Adoption Services

**FAQs for Birth Parents**

**As a pregnant woman, why would you or should you consider adoption?**

There are many reasons why women and men consider placing their children for adoption. Sometimes a girl or woman gets pregnant before she is ready to be a parent, she is too young, or she wants to finish school, or maybe her other children are still babies themselves. Sometimes there just isn’t enough money to support a child or another child. In some situations, birth families feel strongly that their child would be better off being raised by two parents who are more mature and financially stable. Whatever the reasons may be are good ones and they are individual for everyone.

**My friends tell me that it is selfish of me to consider adoption. They say that I don’t care about my baby and am just taking the easy way out.**

Emotionally, there is nothing easy about adoption: adoption is anything but selfish. Birth parents who choose adoption are putting the needs and best interests of their baby ahead of themselves. It is extremely hard to let another family parent your baby. A lot of tears go into this decision. Birth parents who choose adoption love their babies enough to choose a better life for their babies – despite the heartache that they may feel.

**Will my child wonder why I chose adoption for him or her?**

Probably. But through meeting the adoptive family or by giving them letters or gifts to share with your child, you can explain to them why you thought adoption was best. If you choose an open adoption, you may someday get to explain directly to your child why you chose adoption. Your child will be given background information about you and will come to realize that a lot of his or her wonderful traits come from you. Most adopted adults realize that their birth parent(s) chose adoption out of love.

**Are their families who want to adopt my baby?**

Yes! At all times, Catholic Charities has between 20 and 30 families waiting to adopt infants and toddlers. Many of these families are unable for some reason to give birth to a baby themselves and want more than anything to have children.

**Do I have to be Catholic to work with Catholic Charities?**

No. We serve individuals and families of all types regardless of their faith, beliefs or religion.

**How do you check into the prospective adoptive families to make sure they’ll be good adoptive parents?**

Catholic Charities Corporation is a licensed adoption agency through the state of Ohio. Therefore, all of our adoptive parents have to meet state requirements. They are required to go through a homestudy, which is a series of interviews so that we learn more about them and their lives. Medical statements from their doctor and references from their family, friends and employers are required. A fire inspection and safety audit are completed on their home to ensure that it is a safe and appropriate place for a child. The adoptive parents and everyone over the age of 18 in their home must also submit fingerprints for a criminal background check. By the time we
approve a family to adopt, we have gotten to know them very well and feel confident that they will be good parents.

As a second safety net, after your baby is placed with an adoptive family, the social worker visits them at least monthly for the next six months to ensure that the baby is being loved and cared for. The adoptive family can’t go to court to legally finalize their adoption until after that six month time period.

**How is a family chosen for my baby?**

If you are interested, you can assist in the choice of a family who will adopt your baby, based on “profiles” created by the adoptive families. Profiles contain pictures of them and tell the story of their family. After you have read the profiles, you will also have the option of meeting the families.

**Am I allowed to see my baby in the hospital after he or she is born?**

What happens in the hospital is up to you. You can see your baby, hold your baby, feed your baby, or choose not to have any contact with the baby. That is your choice. You just need to let the staff at the hospital know how involved you want to be.

**Can I name my baby?**

Yes, and that name will appear on the baby’s original birth certificate. The adoptive parents have the option to choose a name of their own for the baby once the baby is placed with them. Sometimes, the adoptive family keeps all or part of the name that you chose.

**Will I ever get to see my baby again?**

The answer to this question varies. It depends on the agreement that you reach with the adoptive family. Some birth families and adoptive families agree to exchange pictures and letters through the agency, while other families agree to periodic face to face meetings over a time period. It is up to you to let your social worker and the adoptive family know what kind of contact you are looking for.

**Can I change my mind about placing my baby for adoption?**

No permanent adoption decisions can be made until the baby is at least 72 hours old. After that, your parental rights can be terminated either through a court hearing or through your signing permanent surrender papers. Once either of these things happens, you can no longer change your mind. However, up until that point, you can decide at any time to parent your child instead of choosing adoption.

**Do I have to go to court to place my baby for adoption?**

Whether you can sign permanent adoption papers without going to court or if you will have to appear in court varies from case to case. Your social worker will discuss all of this with you.

**What about my medical bills?**

If you are without medical insurance, Catholic Charities will refer you to apply for Medicaid. If you are not eligible for Medicaid or cannot afford to pay your insurance’s outstanding co-payments, the adoptive family might be able to help you pay for your medical expenses.

**Do I keep seeing the social worker?**

You can see the social worker as often and for as long as you feel you need to. The social worker will come to the hospital to visit you when your baby is born.
Does all of this cost any money?

No. All of the counseling services to birth parents are free, even if you change your mind and decide to parent.

How do I get more information?

A birth parent can call our office locations and set up an appointment to meet with an adoption social worker who can explain how adoption works, including the legal aspects. Meeting with a social worker is a chance for you to get more information about adoption – you do not make any commitments to adoption at this time.