
C O U N S E L I N G

& F A M I L Y S E R V I C E S

Counseling & Family Services Adoption and Single Expectant Parent Program Philosophy

Counseling & Family Services seeks to provide clients with appropriate, timely, affordable services to meet the present and long term needs of children and families. While these two programs are closely related, their functions and purpose are separate.

The agency wishes to provide *adoption services* that are specific to the adoptive request, yet broad in scope to best prepare families for the lifelong commitment of adoption. This includes helping you examine your motivation for adoption, develop knowledge of adoptive attachment, understand evolving emotional needs of adoptive children at different stages of life, and appreciate the importance of birth family connections.

C&FS believes that adoption is a service for children, not a service for adults. Our focus is on providing permanency for each child within a family setting that best meets their needs for home and family. We believe that the family is the primary unit of socialization for children. It is in this circle that children develop a sense of self, and are cared for physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually. It is here that they learn to attach and to care for others. Family stability plays a key role in this vital development, as children become stable and loving adults who can then participate fully and effectively in society. Adoptive parent preparation is based on agency sponsored-training and a home study. These provide an opportunity for you to incorporate the above goals with specific education on adoption topics that will enable you to more fully meet the needs of your family in the future.

Children in adoption have valuable and rich histories that are to be nurtured by adoptive families. Our adoption program works with adoptive parents and birthparents to develop a mutually satisfying level of openness for sharing of information or on-going communication following an adoptive placement. Adoptive parent preparation also includes extensive education regarding the many levels of openness in adoption.

Birthparent Counseling Services are based on one-on-one private counseling where women or couples have an opportunity to counsel through the many issues that challenge them regarding their parenting plans for the future. There are no marriage requirements or fees for birthparent counseling and meetings are held in the home, office or community. Our hope is to help birthparents identify their needs, better understand the potential parenting role, and help them make the best plan for themselves and their child.

Counseling includes an examination of options that surround single parenting or adoption. If you are a considering adoption, our hope is to guide you through the process, educate you on important elements of adoption and help you to make a thoughtful plan

that will be good for you as well as for your child. Some find that they are unable to work due to pregnancy complications. Under certain circumstances and by law a person considering adoption may receive some financial assistance with rent, utilities, food, etc. CFS can assist with this and help you meet these basic needs during pregnancy when planning adoption. Additionally, we understand that a final adoption or parenting decision cannot always be made within a prescribed window of time. In that event, we are able to offer you short-term care for your child where you retain all parenting rights while you participate in counseling to make that decision. While it is important that children achieve permanence as quickly as possible, a short-term care plan may be time well spent toward strengthening your decision regarding the best plan for you and for your child.

We recognize that on-going counseling and support services are instrumental in helping you through the post-placement adjustment. Consequently, we hope to maintain a counseling relationship with you to address any post-placement or adoption issues you wish to resolve.

Single parenting is another alternative that you may choose to pursue. Our hope is to work with you during pregnancy to help you prepare for this tremendous role, maximize your health and identify support systems in your life. Once your child is at home with you, we are able to refer you to the Multiple Services for Single Parent Program, MSSP where you can receive on-going support or counseling as your needs may dictate.