



a resource guide for families  
in Wisconsin impacted by  
adoption or out-of-home care



1-833-947-2777



JOURNEYS@CCLSE.ORG



@JOURNEYSWI



JOURNEYSPROGRAM.ORG



*"I just don't feel so alone."*

However you have experienced adoption or out-of-home care, our program is here to provide you with the support, education and information you need to keep moving forward. It is our hope that you too will know through the highs and lows of this journey that you are not alone. In this guide, you will find many resources and places to start, and I encourage you to reach out to us at 1-833-947-2777 or [journeys@cclse.org](mailto:journeys@cclse.org) for an initial conversation with one of our support specialists. We would be honored to get you started in the right direction.

*Christy Reppe*

Christy Reppe  
Journeys Program Coordinator  
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse



# Table of Contents



ABOUT US	4
EVENTS	5
MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORY	7
SUPPORT GROUP DIRECTORY	8
GIFTS PROGRAM	9
WISCONSIN RESOURCES	11
NATIONAL RESOURCES	18



# About Us

**Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse has been providing supports and services related to adoption and out-of-home care since 1999. Today, these services are a part of our Journeys program. The Journeys program is committed to providing quality support, information and education to any individual in Wisconsin who has been impacted by adoption or out-of-home care. This includes adult adoptees, reunified family members, birth/first family members, and the professionals who serve all of these populations.**

Services offered include:

- Support specialists across the state who can provide information and referrals
- In-person family fun and support events
- Online or in-person support opportunities
- Short-term case management offered through the GIFTS Program
- Educational workshops and conferences for individuals impacted by adoption or out-of-home care
- Online directories of professionals and local support groups by region
- Lending libraries with collections of books and DVDs
- Consultation, training and educational resources available for professionals
- Facebook page with multiple online support groups

# Events

One of our favorite ways to connect with families is through regional and statewide events. Both in-person and online events are always on our calendar.

Visit [www.journeysprogram.org/calendar](http://www.journeysprogram.org/calendar) to see what events are happening near you. You will find family fun events, educational workshops or webinars, support groups and conferences.





*"The knowledge gained here helps me and my extended family by giving us the tools, language and resources to deal with our circumstances."*

**-JOURNEYS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**



# Mental Health Professionals Directory

Visit our website, [www.journeysprogram.org](http://www.journeysprogram.org), to find a full mental health professionals directory representing professionals all across the state who have experience and training working with issues most important to individuals impacted by adoption and out-of-home care.



Rocky Payne, MATCCC/SLP/HP...

NEAREST WIAPS OFFICE

Eau Claire

TELEHEALTH AVAILABLE?

Yes



Brienne Shaker, LCSW

NEAREST WIAPS OFFICE

La Crosse

TELEHEALTH AVAILABLE?

Yes



Cameron Lee Small, M...

NEAREST WIAPS OFFICE

Eau Claire

TELEHEALTH AVAILABLE?

Yes








## Support Group Directory

The Journeys program maintains a list of statewide support groups designed for:

- Adoptive, Foster, Kinship, and Guardianship Families
- Birth Families
- Adult Adoptees

		
WI Adult Adoptee Support Net...	WI Birth Parent Support Netw...	WI Adoption Support Network...
TARGET GROUP Adult adoptees	TARGET GROUP Birth family	TARGET GROUP Adoptive/Guardianship parents
MEETING METHOD	MEETING METHOD	MEETING METHOD

VISIT OUR WEBSITE,  
[WWW.JOURNEYSPROGRAM.ORG](http://WWW.JOURNEYSPROGRAM.ORG), TO FIND  
THE COMPLETE SUPPORT GROUP DIRECTORY.





# GIFTS PROGRAM

Giving Incredible Families Tools for Success

The GIFTS Program is a short-term case management program for post-permanency families with a higher level of need to support permanency. It is a strengths-focused, trauma-informed program.

