

Notable News

Spring 2021

An exclusive publication for Mahoning County Foster Caregivers







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Editor Sandy Appel

From the desk of the President

Happy Spring Everyone!

We are happy to announce that as of August 2020, The Mahoning County FPA has elected a new Board of Directors and we have resumed monthly meetings! If there is one thing that I have learned from being a foster parent, it is that we cannot do this alone. The old saying "it takes a village to raise a child" holds even more true when raising foster children. That is why I was so excited to see the Mahoning County Foster Parent Association become active again. Our meetings have become an environment for Mahoning County Foster Parents to build friendships and support each other on this journey.

Another wonderfully surprising benefit of these meetings has been watching our children form friendships of their own. Being a foster child or a biological/adoptive child in a foster home can be challenging. It's typical for our kids to feel isolated when other children their age don't understand what foster care is or why a child can't live with their parents. By providing childcare during our meetings, we have arranged the perfect opportunity for our kids to form wonderful, relatable friendships. There are sometimes even tears when it's time to leave because they don't want the fun to end!

Our Fundraising Chair, Tara Bishop, jumped right into her new role by arranging several fundraisers. We were able to provide all foster children in Mahoning County homes a \$100 Amazon Gift Card for Christmas with the funds raised. We also blessed the Social Workers at MCCS with Dunkin Donuts Gift Cards as a "thank you" for Social Workers Appreciation Month in March.

Our monthly meetings are held on the last Monday of the month at 6:00pm, at The Gate Church located at 11836 South Ave. North Lima, Ohio 44452. In addition to speakers who educate us on fostering related topics, we have also had Executive Director Randall Muth speak at our October meeting. We hope to continue supporting the Agency, and we look forward to continuing to be a part of the Mahoning County Children Services Team.

Nicole Tsarnas

Email: tsarnasfamily@hotmail.com

FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

Nicole Tsarnas Matt Mager Amanda Rettig Tara Bishop

President Vice President Secretary Fundraising Coordinator

SPOTLIGHT

Waiting Children Seeking Adoptive Forever Families



Larry and Ja'Cary

Born December 2011 and

December 2012

Wanted:

A family that can give Larry & Ja'Cary the attention, acceptance and affection that they need.

A family who can teach the boys at their levels, in spite of their delays.

A family who has experience with developmental delays and autism or one who is willing to learn.

A family who enjoys seeing their children learn and celebrates their victories.

A family who believes in keeping the special sibling bond

that these two have.

A family who wants to provide legal permanency by adoption for Larry and Ja'Cary.

If you are interested in providing permanency for this child, please have your worker contact:



Karen Tesyk | Phone: 330.941.8888 | Fax: 330.941.8787 | Email: Karen.Tesyk@jfs.ohio.gov

AGENCY NEWS

Board Bills

Board Bills are due the 7th of every month. Remember these should be done electronically. Please email Kathy Thomas: Kathy.Thomas@jfs.ohio.gov if you haven't already gotten set up!

Emergency List

We are in desperate need of Emergency Homes for children ages 0 to 18! Please consider being on the Emergency List! For more information contact Valerie Johnson at (330) 941-8888 or Val.Johnson@jfs.ohio.gov.

Rule 5101:2-5-24 | **Foster home recertifications.**

Effective:

June 15, 2020

(A) All currently certified foster homes shall be recertified every two years from the beginning date of the current certificate. If a homestudy is simultaneously approved for adoption and certified for foster care by the same agency, the spans shall be the same for both programs from the date of the foster home certification.

- (1) If an approved adoptive home is subsequently certified for foster care by the same agency that approved the home for adoption, the adoptive homestudy shall be updated at the same time the home is initially certified for foster care so that the spans will coincide.
- (2) If a certified foster home is subsequently approved for adoption by the same agency that certified the home for foster care, the next adoption update shall be completed when the current foster care certificate is recertified so that the spans will coincide.
- (B) The public children services agency (PCSA), private child placing agency (PCPA), or private noncustodial agency (PNA) shall ensure that employees or persons under contract with the agency to complete foster home recertifications comply with the following requirements:
 - (1) The assessor definition in rule <u>5101:2-1-01</u> of the Administrative Code.
 - (2) rule <u>5101:2-48-06</u> of the Administrative Code.
 - (3) section 3107.014 of the Revised Code.
- (C) The recommending agency shall notify the foster caregiver of the date of expiration of the foster home certificate not less than ninety or more than one hundred fifty days prior to the expiration date. The notification shall:
 - (1) Identify any information or documentation that is required for the recertification.
 - (2) Be completed on the JFS 01331, "Notice of Expiration and Reapplication for a Foster Home Certificate or Adoption Homestudy Approval".
- (D) Following agency notification to the foster caregiver as required by paragraph (C) of this rule, if the caregiver fails to either reapply or voluntarily terminate prior to the expiration date of the certificate, the foster home certificate shall expire. If the family wishes to become certified after the expiration date, they shall reapply for initial certification pursuant to rule <u>5101:2-5-20</u> of the Administrative Code.
 - (1) If a foster home certificate expires because a caregiver has failed to reapply there are no rights to appeal pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code.
 - (2) Following the expiration of a foster home certificate:

