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## *Letter from the Administrator*

*I would like to thank you for your interest in learning about becoming a Foster/Adoptive parent. We need you, in fact we need hundreds and hundreds of Foster/Adoptive parents just like you to take on the challenge of loving, protecting and nurturing children of abuse and neglect.*

*There are many children, especially teens and sibling groups in the permanent custody of Cuyahoga County who need true heroes in their lives, who can provide guidance and stability. Foster/Adoptive parents, which include relative caregivers and interested individuals can help meet that need and become a true hero in the waiting child's life.*

*I know that the decision to parent someone else's child or children can be difficult, especially combined with your own family responsibilities, but can you imagine what it feels like to wait for a permanent family? Children in permanent custody of Cuyahoga County at no fault of their own, need you to remain in their neighborhoods, schools, churches and near their friends. Partner with me to help support our children and families to build a stronger community and a promising future especially for our children.*

*If you need more detailed information about our program, please call the Recruitment Department at (216) 881-5775.*

**Remember, "What every child needs ... *family.*"**



# Welcome

## *Welcome to the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services*

We appreciate your interest in Foster Care/Adoption. The enclosed information will help you understand the programs, the agency, the foster home licensing process and the adoption approval process. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Recruitment Department at (216) 881-5775.

### *Mission Statement*

The purpose of the Division of Children and Family Services is to assure that children at risk of abuse or neglect are protected and nurtured within a family and with the support of the community.

To support the accomplishment of the Mission of our agency, we have developed the following imperatives to inform our decisions, drive our work and guide our steps.

### *4 Imperatives:*

1. Children who cannot be protected within their own home must be removed.
2. We must reduce the number of children who come into custody unnecessarily.
3. Children must be placed in the most family-like setting which meets their needs.
4. All children must have a time limited permanency plan.



## *The Need for Foster Care and Adoption in Cuyahoga County*

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Years ago, children who could not live with their families were placed in orphanages or institutions. These children grew to adulthood never reconnecting with parents, siblings or extended families. Years ago, families that took unrelated children into their homes were not licensed and received no funds to care for these children. Gradually, the foster care system was built through social service agencies like ours in Cuyahoga County. Laws were passed and foster care became regulated so that the safety of children could be assured. Social services began taking more and more children into custody for various reasons. At one time, children were placed at the Metzenbaum Center for Children—an emergency, temporary congregate care center. The last child(ren) left in June 1993. Our agency had to do a massive campaign to attract families to apply to become substitute families for these children until permanent homes could be found for them. Our need for families to become foster and adoptive parents continues.

A child in need of a temporary or permanent safe home comes to the attention of our agency by referrals from many sources such as neighbors, friends, family, teachers, doctors, nurses and other people in the community. Every effort is made to work with the family while keeping the child in the home. However, in some cases, children must be separated from their family for

reasons ranging from physical abuse, neglect, sexual victimization and abandonment. Sometimes, a parent is incarcerated or dies. When children must leave their homes, they often experience trauma which impacts the process of normal child development and affects their emotional well-being. Placement away from home is an interruption in the child's life.

Because being separated from one's family is difficult and disruptive, our goal is to place the child into a family setting without delay. Casework strategies are designed to provide services and resources in the family's own community that strengthens the family unit so that children can return home. If it is unsafe for children to remain in the family, and a relative is unsuitable or cannot be found, the children are placed in a foster home in the birth family's neighborhood. This is done so that children can remain close to their schools, friends, extended family, churches and places that are familiar. The closeness to their birth family allows for frequent visitation with the children.



# *Foster Care*

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## **What is foster care?**

Foster care is a protective service for children and families. It is the full-time, though temporary, care of children until their parents can resume their responsibility or if necessary until a permanent (adoptive) home can be found for them.

## **Who are the children needing foster care?**

Children needing foster care are children who have experienced physical abuse, neglect or abandonment; or due to their parent(s) being in jail or hospitalized. These children are of all ages, race and cultures. Some may need extra attention due to physical, developmental delays, emotional and/or behavioral issues. Because of the losses they have experienced, many of these situations result from extreme trauma and deprivation. Children will live with selected foster families until they can return home or a permanent (adoptive) home is found.

