

SUPPORTING CASEWORKERS

SWAN Connect facilitates communication between families, county staff and SWAN affiliate caseworkers by sharing information with all involved parties. SWAN Connect relies on caseworkers to actively participate in this collaboration by ensuring information is always current, accurate and available and by directing families to use the SWAN Helpline to request more information about waiting children.

Caseworkers can help SWAN Connect by:

- Keeping information about a child and family current with PAE.
- Writing strong, strength-based narratives and updating a child's picture on www.adoptpakids.org.
- Quickly responding to emails from the SWAN Helpline and notifying them about a family's current status also helps to keep the process working smoothly.
- Immediately responding to requests from child workers when a family profile is requested helps keep the system moving.
- It is critical that the family profile be provided to the child's worker in a manner consistent with the SWAN benchmarks.

For additional information or to request training about SWAN Connect, please contact your PAE coordinator at 1-800-227-0225.

“It helps a lot to have email inquiries sent out on my behalf because my caseworker is very busy.”

— a waiting family

SWAN Connect

Formerly Known as Pennsylvania's Seamless System



**A FREE service provided by the
SWAN Helpline and the
Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange**



INTRODUCTION

The **Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN)** is both a broad-based cooperative effort and a centralized information and facilitation service funded and overseen by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS). SWAN includes county children and youth agencies, juvenile court judges, foster and adoptive parents, private adoption agencies, and many others, all working together on behalf of children who need permanent homes.

The Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) was established in 1979 by the DHS to help county children and youth agencies find adoptive families for Pennsylvania’s waiting children. PAE serves the counties, SWAN affiliate agencies and the general public, and it interfaces with other state and national adoption exchanges. PAE is not an adoption agency, but serves to connect families who want to adopt with children waiting for a permanent home. Final decisions about adoption are the sole responsibility of the county agency with custody of the child.

SWAN Connect is a collaborative effort of SWAN, PAE, county children and youth and SWAN affiliate agencies to help build families by improving communication and bridging gaps between waiting children and waiting, approved adoptive families. ***SWAN Connect’s services are completely free!***

HOW DOES SWAN CONNECT WORK?

1. Approved adoptive families call the SWAN Helpline (1-800-585-SWAN) to ask about any child listed at www.adoptpakids.org.
2. The SWAN Helpline gives the approved adoptive family additional information about the child that is not on www.adoptpakids.org.
3. PAE coordinators work directly with the child’s caseworker to get additional details about the child that are not available on their Child Registration/Update Form (CY130).
4. Helpline reviews that additional information with the approved adoptive family.
5. If the approved adoptive family remains interested in a particular child after receiving additional information, Helpline will notify the child’s worker of the family’s interest.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The **SWAN Helpline** is a “warmline” for families, and it is staffed with SWAN technical specialists who receive calls from families interested in adoption and foster care. The specialists answer questions and send the families information packets on adoption. First-time callers to the SWAN Helpline are primarily prospective resource families seeking information about providing permanency to available children in Pennsylvania’s child welfare system.

The SWAN Helpline is the point of contact for resource and adoptive families throughout the permanency process—and beyond. Its specialists provide education, encouragement and follow-up to assess how families are progressing in their journey to becoming a permanency resource, as well as continuous support and resources to families who already have adopted or are providing legal guardianship or kinship level care.

SWAN Helpline supports SWAN Connect by providing in-depth information about available children to families with an approved family profile who are registered with PAE. This process promotes family engagement and facilitates communication.

PAE coordinators carry a caseload of children from their assigned region. They follow the status of each family referral from the SWAN Helpline until it is decided whether or not the family is selected for a child. They work with county and SWAN affiliate workers to assure that in-depth information on each child is available to families.

“I am able to find out pretty quickly if I have been selected as a possible match for a child. If I find out I have not been selected, I can move on and look at other children.”

— a waiting family

Families may reach the SWAN Helpline by phone at

1-800-585-SWAN (7926)

or by email at

SWANHelpline@diakon-swan.org
