



CSSM March 2020 Newsletter

Hello!

It's officially Spring and, wow, what an interesting year we're all having so far! All of us at CSSM hope each of you is well and actively attempting to "flatten the curve" by practicing social/physical distancing and excellent hygiene. To follow is how we are changing our services currently in order to keep ourselves, our adoptive families and expectant parents as healthy as possible.

- ❖ Staff in the main (Helena) office are alternating shifts so that most folks are at home, but there will be someone there answer the phone, complete necessary daily work and facilitate the Baby Boutique. We are asking that people not enter the building, but someone will bring out diapers, etc. to those who are in need of critical items.
- ❖ Social workers are working from home. Any calls made to those offices will go to voicemail, then the messages will be forwarded directly to the social worker. We are utilizing the Zoom application for adoptive parent "visits" that we typically do in person. So far, this has worked well, though clearly not ideal.
- ❖ Visiting with potential birth parents may require in-person contact, in which cases we will be vigilant with our cleaning, maintaining appropriate distance and good personal hygiene.

You may find yourselves wondering how COVID-19 might affect adoptions. None of us has ever been part of this scenario before, so in all honesty, much is unknown. However, at this time, we do not believe it will have any negative impact on facilitating adoptions. CSSM staff believes that it is highly likely we will see an increase in the number of inquiries by expectant parents (or those parenting and struggling to do so) due to the state of the economy. This of course is a double-edged sword, in that it means many people who are pregnant or parenting could be making choices out of desperation. It also means we may see more placements occur after a very slow period.

The Center for Disease Control is not currently able to offer guidelines or information related to pregnant women and newborns and the COVID-19 virus. It is still very new, and little research has been conducted. However, this study (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32180426>) looked at 38 babies born to women in China with COVID-19 and it does not appear that in any of those cases the babies had contracted the disease through intrauterine or transplacental means. From the study: "At this point in the global pandemic of COVID-19 infection there is no evidence that SARS-CoV-2 undergoes intrauterine or transplacental transmission from infected pregnant women to their fetuses." Also, apparently breast milk of affected women has not been shown to transmit the virus to their newborns. Yet, new mothers would need to take great care to not spread the virus through other means (droplets: coughing, sneezing). Ideally, she would be able to wear a face mask, have clean hands and be in a disinfected environment.

Please refer to this link frequently as our country moves forward through this pandemic and pray that more information will be known soon. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/pregnancy-breastfeeding.html>

We will provide more information as it becomes available.

We are praying for you, your children, your future children, expectant parents and all people around the world affected, physically, economically and emotionally, by this disease.

With love from the CSSM staff,

Twila, Jann, Michelle, Jenny, Senja, Stacey, Allison and Katie

REMINDERS:

- Don't forget to list Catholic Social Services when choosing your Amazon Smile choice, it makes us smile 😊
- CASE - the Center for Adoption Support and Education has some great educational opportunities. You can go to their website, www.adoptionsupport.org, and sign up for the newsletter (a link in the upper left corner)

Do you need some ideas for training? Here are a few links that will lead you to several opportunities via webcasts or videos, some of which are ongoing:

- www.adoptionsupport.org
- www.injoyhealtheducation.com
- <http://www.hunteryoga.com/blog/dr-dan-siegel-the-yes-brain-109/>
- <http://www.drdansiegel.com/>