If a family is determined to be eligible for the program, a GIFTS Case Manager will work closely with that family for up to 6 months to assist in:

- Offering consistent, ongoing support and advocacy
- Providing resources and referrals based on the identified needs of the family
- Identifying family strengths and goals
- Individualized parent/caregiver coaching

TO REQUEST A FREE GIFTS CONSULTATION, FILL OUT THE FORM [THROUGH THIS LINK](#) OR THE QR CODE HERE:



*"This has been my primary  
source of support to take care of  
myself as a parent.  
I am so grateful."*

-JOURNEYS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT





# WISCONSIN *resources*

## ABC for Health



ABC for Health is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special needs, to health care benefits and services.

[www.safetyweb.org](http://www.safetyweb.org) / 608-261-6939

## Adoptive Family Travel



Adoptive Family Travel works with adoptees and their families to design heritage journeys to their birth countries, visit the sites, and provide opportunities for unique, authentic experiences.

[www.adoptivefamilytravel.com](http://www.adoptivefamilytravel.com) / 866-359-0995

## The Coalition for Children, Youth, & Families



The Coalition for Children, Youth & Families is a statewide information and support organization. They also partner with the Wisconsin Department of Children & Families and the Journeys Program to serve as the Wisconsin Family Connections Center.

[www.coalitionforicyf.org](http://www.coalitionforicyf.org) / 414-475-1246

# Child Development Center at Children's Wisconsin



The Child Development Center at Children's Wisconsin is dedicated to the care of children, from infancy through adolescence, with developmental challenges. We provide services directly or in collaboration with other pediatric specialists to provide high-quality, family-centered care, education, prevention, research, and advocacy.

**[www.childrenswi.org/medical-care/child-development-center](http://www.childrenswi.org/medical-care/child-development-center) / 877-607-5280**

## *International Adoption Clinic – Milwaukee*

Based in the Child Development Center, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's International Adoption Clinic offers services to families adopting children from outside the United States.

**[www.childrenswi.org/medical-care/child-development-center/international-adoption-program](http://www.childrenswi.org/medical-care/child-development-center/international-adoption-program) / 877-607-5280**

## International Adoption Clinic – Twin Cities



Providing pre- and post-adoption medical guidance (including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders evaluations) plus academic research to help mitigate the long-term effects of early childhood adversity.

**[www.adoption.umn.edu](http://www.adoption.umn.edu) / 612-624-1164**

## Respite Care Association of Wisconsin



Respite Care Association of Wisconsin (RCAW) is a non-profit charitable organization with a goal to promote, support, and expand quality, statewide respite care across the lifespan.

**[www.respitecarewi.org](http://www.respitecarewi.org) / 608-222-2033**

# State of WI Department of Children and Families



## ***ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***

Adoption assistance helps support parents raising a child with special care needs who meets the eligibility criteria for adoption assistance in Ch. DCF 50

Administrative Code. **866-666-5532**

**[www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/adoption/assistance](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/adoption/assistance)**

## ***ADOPTION RECORDS SEARCH PROGRAM***

The Adoption Records Search Program helps adopted persons get information about themselves and their birth relatives. Persons whose birth parents have terminated their parental rights in Wisconsin can also get information about themselves and their birth relatives.

**[www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/adoption/search](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/adoption/search) / 608-422-6928**

## ***KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PORTAL***

The Kinship Navigator Portal can be used by any relative caregiver throughout the state. Caregivers will answer a set of questions specific to their situation, and based on those answers, they will be provided with information about their eligibility for various programs. **[www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/kinship/navigator](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/kinship/navigator)**

## ***YOUTH SERVICES PAYING FOR COLLEGE***

We encourage youth and the caring adults in their lives to take advantage of the programs and services listed below:

- Education and Training Voucher / Department of Children and Families Brighter Star Program
- Campus Contacts for Foster Youth
- Opening Doors to College
- Additional Resources

**[www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/youthservices/college](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/youthservices/college)**

# State of WI Department of Health and Human Services



Because DHS programs vary by county, we encourage you to reach out to your local county DHS office for the most accurate information. **608-266-1865**

## *BIRTH TO 3 PROGRAM*

The Birth to 3 Program is a federally-mandated program to support families of children with delays or disabilities under the age of three.

**[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3)**

## *CARE4KIDS PROGRAM*

Care4Kids is an innovative program designed to offer comprehensive and coordinated health services for children and youth in foster care.