## **What do foster parents do?**

Our foster parents provide basic daily care and supervision in a loving, nurturing and stable environment. They act in the place of the parent, supporting the child at school, ensuring all medical, dental, social, recreational, cultural, religious and physical needs are met. Parents are expected to provide transportation and accompany children to medical and therapy appointments and sometimes arrange these appointments. Foster parents develop non-physical discipline techniques that are fair and age appropriate. They act as a child advocate and are part of the agency team and will participate in all child focused meetings at the agency or in the community. Foster parents support children in the visitation plan and supports the family in the reunification efforts or an alternate plan if the child cannot return home. Foster parents take training that increases their knowledge and skill level in parenting this very special population. Foster parents respect the culture, race and background as well as that of their families. More than anyone else they impact this system.

## **What are the requirements?**

A foster parent must be at least 21 years of age and have sufficient income to meet their own basic needs and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. You can be single or part of a couple who have had a stable relationship for at least 1 year. There are no educational or religious requirements and home ownership is not necessary.



## ***Foster Care (Continued)***

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### **Is there help to foster?**

The agency pays a daily board rate as a reimbursement of expenses. In addition, a monthly clothing allowance is added. A medical card is provided for medical, dental and therapeutic services. Mileage reimbursement is provided for necessary travel of our children. Support groups, scheduled visits and 24-hour access to the agency are examples of the wide range of supportive services available to the foster home.

### **What is the next step to begin the process to be licensed as a foster parent/family?**

Persons interested in foster care must complete 36 hours of pre-service training. In these 12, 3-hour sessions, information is provided about our programs, requirements, expectations, the home study process and very detailed information about the children needing homes and the issues facing them and their families. Sessions are held year round at various times. Small-sized classes promote group participation.

### **Prior to Placement Requirements**

Prior to having a placement in the home, foster parents will complete additional training entitled Foster Parent 101. This is a 6-hour class that will cover issues required by law about full disclosure, and a review and discussion of the major rules, regulations and policies regarding foster care.



# *Steps to Family Foster Care*

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## **1. Pre-Service Training**

Orientation to our programs consist of 36 hours of training divided into 12, 3-hour sessions. Sessions are offered at various times to accommodate all schedules. **NO CHILDREN ARE ALLOWED.** All spouses and live-in partners must complete pre-service training to be certified. Finishing your 36 hours of training does **NOT** certify you as a licensed foster parent or an approved adoptive home. Your training is good for 12 months.

## **2. Application Submission**

You will be given an application to foster and/or adopt children in the first training session to take home and fill out. The application and other paperwork given may be returned at any time during the remaining training sessions. At that time, you will have a 10-minute interview with support staff who collects the application and other paperwork. You must show proper ID, have the application notarized, get fingerprinted and submit your application and paperwork to recruitment staff. All household members over 18 must have proper ID and be fingerprinted. If you do not apply, your home will not be studied.

## **3. The Home Study**

**WE WILL NOT BEGIN YOUR HOME STUDY UNTIL AN APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED.** The home study can take 4 to 6 months and can start while you are still in training. You will have a series of visits from the home study social worker, and all household members will be interviewed. The social worker will inspect your home several times to ensure that safety site regulations are met and advise you of getting a fire inspection. The thorough study will require you to submit many types of documentation required by the Ohio Administrative Code. If the study is successful, your home can be recommended for licensing for foster care and/or approved for adoption.

## **4. Placement Expectations**

Time varies on how soon a child can be placed in your home. Information regarding the number, sex, age and characteristics identified by you are considered when a placement is needed. When a child needing placement matches your specifications, we will call you to see if you are available.



## *Adoption*

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### **What is adoption?**

Adoption is the permanent, legal transfer of all parental rights and responsibilities from one family to another family. Adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as parents whose children are born to them. It is the first step to a lifelong commitment of sharing your life with a child who is in need of a family that will keep him/her safe.

### **Who are these children?**

These are children who could not be returned to their families. Some of these children are older, or are part of a sibling group that needs to be together, some have physical, emotional or medical issues which require loving attention. Over 81 percent of these children are African American.

### **What are the requirements?**

Persons must be 18 and over to adopt. You must have sufficient income to meet your own basic needs and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. You can be single, married, divorced or legally separated with documentation. There are no educational or religious requirements and home ownership is not necessary.

### **Is financial assistance available?**

Yes, subsidies are available for families adopting children with special needs because of age, race, disabilities, medical or emotional conditions or being part of a sibling group.

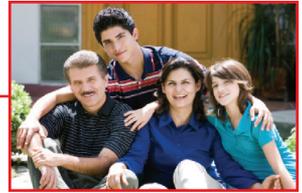
### **What is the next step to begin the adoption approval process?**

Persons interested in adoption must complete 36 hours of preservice training. In these 12, 3-hour sessions, information is provided about our programs, requirements, expectations, the home study process and the children waiting to be adopted. Sessions are held year round at various times. Small-sized classes promote group participation.



