

November 15, 2011



Ohio Adoption Planning Group

A Public/Private Agency Collaboration Supporting Best Practices in Adoption and Permanency Throughout Ohio

CONTACT

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CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES ACROSS OHIO COME TOGETHER FOR OHIO ADOPTION ADVOCACY DAY: CHILDREN CAN'T WAIT!

Policy makers urged to invest in adoption services to prevent children from aging out of the system without critical family connections

Columbus, OH — Children Can't Wait and currently too many are aging out of the foster care system. This is the motivation behind today's third annual Ohio Adoption Advocacy Day at the Riffe Center in Columbus. The event called attention to the nearly 3,000 Ohio children in foster care waiting to be adopted and become part of their own forever families. Kicking off National Adoption Awareness Month, the event drew more than 200 adoption advocates, families, youth and elected officials.

The event created a forum for the Ohio Adoption Planning Group to urge Ohio leaders and policy makers to commit to a renewed and stable investment in adoption so that every child is connected to a permanent family, preventing children from aging out of foster care without critical family connections. In 2009 alone, 1,042 Ohio children in foster care aged out of the system at age 18.

"Over 1,000 young people will age out of Ohio's foster care system this year, many without family or economic support or connections," said Denise St. Clair, Executive Director of the National Center for Adoption Law and Policy, one of the event's speakers. "Lifelong commitments from loving adults or families promise brighter and more fulfilling futures for our youth in foster care. As a state, we need to focus our resources on programs to recruit, retain, and support adoptive families so that this promise can become reality."

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption works across the nation and in Ohio to raise awareness about children waiting to be adopted, while providing resources to agencies that move children into adoptive homes. Speaking on the importance of permanency, the Foundation's President & CEO Rita Soronen remarked, "We are fervently committed to assuring that every child waiting to be adopted has a safe, nurturing and permanent family – it is our responsibility and our promise to each of them."

During the event, the Ohio Adoption Planning Group presented State Senator David Burke (R-Marysville) and State Senator Charleta Tavares (D-Columbus) with Adoption Leadership Awards. The award is presented to elected officials who demonstrate a commitment to adoption and foster care issues.

SPONSORS:



Tuscarawas County Department of Job & Family Services—Caring for Kids—Guernsey County Children Services—Northeast Ohio Adoption Regional Exchange—Safely Home

About the Public Children Services Association of Ohio

PCSAO is a membership driven association serving Ohio's 88 County Public Children Services Agencies through the support of program excellence and sound public policy for safe children, stable families and supportive communities. We do this through member dialogue, active sharing of information, building partnerships, research, training and technical assistance, and advocacy at the state and federal level. Contact: Greg Kapcar, Legislative Director; greg@pcsao.org; 614-224-5802.

About the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies

OACCA is a statewide association of agencies that provide a wide array of services to children and families across the state. OACCA represents member interests to the General Assembly and other areas of the state government. We also take an active approach to federal and local issues that affect member agencies and the populations they serve. Contact: Mark Mecum, Associate Director; mmecum@oacca.org; 614-461-0014.

About the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is a national nonprofit 501(c)3 public charity dedicated to dramatically increasing the adoptions of children waiting in North America's foster care systems. Created by Wendy's® founder Dave Thomas who was adopted as a child, the Foundation implements result-driven national signature programs, awareness initiatives and advocacy efforts. Visit www.DaveThomasFoundationForAdoption.org or call 1-800-ASK-DTFA (1-800-275-3832) to learn more.

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Event flyer and featured profiles of waiting children attached

November is National Adoption Awareness Month



“Children Can’t Wait: Support Adoption!”

3rd Annual Adoption Advocacy Day

Hosted by the Ohio Adoption Planning Group

Tuesday, November 15, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Registration: 11-11:30 a.m. Program Begins: 11:30 a.m.

Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, Studio Theatre Lobby, 4th Floor, Columbus

Please RSVP by November 11, 2011 to Greg Kapcar at greg@pcsao.org or (614) 224-5802.

Sponsored by:



Tuscarawas County Department of Job & Family Services
Guernsey County Children Services — Safely Home

Ohio Youth Waiting for Adoption

These children are representative of the more than 3,000 children waiting for adoption.



Aschistian

Born December 1997

Aschistian loves all sports, from bowling and golf to soccer and baseball. He hopes to be a modern day hero, helping people by becoming a police officer, fireman or SWAT team member.

Keuntay

Born February 1999

Keuntay may be the next Leonardo da Vinci! This talented 12 year old, who has both an artistic eye and the mind of an engineer, enjoys taking gadgets apart and fixing them back up.



Jake

Born January 1999

Jake is full of energy and very smart! He loves games, puzzles and kids' toys. Jake also likes to work on things and is very proud of his workbench.



La Ronda

Born December 1994

La Ronda is a young lady whose eyes reflect the brightness of her future. "Ronda" is extremely artistic and her talent is seen through her nail art designs and hair styling skills. When not providing spa-like services, Ronda can be found knitting, reading, singing, and taking pictures. Ronda is a natural leader and has been the news anchor of her school's morning news program and the president of a youth advocate club in the past.



Bobbie

Born January 1995

Bobbie is a budding chef, thinking of different food creations she'd like to try out. Bobbie also enjoys singing, but is somewhat shy when asked to perform in front of others.



Kameron

January 1996

Kameron is a creative, engaging youth who loves the outdoors. Kameron's favorite sport is football and he hopes to play for the NFL. If that doesn't work he is interested in directing, singing or dancing professionally.



Lane

Born July 1998

Lane has a vivid imagination and often writes short stories. Lane says, "I like to play board games and jump on trampolines. I like to fish and be in a house with pets. Things I like: frogs, sketching, video games and myself."



Malayshia

Born July 1998

Malayshia loves pets of all sorts. She is a little shy and prefers the company of adults over children. Malayshia does not like mustard and will cleverly tell people that she is allergic so she does not have to eat it.

