

Why choose Catholic Charities?

- Because we've been around since 1922! Our agency is licensed by the State of Indiana and accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. Our staff is professional and has worked in the pregnancy and adoption field for many years.
- To help you put your best foot forward in adoptive parenting. We provide access to adoption education as part of the home study process.
- We want you to be able to become a family as soon as possible. You may not only be in our approved pool, but you may take your home study elsewhere to broaden your placement possibilities.
- We will be available years down the road if you need help.

Accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc.

Supported by United Way in Allen, DeKalb, Noble, Steuben, and St. Joseph counties.



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne–South Bend Inc. is a state-licensed, Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children-accredited social services agency serving people in the Indiana counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Marshall, Noble, Steuben, St. Joseph, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley—and throughout the state.

Catholic Charities provides assistance to all individuals, regardless of their religious affiliation, race, national origin, or gender.



315 East Washington Boulevard • Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802
(260) 422-5625 • Toll-free (800) 686-7459

1817 Miami Street • South Bend, Indiana 46613
(574) 234-3111 • Toll-free (800) 686-3112

www.ccfwsb.org

Open Adoption

*Assisting everyone involved
in the adoption process*



About our agency

Catholic Charities of the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese has been serving northeast Indiana since 1922. We currently serve nine counties in the Fort Wayne office: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Whitley, Huntington, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, and Wells, and we serve five in the South Bend office: Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Marshall, and St. Joseph.

Our philosophy

The heart of Catholic Charities' pregnancy and adoption services is twofold: concern for the family struggling with an untimely pregnancy and concern for the family that has infertility. Catholic Charities believes that if adoption is to occur, the best interest of the child should be served. Catholic Charities will provide you with information needed to assist you as you begin your journey to become a family through adoption.

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to be Catholic to come to Catholic Charities?

No. Catholic Charities' services are available to everyone.

What are the types of adoption available?

In a closed adoption, no information is exchanged between the birth family and adopting family. Catholic Charities no longer facilitates closed adoptions unless directed to do so by the birth family. Catholic Charities provides post legal services to those who have had closed adoptions facilitated by Catholic Charities.

In a semi-open adoption, the birth family selects the adoptive family. A meeting follows, with non-identifying information exchanged between the two parties.

Generally, the agency serves as the go-between in the sharing of information between the two parties through the child's growing years. In open adoption, the birth and adoptive family select each other, disclose who they are, and have some form of ongoing contact through the child's growing years. The primary difference between the semi-open adoption and the open adoption is the level of trust. Open adoption is about relationships between adoptive and birth families. Co-parenting is not involved. There is no question that the adoptive parents are not only the legal parents, but are the mom and dad. Catholic Charities is available to assist as needed when adoption occurs.

What kinds of adoptions are facilitated at Catholic Charities?

Most adoptions at Catholic Charities are open or semi-open, providing some form of ongoing contact. However, if a birthparent doesn't want to or isn't able to have ongoing contact, she doesn't have to in order to have Catholic Charities facilitate her adoption. (Closed adoptions occur at the direction of the birth family.) Catholic Charities will assist and advise as needed.

Who benefits from an adoption with ongoing contact and how?

Catholic Charities believes that every form of adoption must center on meeting the needs of the adoptee. We believe that the best interest of the child is served by preserving the connection to the family of origin. As adopting parents, you need to be aware that under Indiana state law, ongoing contact is not governed. No conditions may be attached to the adoption decree for a child under the age of 2 that mandates continued contact between adoptive parents and birthparents. There are, however, no restrictions preventing continued contact. Failure on either side to fulfill a

verbal or written commitment cannot be taken to court for action. Catholic Charities believes that when birth families and adopting families enter into an adoptive agreement, it is morally and ethically binding.

Openness benefits all parties: birthparents, adoptees, and adoptive parents. Most importantly, the child has opportunities to connect with his or her history, which can be helpful as the child approaches adolescence and deals with identity issues and adulthood. For birthparents, openness eases feelings of guilt, fear, and uncertainty. For adoptive parents, it offers an ongoing reliable source of information to help understand medical history, physical features, and even some personality traits.

How are adoptive parents chosen?

Birthparents initially select adoptive parents from profile information that adoptive parents provide the agency. A couple prepares their profile information after their home study is approved. The information is chosen by them to reflect their family life and home. The profile information also includes a couple's hope for a match, their preference for openness, and a letter of introduction. Once birthparents have selected a family, a meeting will be set up between the two parties with Catholic Charities' assistance. If the match moves forward, the two parties will then decide where and when to continue contact.

Questions are welcome. Please feel free to call us!

Fort Wayne Office

(260) 422-5625

(800) 686-7459 (toll-free)

South Bend Office

(574) 234-3111

(800) 686-3112 (toll-free)