# *Steps to Family Adoption*

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## **1. Pre-Service Training**

Orientation to our program consists of 36 hours of training divided into 12, 3-hour sessions. Sessions are offered at various times to accommodate all schedules. **NO CHILDREN ARE ALLOWED.** All spouses must attend. In Cuyahoga County you can be single, married, divorced or legally separated. Same sex couples may apply, however, only one parent can adopt. Heterosexual couples must be legally married to adopt. Finishing your 36 hours of training does **NOT** approve you as an adoptive home. Your training is good for 12 months.

## **2. Application Submission**

You will be given an application to adopt children in the first training session to take home and fill out. The application and other paperwork given may be returned at any time during the remaining training sessions. At that time, you will have a 10-minute interview with support staff who collects the application and paperwork. You must show proper ID, have the application notarized, get fingerprinted and submit the application and paperwork to recruitment staff. All household members over 18 must have proper ID and be fingerprinted. If you do not apply, your home will not be studied.

## **3. The Home Study**

**WE WILL NOT BEGIN YOUR HOME STUDY UNTIL AN APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED.** The home study can take 4 to 6 months and can start while you are still in training. You will have a series of visits from the home study social worker (Adoption Assessor), and all household members will be interviewed. The social worker will inspect your home several times to ensure that safety site requirements are met and advise you of getting a fire inspection. You will be required to submit many types of documentation required by the Ohio Administrative Code.

## **4. The Approval**

If the home study is successful, your family can be approved to be considered as a potential adoptive family and the search will begin.

## **5. The Matching and Staffing Process**

An Adoption Assessor and the child's social worker will meet to discuss the current and future needs of the child waiting for a home. One or more families are identified to decide which would best meet the long-term needs of the child(ren). An introductory meeting will be scheduled between the child(ren) and prospective parent(s).



## ***Steps to Family Adoption (Continued)***

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### **6. Presentation**

The selected family is invited to the agency to meet with the Adoption Assessor and the child's social worker. Information and pictures are shared with the family. The family is given the opportunity to take information home and talk to family members about the prospect of adding a new family member.

### **7. Pre-Placement Visits**

To help transition, meetings are planned at both the child's (children's) current home and at the potential adoptive family's home. Future visits are planned by the agency. Visits usually increase from 1 hour to a half day, to a full day and eventually to weekend visits in the home of the new family.

### **8. Moving Day!**

Wow! The big day arrives and the child(ren) moves in with his/her new family. Social workers can visit weekly to support the move, offer assistance and/or services and help with the newly-formed relationships.

### **9. Finalization**

The new family, the child(ren) and the social worker go to Probate Court and meet with the Judge/Magistrate to discuss details about what adoption means for the family and the child(ren). Everyone gets an opportunity to participate. If everyone is in agreement, the adoption is finalized. CONGRATULATIONS!

### **10. Post Finalization**

New families are encouraged to use the agency's services such as training classes, support groups and referrals to community agencies throughout all of our neighborhood partners.

## ***Q & A for Relatives and Friends***

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### **If I am a relative of a child who needs care, can I be his/her foster parent?**

Yes. If the child is in the custody of Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS), you may apply to become a licensed foster parent to the child(ren).

### **I am a relative... do I have to meet all of the qualifications to become a foster parent to my relative's child?**

Yes. You must meet the same eligibility requirements as any other foster parent applicant.

- You must be at least 21 years of age
- Maintain your present marital status for 1 year to foster and/or adopt
- Have enough income to support yourself and your family
- Complete 36 hours of pre-service training
- Submit a complete application
- Satisfactorily complete a home study, required documentation and safety inspections
- Have proper ID (includes fingerprinting) for you and all household members 18 and over
- Agree to use age-appropriate discipline—no physical discipline
- Complete Foster Parent 101

### **Can I adopt a relative's child?**

Yes. If the birth parent's rights have been terminated by the court, the child is in our permanent custody and if you are at least 18 years old, you may apply to adopt. If your application is accepted and your home study is successfully completed, your family will be considered as a potential adoptive family.

### **If paternity has not been established, can I foster or adopt my relative's child(ren)?**

If the child(ren) is/are in the custody of CCDCFS, you can apply to become a foster parent. You cannot apply to adopt the child until the formal and legal process (by Juvenile Court) notification has terminated the rights of both parents.

