

Dear Church Leader,

Protecting children from abuse and neglect is as important for our community as it is for us at Lorain County Children Services. One very personal way to make a difference in the lives of Lorain County's abused or neglected children is by choosing to become a foster parent. I'm sure you can think of members who would make wonderful foster parents. People who can whole heartedly and lovingly take care of another family's child.

We know that people who can do this are among us. We are asking you to help us find them, support them, and give our children the opportunity to benefit from them. They might be the people who lead your youth program or the people who watch the children during services. They may be the family that just joined your church or the parents who just became empty-nesters. We think that knowing they have the support and encouragement of their church community is important and might be the reason someone feels ready to take the next step.

Many of our local churches acknowledge or observe Orphan Sunday –November 13, 2016. Orphan Sunday includes **Stand Sunday** – a way for churches to stand up for foster children and children waiting to be adopted and support those interested in becoming a caregiver or adoptive parent. We have enclosed a sample of items you can request for your church (in print or electronically) to help call attention to the very real needs of our community's abused or neglected children.

We are especially promoting an upcoming Open House, hosted by our current licensed foster parents. People can come to our open house and hear directly from active foster parents about what it's like, what are the rewards, challenges and about their individual journey from licensing to taking care of children in Lorain County.

In the toolkit you should find:

- Steps to Foster Parenting
- Am I Ready? A Simple Self-Assessment Guide
- The Foster Care Funnel
- Business Cards
- Information on upcoming "Foster Parent Information Sessions"
- Sample poster and information related to Stand Sunday.



Please call me, Family-Based Care Supervisor, Julie Schoenlein at 440-328-2467 at any time to discuss how we can help you bring a message of foster care or adoption into you church. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julie Schoenlein