

ADOPTION INFORMATION FACT SHEET

Description of the characteristics of children recently adopted or currently available for adoption

Lorain County—visit our web page and view our kids looking for a family:

www.childrenservices.org

- Generally our children available for adoption are between one (1) and eighteen (18) years of age
- A child may be part of a sibling group and/or placed with their siblings.
- A member of a racial/ethnic minority group such as African American, Hispanic, or Bi-Racial (multi-cultural)
- Children who may have special needs such as medical needs (short- and long-term), mental health issues, and behavioral needs
- Children who may require specialized educational planning

First Steps

Please join us for an orientation session. You will learn more information in detail about our program. In addition to hearing about our program, you will receive written information, our adoption policy, and an application if you choose to continue the process.

If you choose to continue and turn in an application, you will have a social worker assigned to complete a homestudy on your family. At the same time you will continue to attend the training, which is required.

Please consider making a difference in the life of a child and become a foster/adoptive parent with Lorain County Children Services.

There are other children also available throughout Ohio with similar characteristics. Also located in this packet is additional information on adoption in the Ohio Adoption Guide book

Homestudy Process

Becoming a foster caregiver is a joint decision between the agency and you, and involves many aspects. The homestudy process will include, but is not limited to the following:

- Meetings with an agency worker in your home (usually 4 visits)
- Interviews with all members of your household and the agency worker
- Discussions of the types of children you would be able to parent and what type of license you are applying for
- Review of reference letters, medical information, fire inspection information. Criminal background check information, Central Registry, SACWIS check, sexual offender/predator databases and BCII and FBI fingerprints required and as a precondition for approval for adoption
- Overall inspection of your home and environment
- Completion of training

Lorain County Children Services does not approve "Adoption Only" families, unless they have identified one of our children listed on the web page or they are a relative of a child in Lorain County Children Services custody. Families interested in our program are either foster or foster-to-adopt families. Families interested in "adoption only" can obtain a referral to a local agency that specializes in that program.

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International Adoption

Lorain County Children Services is not available to complete an International Adoption home study or placement. Referrals will be made to agencies that specialize in those services.

Subsidies

There are financial programs available for families who adopt children with special needs. One program is Title IV-E Adoption Assistance. This is a federal program that provides a monthly subsidy and medical card on behalf of eligible children with special needs. The amount of the payment is negotiated on a case-by-case basis, between the adoptive parent and the placing agency prior to the adoptive placement. Subsidies may continue until the child is eighteen (18) years old or until twenty-one (21) if the child has a physical or mental handicap. Children who receive this benefit are also eligible for a Medicaid Managed Care Plan. To be eligible, the child must be considered a child with "special needs".

For children who are not eligible under the federal subsidy program, the State offers a similar program that offers a monthly maintenance payment on behalf of the children. This subsidy is based on the family's income and does not include a Medicaid card.

Another subsidy which may be available is the non-recurring adoption subsidy. This subsidy is available for expenses directly related to the legal adoption of a child with special needs. Typical items covered are such things as attorney fees, court costs, adoption fees, health or psychological examinations or cost of transportation, lodging, etc. necessary for the placement. All agreements must be negotiated prior to the finalization. International adoptions are not eligible for this subsidy

The Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) program may be available for some adopted children with special needs. Adopted children in need of special services may be eligible due to previously undiscovered needs or because subsidies were not available prior to their finalization date. The service must be directly related to the child's need and beyond the financial means of the family. The program is accessed through the county of residence.

All of the above subsidies will be discussed in more detail with each family between the custodial agency and prior to an adoptive placement. Families who may not agree with the agency offer for a specific subsidy amount are always afforded the ability to request a state hearing.

Open Adoption

Open adoption is a voluntary agreement between the child's biological family and the adoptive family regarding on-going contact and/or sharing of information after the adoption. The opting to alter or discontinue this voluntary agreement is at the discretion of the adoptive family. The agency will comply with ORC Section 3107.62, 3107.64, and 3107.65 which governs open adoptions.

Individuals interested in Voluntary Surrender of a child (with no current incident of abuse/neglect) will be referred to Catholic Social Services or other local private agencies, and will be provided a list of our private adoption agencies.