe in a climate where racial inequality and police injustices are commonplace in the daily news cycle. The event, which is being underwritten by Northern Trust, begins with a reception at 5:30 p.m. followed by the roundtable at 6:30 p.m.

Panelists will share their personal insights and professional experiences as Black men and fathers. Topics will include the unique risks that Black boys face; Black boys do's and don'ts; and how to prepare your son for interactions with the police. The panelists will also share the types of discussions that are taking place in their own homes, as well as the fears they have about their sons' safety and how they are raising them to become strong Black men. A Q&A will follow the discussion.

Panelists include:

- **Kenard Gibbs**, VP, Black Entertainment Television & CEO of Soul Train Holdings
- **Ronald Holt**, Commander, Chicago Police Department Special Activities Division; Co-Founder of Purpose Over Pain
- **Tim King**, Founder, President and CEO, Urban Prep Academies
- **Dana K. O'Banion**, Attorney and Children's Book Author
- **Jonathan Peck**, Principal and Owner, Strategic Advice Services; Co-Founder of Concerned Black Men of Metropolitan Chicago

"I'm reminded of the Nigerian proverb, 'It takes a village to raise a child,' and that is the mantra we carry with us as we launch this important series," says Nijole Yutkowitz, Vice President of Inclusion and Community Development at The Cradle and a Cradle adoptive parent. "Today, 35-40% of the children The Cradle places each year are Black or biracial. Our work with families doesn't stop at the point of adoption. Our goal is to provide lifelong support and help parents prepare their children for success.

Tickets are \$50 and proceeds from the evening will support The Cradle programs and services, including the agency's efforts to find permanent, loving homes for African American babies.

The Cradle's ***Our Children*** initiative is a multi-year series of programs and events aimed at educating families about the realities and injustices their children may experience in societal interactions, with a special emphasis on transracial families. The initiative aims to give parents the tools and support they need to communicate with and prepare their children for a society that is far from color-blind.

Future roundtables in the ***Our Children*** Series will address "The Color of Education" and "Raising Black Girls: My Black Is Beautiful, Too." The series will also include film screenings, guest speakers and webcasts.

About the Cradle

The Cradle is one of the foremost adoption agencies in the country and the only adoption agency in the U.S. with an onsite infant nursery. Since its founding in 1923, The Cradle has placed more than 15,000 children with permanent loving families. The Cradle's mission is to benefit children and all others touched by adoption by compassionately delivering exceptional education, guidance and lifelong support to build, sustain and preserve nurturing families. For more information, visit www.cradle.org.