**[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/care4kids](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/care4kids)**

## *KATIE BECKETT PROGRAM*

The Katie Beckett Program is a special eligibility process that allows certain children with long-term disabilities, mental illness, or complex medical needs, to obtain a ForwardHealth card.

**[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp)**

## *CHILDREN'S LONG-TERM SUPPORT WAIVER PROGRAM*

The Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver Program funds community supports and services for children who have substantial limitations in their daily activities and need support to remain in their home or community. **[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts)**

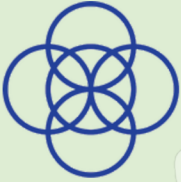
## *MENTAL HEALTH: CHILDREN*

A collection of services to young children, youth, and young adults with mental health challenges to help them meet their goals at home, at school, and in the community.

**[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh/children](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh/children)**

- Comprehensive Community Services
- Coordinated Services Teams Initiatives
- Youth crisis stabilization facilities
- Youth day treatment

## Waisman Center



Located in Madison, WI, the Waisman Center is dedicated to advancing knowledge about human development, developmental disabilities, and neurodegenerative diseases through research, training, services, and outreach.

[www.waisman.wisc.edu](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu) / 608-263-1656

## Well Badger Resource Center



The Well Badger Resource Center is a health information and referral service operated by the Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation (WWHF), in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

[www.wellbadger.org](http://www.wellbadger.org) / 800-642-7837

## Wisconsin Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Resource Centers



The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program collaborates with national, state and community-based partners to link children to appropriate services, close service gaps, reduce duplication and develop policies to better serve families. Visit the website for your region's contact information.

[www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/regionalcenters](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/regionalcenters)

## Wisconsin FACETS



Our mission is to provide and broaden opportunities that enhance the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities and their families, with emphasis on support for underserved families in the community. [www.wifacets.org](http://www.wifacets.org) / 877-374-0511

## Wisconsin Family Ties



Wisconsin Family Ties is a statewide not-for-profit organization run by families for families to empower and support parents of children with emotional or behavioral health challenges. It provides advocacy, support groups, information and referral, and education.

**Toll free for parents only: 800-422-7145**

**[www.wifamilyties.org](http://www.wifamilyties.org) / 608-267-6888**

## Wisconsin Foster & Adoptive Parent Association



WFAPA is a peer and volunteer-based organization that supports and advocates for foster and adoptive parents by offering training and support programs. They also work to create and support different legislative measures with representatives in Madison.

**[www.wfapa.org](http://www.wfapa.org)**

## Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative



WSPEI helps build positive partnerships between families and school districts resulting in shared decision making and student's learning.

**[www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org) / 833-879-7734**

*The Journeys program does not manage the websites, phone numbers, or contact information of the resources listed in this guide. Resources are subject to change by the organization to which it belongs. No resources are specifically endorsed by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of La Crosse. Annotations are taken from the organizations' websites.*





*"It's never too early or too late  
to reach out. We're here to help, and if  
we don't know the answers, we are  
happy to help you find them."*

-JOURNEYS PROGRAM STAFF MEMBER



# NATIONAL *resources*

## Adoptees United



Adoptees United is committed to a diverse board and organization that represents the interests of all adoptees, whether domestic, intercountry, transracial, or former foster youth. [www.adopteesunited.org](http://www.adopteesunited.org)

## Adoption Families Magazine



Adoptive Families, the award-winning national adoption magazine, is the leading adoption information source for families before, during, and after adoption.

[www.adoptivefamilies.com](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com) / 800-372-3300

## Adoption Learning Partners



Adoption Learning Partners offers meaningful, timely, web-based educational adoption resources for professionals, parents, adopted individuals, and the families that love them.

[www.adoptionlearningpartners.org](http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org) / 800-566-3995

## Adoption Network Cleveland



Adoption Network Cleveland is a non-profit educational, support, and advocacy organization for all those touched by adoption.

[www.adoptionnetwork.org](http://www.adoptionnetwork.org) / 216-325-1000

# Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition: New York



AFFCNY unites foster, adoptive and kinship care families, giving them a voice and providing support, information and advocacy.