Please note: If you are not a blood relative, you are considered an interested individual. You must go through the process to be a licensed foster parent or the child may be court appointed to your care.

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## ***Q & A for Relatives and Friends (Continued)***

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**I am caring for a friend's child. It is a court-ordered placement but I have not been certified as a foster parent yet... can I receive financial assistance?**

Not until you are licensed by CCDCFS. You may apply for TANF and Medicaid through Employment and Family Services. If you are in need of immediate financial assistance, speak to the child's social worker. As a non-relative, once you are licensed, reimbursement may be retroactive to the first day of placement.

**If I am caring for my friend's child, can I adopt him/her?**

If the child is in our permanent custody, you may apply to our agency to adopt the child, as long as you are meeting all the necessary steps to becoming an adoptive family.

**Can I adopt if I have legal custody of my friend's child?**

Yes. You must contact Probate Court at (216) 443-8988 and they will advise you of the process and the steps you will need to complete.

**If I have legal custody (or legal guardianship), can I become the child's foster parent?**

No. Legal custody means that you have signed documents assuming permanent care of the relative's child and CCDCFS is not responsible for the child's care. You need to apply for TANF and a Medicaid card through the Department of Employment and Family Services. You may also apply for child support through the Child Support Enforcement Agency.

**I now have legal custody of a child but want to become his/her foster parent instead. Will the agency take back custody?**

No. It is rare that CCDCFS would resume custody of a child once placed. You may petition Juvenile Court to decide if the child is at risk or if there is a hardship situation. The court will make the final determination.

**I am caring for a relative's child and I am in the process of becoming a foster parent. Can I get financial assistance before I complete the process?**

You may apply to receive TANF and Medicaid from the Department of Job and Family Services. Income Maintenance is located at 1641 Payne Avenue. Please call (216) 987-7000. If eligible, assistance will be provided until you are licensed and you begin to receive reimbursement from CCDCFS.

## *Am I Ready?*

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Circle “T” for true or “F” for false, for each statement below. This questionnaire helps you prepare and decide if you meet the requirements to become a foster/adoptive parent.

### **1. I reside in Cuyahoga County. T/F**

Adoptive applicants who are not licensed foster parents for CCDCFS must be residents of Cuyahoga County. If you don’t live in Cuyahoga County, you may adopt our children, but your home study must be completed by your home county.

### **2. I have enough room in my home for a foster/adopted child. T/F**

Each foster child must have his/her own bed. Foster and adopted children may share bedrooms with other same sex children. No foster child can share a bedroom with anyone 18 years and older except in stipulated circumstances (if you need more information about those circumstances, contact the Recruitment Department at (216) 881-5775). Children of different sexes can share a bedroom up to age 5. No resident in the home may move out of his/her bedroom to make room for the new child.

### **3. I am ready to have a safety inspection of my home done. T/F**

During the home study process, your social worker will conduct a safety inspection of the home. The home must be free of danger and refuse. You must have working smoke detectors, an escape plan of the house posted, fire extinguishers and pass a fire inspection by the fire department.

### **4. I am in good physical, emotional and mental health. T/F**

Being a parent is demanding! You must be healthy and emotionally stable to care for foster/adopted children. All household members must have a medical statement completed by a physician. Everyone over the age of 4 will be interviewed.

### **5. I have never had a case with an agency due to abuse or neglect. T/F**

If you ever had a case opened with social services and abuse and neglect were substantiated, you may not be able to become a foster/adoptive parent. This might hold true if your own child was placed in foster care and/or was adopted. Your application will be reviewed for a final determination. If you have any concerns or questions, please call us at (216) 881-5775 and talk with staff.

## *Am I Ready? (Continued)*

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**6. I have income that meets my family's needs. T/F**

During the process, you will be asked to provide proof of income to meet household and family expenses.

**7. I've been in my current relationship for 12 months or more. T/F**

Foster/Adoptive parents can be single, married, legally separated or divorced. To reflect stability in your situation, you must be in your current marital status for at least 12 months.

**8. Only married couples may adopt in Cuyahoga County. T/F**

All couples, opposite-sex or same-sex living together must be married to each other to finalize an adoption in Probate Court.

**9. No adult or teen in my home has ever been convicted of a crime. T/F**

Any adult living in your home that was convicted of certain criminal offenses cannot become a foster/adoptive parent. All adults 18 and over will be fingerprinted. If you have not been a resident of Ohio for the past 5 years or have been accused and/or convicted of a crime in another state, an FBI check will be done. You must also report any offenses committed by juvenile household members ages 12 to 18. Call the Recruitment Department at (216) 881-5775 if you have any questions.

