

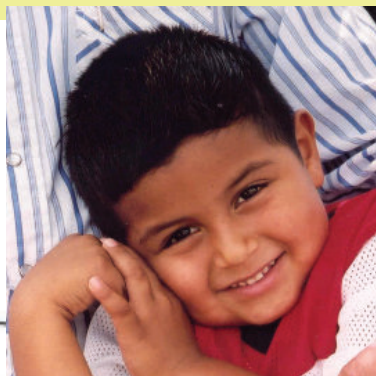


Adoption Statistics

January 1 - September 1, 2011

- 6 - ND Placements
 - 4- Caucasian
 - 1- African American/ Caucasian
 - 1- Caucasian/Hispanic/NA
- 4 - Intercountry Placements
 - 1 - from Serbia
 - 3 - from Ethiopia

Our staff is working with several birth parents across the state right now who are considering making an adoption plan. Three have already selected a family.



Adoption Celebration to be held

The annual Adoption Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, October 29th 1:00-3:30 pm at First Evangelical Free Church located at North Washington and 43rd Avenue in Bismarck. The program is scheduled to start at 1:30. The Adoption Celebration celebrates families that are created through adoption. Time is taken to recognize adoptive parents, birth parents, children as well as workers and advocates who bring these families together. Various awards are given, some of which include The Adoption Triad Award, which recognizes individuals involved in an open adoption, as well as the Multicultural Family Award. Anyone in the public is invited to attend. We'd love to have you join us! If you would like more information about the Celebration, contact your PPAS worker.

Contact Between Adoptive and Birth Families

While the trend has been toward more open adoptions, we do still have placements that we would consider semi-open (where pictures/letters are sent back and forth through the agency). The type of adoptive relationship is not as important as the way you choose to honor the agreement made with your child's birth parents. Often, adoptive families want to say they are open to anything in order to be chosen faster by the birth parents. However, the risk you run in doing this is that if you REALLY do not feel comfortable having four yearly visits with the birth parents, please don't agree to that.

If you do agree and don't follow through, several things could happen: 1) Your child will one day know that you promised his/her birth parents that you would allow visits and you broke your promise. This does not help build a trusting relationship with your child. 2) The birth parents feel betrayed and they voice these concerns to other birth parents who then won't consider adoption for their child because they feel that adoptive parents have not been forthright. How can they entrust the most precious gift in the world to someone they can't trust?

Everyone knows that new parents can be overwhelmed with night time feedings, lack of sleep, a barrage of visitors to thier home, trying to set up a whole new routine for thier lives, their jobs and their marriage. These are happy, exhilarating yet emotional, exhausting, stressful times. So having to think about taking time to write to the birth family or gathering pictures to send to them can feel invasive and over whelming. However, keep in mind if it were not for the birth parents you would not be experiencing the joys of parenthood. Some times adoptive families feel that it is probably too painful for birthparents to see pictures of their children or they fear that if they see this cute child they will want them back. If parental rights have been terminated, this is not an option for them.

(Continued to back page)

Contact (Continued)

Those who have been in the child welfare field for years can also attest to the fact that pictures are reassuring to the birth parents. They *want* to see their child in the cute outfits. They *want* to see them laughing and smiling because this shows that their child is receiving what they hoped for when they made the adoption plan in the first place: love, nurture, and permanence from a stable family. They *want* to see and hear about how much their child is loved.

Years ago, I recall a family who sent two pictures for the birth mom – one was of the child looking very sober and the other was a picture taken of this huge Christmas tree with the baby on the floor under the tree. The birth mom's comment was, "Well they have a nice tree, wish I could see the baby" and her comment of the other picture was, "He looks so sad, I wonder if he is not happy." Compare that to comments from birth moms who say "oh he looks so happy and well taken care of", "look how cute he is", "look how well dressed he is", etc. Which birth mom do you think feels better about her decision? On the opposite side of that I recently called an adoptive mom to request pictures and an update on their child and the ethical and moral response was, "After the gift she gave to us, how could I not share pictures and updates with her."

Your parents, siblings and friends may get tired of hearing you talk about the new baby, but the birth parents will never tire of hearing you talk about the baby, so take advantage of this and "brag" all you want to them. They will love it and will feel reassured knowing how much their child is cherished.

Please contemplate all of this when making your decision regarding contact with your child's birth parents, or if you already have placement, think about the commitment you made to the birth parents of your child.

Sharon Maier, PPAS Director – on behalf of all of the PPAS Staff

P's and Q's! (Purses and Quilts)

We recently had our first planning meeting for CCND's annual quilt auction, which raises money to support the PPAS program. We have decided to add another dimension to next year's event, we are adding purses to the auction! We are excited about this new event and would welcome any input and/or ideas on how to make it a success. If anyone in the Fargo area is interested in serving on the committee for the event, we would LOVE to have you. Please contact Sharon or Katie in the Fargo office if you have any questions.

Staff News

We welcome Danae Moran who is a social work intern in our Fargo office this fall. She is a senior at MSUM in Moorhead and will graduate this December. She is doing her internship with our PPAS Program as well as the AASK Program.

Help us "Go Green"

If you received this via mail, We ask you to consider receiving it by email. Please email Colette at cgauslow@catholiccharitiesnd.org to sign up for the email list. Thank you!

Pregnancy, Parenting and Adoption Services Staff

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Lisa Minette

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Kristal Huntley-Egemo

He Is Mine

I tiptoed into your room one night.
I watched you sleeping there.
Your tiny body looked so snug
Wrapped in peaceful slumber's care.

I thought of how you came to be
The child we'd longed to know.
I wondered at the sight of you:
"How could she let you go?"

Tears streamed down my cheeks as I
Felt the pain she must have known.
For I will have to let you go
Some day when you are grown.

A mother I might never meet
Had given me her son.
Yet, surely as you've filled my heart,
A piece of hers you'd won.

"How could she let you go?"
The question kept returning.
And in the depths of my own heart.
A question kept on burning.

"How can I ever let you go
When years have come and gone?"
I stood there by your crib until
The nighttime turned to dawn.

And as the sun peeked through the shades,
The voice of God broke through.
"I trusted her to give him life
And now I'm trusting you.

"To show him what is right and wrong,
to love him and to be
The one who teaches him the way
To come back home to me.

"He wasn't hers to give, you know.
And he's not yours to own.
I've placed him in your life to love
But he is mine ... on loan."

Valerie Kay Gwin
Chicken Soup for the Adopted Soul



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