[www.affcny.org](http://www.affcny.org) / 888-354-1342

## American Adoption Congress



Represents those whose lives are touched by adoption or other loss of family continuity. We provide education for our members and professional communities about the lifelong process of adoption.

[www.americanadoptioncongress.org](http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org)

202-483-3399

## Center for Adoption Support and Education



C.A.S.E. offers mental health services and educational resources for all members of the adoption and foster community. We are committed to nurturing, inspiring and empowering children, teens, their families and the professionals who support them.

[www.adoptionsupport.org](http://www.adoptionsupport.org) / 301-476-8525

## Child Welfare Information Gateway



Child Welfare Information Gateway promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, and related professionals as well as the public to information, resources, and tools covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, adoption, and more.

[www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov) / 800-394-3366

## Creating a Family



Creating a Family is the national adoption & infertility education organization with a goal to strengthen families through education and support for infertility patients, adoptive parents, and allied professionals.

[www.creatingafamily.org](http://www.creatingafamily.org)

## Dave Thomas Foundation



The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is the only public nonprofit charity in the United States that is focused exclusively on foster care adoption.

[www.davethomasfoundation.org](http://www.davethomasfoundation.org) / 800-ASK-DTFA

## Empowered To Connect



Empowered To Connect offers resources for adoptive and foster parents to help them develop strong and life-changing connections with their kids. Based on Dr. Karyn Purvis' work and research at TCU's Child Development Center.

[www.empoweredtoconnect.org](http://www.empoweredtoconnect.org)

## Foster Parent College



The Foster Parent College provides innovative, research-based, interactive online courses for foster, adoptive, and kinship parents.

[www.fosterparentcollege.com](http://www.fosterparentcollege.com) / 800-777-6636

## Mentalhealth.gov



MentalHealth.gov provides one-stop access to U.S. government mental health and mental health problems information.

[www.mentalhealth.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.gov)

## National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)



NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) / 800-950-6264

## National Association of Adoptees & Parents



The National Association of Adoptees and Parents (NAAP) is an educational organization that is dedicated to enhancing the lives of adoptees.

[www.naapunited.org](http://www.naapunited.org)

## National Center on Adoption and Permanency



NCAP's multidisciplinary team provides research and expertise that enables public and private agencies, organizational leaders, advocacy groups and other professionals to empower, strengthen and support all families.

[www.nationalcenteronadoptionandpermanency.net](http://www.nationalcenteronadoptionandpermanency.net)  
617-903-0553

## National Child Traumatic Stress Network



The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) brings a singular and comprehensive focus to childhood trauma. NCTSN's collaboration of frontline providers, researchers, and families is committed to raising the standard of care while increasing access to services.

[www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org) / 310-235-2633

## National Council For Adoption



National Council For Adoption's mission is to meet the diverse needs of children, birth parents, adopted individuals, adoptive families, and all those touched by adoption through global advocacy, education, research, legislative action, and collaboration.

[www.adoptioncouncil.org](http://www.adoptioncouncil.org) / 703-299-6633

## North American Council on Adoptable Children



NACAC promotes and supports permanent families for children and youth in the U.S. and Canada who have been in care—especially those in foster care and those with special needs.

[www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org) / 651-644-3036

## On Your Feet Foundation



Founded in 2001 by adoption professionals, adoptive parents and a birthparent, On Your Feet's founders focused on helping clients build a better life by giving them the tools they need.

[www.onyourfeetfoundation.org](http://www.onyourfeetfoundation.org) / 224-858-6933

## Rudd Adoption Research Institute



The mission of the Rudd Adoption Research Program is to advance knowledge about the psychology of adoption through original research; mentor the next generation of adoption-competent researchers; engage with community partners to incubate and evaluate innovative programs that have potential for national impact; and provide research-based information to influence practice and policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

[www.umass.edu/ruddchair](http://www.umass.edu/ruddchair) / 413-545-0547



*"with you for the lifelong journey"*

THIS BOOKLET IS PROPERTY OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE.  
CREATED JUNE 2021 & UPDATED OCTOBER 2023