**10. I am ready to begin the home study process now! T/F**

So you're not moving or having any financial, marital or medical difficulties. You see no major changes to your life in the near future, and if you are renting your landlord will approve foster children in the home and your home is in good repair. Have you also talked seriously to other family members about your decision? Okay, let's go...

*If you answered "TRUE" to all of the statements, you are ready to begin the process. If you answered "FALSE" to any statement, please call (216) 881-5775 and talk with the Recruitment Department staff for more information. We are there to serve you and to offer assistance.*



## ***Family to Family***

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The ***Family to Family*** Initiative was created by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to reform and improve child welfare practices across the nation by advocating for children to remain safely with their own families in their own neighborhoods. The initiative was also created for public and community agencies to collaborate to protect those children in their communities and provide services and supports to their families close to their homes. Lastly, the goal is to ensure that all children have permanency in their lives.

***Family to Family*** was adopted by Cuyahoga County in 1992 in consultation with national experts in child welfare.

### ***Family to Family*** believes:

- Children belong in families
- Children's safety is paramount
- Families need strong communities
- Public child welfare agencies need to partner with the community and its sister systems to achieve strong outcomes for children and families

***Family to Family*** is about building bridges that will enhance the lives of children and promote stability in families through community partnerships.

***Family to Family*** is committed to recruiting, developing and supporting foster/adoptive/ kinship families in the communities from which children are removed.

***Family to Family*** ensures that all children who come into foster care including teens and siblings be routinely placed together with families.

***Family to Family*** involves birth parents, foster parents and kinship families as part of the decision making team.



# Service Offerings

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## 1. Foster Care Reimbursement

A check (referred to as board payment or per diem) is issued at the end of each month for the child's care and needs. A foster care allowance is also provided to help meet with the child's clothing needs as well as reimbursement for mileage and parking fees when transporting foster children to and from agency-authorized appointments. Reimbursement payments (up to 40 hours of required training of each recertification period) are available. All foster parents must meet their training requirement on time.

## 2. Medical, Dental, Counseling and Therapy Needs

These services are covered by CCDCFS and/or Medicaid for all children living in foster homes.

## 3. Foster/Adoptive Support Groups

The clusters are neighborhoodbased support groups supported by the agency and our neighborhood partners, facilitated by foster/adoptive parents to provide fellowship, support, respite, education, training and fun for families. Please call Lois Roberts at (216) 881-4345 for more information about a cluster near you.

The Family Care Association of Cuyahoga County is another support group comprised of a network of foster/adoptive families. For more information about becoming a member, please call (216) 410-8028.

## 4. High Quality Training

The agency offers foster parents high quality training in order to enhance their skills and knowledge needed for the application process.

## 5. Pre-Placement Adoption Services

Once a prospective match is made, a plan is developed consisting of visitation dates for the child(ren) and family. Workshops provide subsidy information to families.

## 6. Post-Placement Adoption Services

Adoption subsidies are available for most children with special needs or circumstances.

*Community support is also available to all of our families through our 14 Neighborhood Partners located throughout Cuyahoga County.*



## *Helpful Terms and Descriptions*

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- 1. Adoption**—is the method approved by law to establish the legal relationship of a parent and child who are not so related by birth, with the same natural rights and obligations that exist between children and their birth parent(s).
- 2. Adoption Approval**—the recommendation by Children and Family Services resulting from the home study assessment process including, but not limited to: collected information, conducted interviews and the completed home inspection.
- 3. Home Study Resource Managers**—are certified adoption assessors and social workers who assess families who wish to foster/adopt, by visiting the home and talking to family members to complete the home study process.
- 4. Adoption Workers**—social workers/certified adoption assessors who are responsible for the needs and well-being of the child(ren) in permanent custody including regular visits with the child(ren).
- 5. Adoption Subsidy**—financial assistance for families who adopt children with special needs or circumstances. Also referred to as subsidized adoption.
- 6. Case Plan**—a goal-oriented, time-limited, individual plan of action for a child and the family which identifies problems to be resolved. The plan also details steps of resolution with the aid of supportive services within the family's community.
- 7. Cluster**—a network of foster/adoptive parent support groups for and facilitated by foster and adoptive parents with the intention of fellowship, mentorship, family fun activities and an education/training piece for peer problem solving and decision-making skills.
- 8. Custody**—when Juvenile Court removes a child from his/her legal guardian and gives certain rights and responsibilities to an individual or an agency. There are different forms of custody including: emergency, temporary, permanent and legal.
- 9. Family Assessment**—is the social review, study and preparation of a family who wishes to become adoptive/foster parents.
- 10. Family Service Worker**—the FSW is the social worker assigned to the family case managing the case plan, safety/risk assessments, services and supports for the family and children involved.

