

## **ADOPTION SERVICES**

**Catholic Charities of Salina, Inc. (DBA Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas)**, serves a 31 county area with an outreach office in Manhattan, Kansas and Hays, Kansas. Catholic and Protestant clients, as well as those claiming no religious preference, are served with equal consideration. Birth parents and their families are served at no cost to them. Catholic Charities is licensed by the state of Kansas to maintain high standards of adoption.

Couples who wish to adopt are screened and prepared for adoption through the home study process, and adoption education. They prepare an autobiography and picture profile of their family.

### **PHILOSOPHY:**

Our adoption program is based on the premise that the agency is responsible to prepare couples to be adoptive parents.

The birth parents of each child available for adoption through Catholic Charities of Salina, Inc. have chosen a couple to be parents to their child and have entrusted the agency to help them carry out their adoption plan.

We believe that every form of adoption must center on meeting the needs of the adoptee and that children are best served by preserving their connection to their family of origin. We view adoptive parents as a resource to the birth family.

We believe in the importance of placing a child in a home that respects the preservation of the child's racial, cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage while respecting the birth parents' choice of adoptive homes.

We believe open adoption best serves the needs of each member of the adoption triad and offer our services to facilitate open adoptions. Our agency continues to be available to interested parties as long as services are requested because we recognize that adoption is a lifelong experience.

We believe the spirit of candor is appropriate in adoption, whether regarding recent or past adoptions, and we support the right of adoptees and birth parents to have information from their records to help them reconnect with each other.

### **ADOPTION HISTORY:**

**ADOPTION IS A LIFETIME PROCESS** for all the parties involved. For several generations the adoption process for infants has been a closed process. The parties in the adoption knew very little about each other. As more and more adoptees began to search for their birth parents and more and more birth parents attempted to locate the child they had placed for adoption, it became apparent that there were many problems with the closed, secret adoptive process. When birth parents began to be more insistent about information

about the couple who would adopt their child, social workers and/or agencies began to provide some degree of openness between birth parents and adoptive parents. Today, more and more licensed agencies across the country provide some degree of openness in adoptions.

### **OPEN ADOPTION:**

We refer to open adoption as the exchange of identifying information between the members of the adoption triad: The birth parents, the adoptive parents, and the adoptee. The amount of openness is determined by what is comfortable for those involved in the adoption. Most birth parents meet the couple whom they chose to parent their child. Some continue post adoption contacts, including post placement visits, when there is mutual agreement about such visits. Letters, pictures and gifts are commonly exchanged.

Adoptive parents in many cases have become the strongest proponents of open adoption which is not co-parenting. The two sets of parents are not in competition for the child's love. Adoptive children have the capacity to love both sets of parents. They are connected to their birth parents as long as they live.

### **EDUCATION AND PREPARATION TO ADOPT:**

Catholic Charities stresses the importance of preparing and educating prospective adoptive couples about the complex issues encountered in parenting an adopted child. We require participation in an on-line education course and a workshop facilitated by your local adoption specialist.

Catholic Charities believes in the importance of educating couples about the dynamics of adoption. Each couple adopting domestically is required to view 3 courses on-line from Adoption Learning Partners. Couples will need to provide a copy of their certificates of completion to the adoption social worker before the home study begins. On line access is [www.adoptionlearningpartners.org](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org). The titles of the modules are: 1) Open Adoption 101: What to Consider, How to Establish, and Ways to Stay Connected, 2) Let's Talk Adoption, 3) Finding The Missing Pieces. If you are open to adopting a child of any race/ethnicity Conspicuous Families is an additional mandated module. Each parent is required to complete the modules, with a cost between \$105 and \$135

### **ADOPTIVE HOME ASSESSMENT:**

The Adoptive Home Assessment is the process to evaluate and prepare couples for adoption. This preparation involves several interviews with a social worker. This fee is not refundable

Should the prospective adoptive mother become pregnant or the family receives a child from another agency, the adoptive couple's file will be placed on hold. However, the home study may be used by other agencies or for an independent or private adoption.

Issues discussed include: Adoption, infertility, family of origin, education and employment, marriage, parenting, home and finances, and community resources.

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### **PROFILES:**

Couple provides autobiographies and an online picture album via [www.parentfinder.com](http://www.parentfinder.com) showing various aspects of their lives. From these profiles the birth parent/s choose their family. Investing considerable time and energy to prepare an attractive profile is necessary. The information provided is extremely helpful to birth parents as they make the all-important decision about who will parent their child.

### **WAITING:**

It is very difficult to determine the amount of time couples wait before a child is placed. Families are selected by the birth parents. The number of infants available affects the length of the wait.

### **ABOUT FEES:**

The rationale underlying our fee policy is to make our services as self-supporting as possible. We expect adoptive parents to pay for the cost of our services to them.

Adoptive couples will be responsible for legal costs incurred in freeing the child for adoption. Adopting couples are responsible for any other legal fees, including the cost to finalize an adoption or high-risk legal fees associated with relinquishing parental rights.

Couples who adopt will be asked to cover all expenses of the infant and birth mother that are not covered by insurance. Therefore, couples interested in adopting will need to work with their health insurance agency about this coverage. Couples are also expected to pay any deductible and co-pay of the birth mother's health insurance. When appropriate, birth mothers are asked to apply for a medical card through DCF.

### **PLACEMENT:**

The social worker will contact prospective adoptive parents if the birth parents wish a meeting. The meeting is typically arranged during the 7th or 8th month of pregnancy.

After the birth parents have signed their relinquishment of parental rights, the baby will be placed with adoptive parents unless the child needs to remain in the hospital for some reason. The birth parents and the social worker make arrangements for the placement. The adoptive parents will be advised if this is a legal risk placement.

Because of the need to file the Petition for Adoption within 31 days after the birth of the baby (in order to utilize insurance coverage), the agency will provide couples' attorney with all the necessary paperwork in order to meet the deadline in usual circumstances.

## **FINALIZATION**

Couples will need the services of a lawyer to file the Petition for Adoption. The agency will mail to the lawyer all necessary paperwork in order to finalize the adoption. A date will be set for the hearing, and the couple will be asked to be present before the judge.

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With the granting of the final adoption decree, the child is legally a part of the adoptive family. The attorney is responsible for obtaining a new birth certificate for the child which will be issued in the name given the child by the adoptive couple. The original birth certificate is available to adopted children at the age of 18 upon request from the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

## **POST ADOPTION CONTACTS:**

Because adoption is a lifelong issue, the agency is an on-going resource for continuing information about rearing adopted children, and contact from adoptive couples is welcomed.

### **Adoption Services, Hays**

Catholic Charities  
122 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St.  
Hays, KS 67601  
Phone: (785) 625-2644

### **Adoption Services, Manhattan**

Catholic Charities  
323 Poyntz, Suite 102  
Manhattan, KS 66503  
Phone: (785) 323-0644

### **Adoption Services, Salina**

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Salina, KS 67401-1366  
Phone: (785) 825-0208