## *Helpful Terms and Descriptions (Continued)*

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- 11. Fingerprints**—a requirement for the purpose of all child placements including foster/adoptive families, related caregivers and interested individuals. Fingerprints are run through the BCI/FBI. Valid state ID is required.
- 12. Foster Care**—a safe, stable, loving and nurturing placement for a child until he/she can return home to his/her biological parent(s).
- 13. Foster Care License**—at the successful conclusion of your foster home study, your family is licensed by the State of Ohio as a substitute care provider.
- 14. Resource Manager (FHRM)**—an experienced social worker/adoption assessor who manages licensed foster/approved adoptive homes. They may act as a mentor, advocate, educator, coach and supporter.
- 15. Interested Individual**—a court-ordered placement of a child with a non-blood relative where a relationship may have been established.
- 16. Legal Risk**—a situation where an adoptive family cares for a child as a foster family because a motion for permanent custody has been filed which may make the child(ren) available for adoption. The adoptive family has an understanding that there is a risk that the permanent custody may not be granted.
- 17. Legal Custody**—court-awarded custody to an individual, however, this is not the same as permanent custody.
- 18. Neighborhood Family to Family Site**—community sites which partner with CCDCFS to work with birth families and to support foster families in area neighborhoods. In Cuyahoga County, they are referred to as Neighborhood Collaborative Partners.
- 19. ODJHS**—Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.
- 20. On-going Training**—is required in order to keep a foster home licensed and in good standing. 20 hours of training is required each year. The home is recertified every 2 years.

## ***Important Phone Numbers*** (subject to change without notice)

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Main Number	(216) 431-4500
Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline (24-hours)	(216) 696-KIDS (5437)
Customer Care Line	(216) 432-CARE (2273)
Recruitment Department	(216) 881-5775

### ***Foster Home Resource Management***

#### **Deputy Director**

Jacqueline McCray (216) 432-2642

#### **Senior Supervisors**

Lisa Stevens-Cutner (216) 432-3506

Kathleen Sullivan (216) 432-2625

#### **Recruitment Supervisor**

Melanie M. Zabukovec (216) 881-5972

### ***Permanency Support Services***

#### **Senior Supervisors:**

Beverly Torres (216) 881-4447

### **System of Care Supervisors (14 Neighborhood Partners)**

West Side/Far West Side (216) 771-7297

Hough (Catholic Charities Fatima Center) (216) 361-1244

Glenville (216) 268-3909

Miles-Union-Broadway (216) 441-2907

Fairfax/Woodland Hills (216) 707-6003

East Cleveland (216) 283-4400

Harvard/Union/Miles (216) 991-8585

Euclid (216) 731-7454

Friendly Inn Settlement (216) 431-7656

Parma (440) 887-4873

Lakewood (216) 529-6873

Garfield Heights (216) 283-4400

Cleveland Heights/University Heights (216) 320-9520



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## ***Information for Individuals Inquiring About or Applying to be a Foster Caregiver or Adoptive Parent***

Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin. The following is CCDCFS' STATEMENT OF POLICY of Non-Discrimination:

### ***Foster Care Program***

CCDCFS staff shall not deny any person the opportunity to become a foster caregiver on the basis of race, color or national origin of that person, or of the child involved; nor shall CCDCFS delay or deny the placement of a child into foster care on the basis of race, color or national origin of the foster caregiver or of the child involved.

### ***Non-Discrimination: Adoption Program***

CCDCFS staff shall not deny any person the opportunity to become an adoptive parent on the basis of race, color or national origin of that person, or of the child involved; nor shall CCDCFS delay or deny the placement of a child for adoption on the basis of race, color or national origin of the adoptive parent, or of the child involved. If you believe you have experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, please contact any of the agencies listed below:



- **CCDCFS' Customer Care Line**  
3955 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
(216) 432 CARE (2273)  
1-800-321-0322
- **The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services**  
Bureau of Civil Rights  
30 E. Broad Street, 37th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43266-0423  
(614) 644-2703 or 1-866-227-6353
- **Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services**  
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 506F  
Washington, DC 20201  
1-800-363-1019 (Voice)  
1-800-537-7697 (TDD)