- (a) If the agency has access to the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS), the agency shall enter the appropriate data into the system to recommend closure of the home.
- (b) If the agency does not have access to SACWIS, the agency shall submit a JFS 01317 "Recommendation for Certification/Recertification of a Foster Home" to the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) to recommend closure of the home.
- (E) If a foster caregiver(s) has re-applied for a foster home certificate at least thirty days prior to the expiration of a current certificate, an assessor shall complete a JFS 01385, "Assessment for Child Placement Update", ensure that the foster caregiver(s) remains in compliance with the requirements set forth in Chapters 5101:2-5 and 5101:2-7 of the Administrative Code, and determine the continued suitability of the caregiver to serve as a foster caregiver. The agency is to compile and review the following documents, in addition to completing the JFS 01385:
 - (1) The most recent JFS 01653 "Medical Statement for Foster Care/Adoptive Applicant and All Household Members" completed for the applicant and all household members. The agency may require a new JFS 01653 if the agency deems it necessary.
 - (2) The agency may require a report of a physical, psychiatric, or psychological examination or treatment of the caregiver or other household member in order to ensure the safety, health or care of a foster child. The examination shall be conducted by a licensed physician, psychologist, or other certified or licensed professional.
 - (3) Homes certified prior to June 1, 2020 do not have to comply with immunization requirements.
 - (4) Immunizations for homes certified on or after June 1, 2020.
 - (a) All household members in a home caring for infants and children with special medical needs are to have an annual influenza vaccine consistent with the recommendations of the advisory committee on immunization practices (ACIP), unless the immunization is contrary to the individual's health as documented by a licensed health care professional or for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions.
 - (b) All household members in a home caring for infants are to be up to date on the pertussis vaccine unless the immunization is contrary to the individual's health as documented by a licensed health care professional or for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions.
 - (c) Copies of the immunization records are to be placed in the file of the home.
- (5) The most recent fire inspection by a state certified fire safety inspector or the state fire marshal's office using the JFS 01200 "Fire Inspection Report for Residential Facilities
 - Certified by ODJFS" or other form used for a local or state fire inspection. The agency may require a new fire inspection prior to recommending the home for recertification if the agency deems it necessary to ensure the home is free from conditions which may be hazardous to the safety of a foster child.

- (6) The most recent JFS 01681 "Applicant Financial Statement.". The agency may require a new JFS 01681 if there have been any substantial changes to the foster family's financial situation.
- (7) The most recent annual well water test approved by the health department, if applicable.
- (8) If the agency has the ability to complete the search in SACWIS, the agency shall complete an alleged perpetrator search of abuse and neglect report history through the system for each foster caregiver and adult household member. If the agency does not have the ability to complete the search in SACWIS, the agency shall request and obtain a search of the system from ODJFS for each foster caregiver and each adult household member.
 - (a) A report with the results of the search shall be placed in the foster home record.
 - (b) This report is to be used to determine the continued suitability of the foster family.
- (9) The agency shall conduct a safety audit utilizing the JFS 01348 "Safety Audit" completed within six months prior to recommending a foster home for recertification, documenting that the residence continues to meet all safety standards. Any deficiencies noted on the JFS 01348 shall result in the completion of a rule violation report and a corrective action plan in accordance with paragraph (E) of rule 5101:2-5-28 of the Administrative Code.
- (10) The most recent criminal records checks for all foster caregivers and adult household members. Once a foster caregiver is certified, a new criminal records check shall be conducted, pursuant to rule <u>5101:2-5-09.1</u> of the Administrative Code, for the foster caregiver(s) and each adult household member every four years prior to recommending a foster home for recertification. If an existing resident of the home, including youth placed in the home, turned eighteen years of age during the current certification span, the agency shall have criminal records checks completed at the time of the next recertification and every four years thereafter at the time of recertification.
- (11) Documentation that the foster caregiver(s) has completed the required ongoing training pursuant to rule 5101:2-5-33 of the Administrative Code. If the foster caregiver has not completed the required continuing training, the agency may recommend recertification if the situation meets the specifications of the agency's good cause policy pursuant to rule 5101:2-5-13 of the Administrative Code.
- (F) An assessor's recertification of a foster home shall include at least one home visit and one interview with each member of the household (except foster children) based on his or her age and development currently residing in the home. This may be a joint interview or individual interviews.
- (G) If an agency receives a completed JFS 01331 at least thirty days prior to the expiration date of a foster home certificate, an agency shall follow the requirements listed in this rule to complete the assessment for recertification.
 - (1) At the completion of the assessment and prior to the expiration of the foster home certificate, an agency is to enter the required data into SACWIS documenting one of the following:
 - (a) Recertification
 - (b) Denial of recertification.
 - (c) Closure, based on receipt of a voluntary withdrawal.

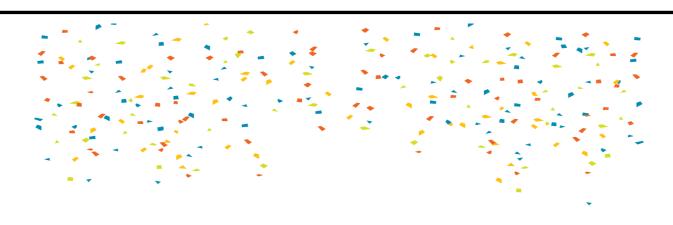
- (2) The effective date of a foster home certificate shall be the first day following the expiration of the previous certificate. For only those certifications in which paragraph (I) of this rule apply, the effective date shall be the date that ODJFS receives the recommendation for certification from the agency, which shall be no more than thirty days past the expiration date of the current certificate.
- (H) If an agency receives a completed JFS 01331 less than thirty days prior to the expiration date of a foster home certificate, the agency may complete the requirements listed in this rule if they have sufficient time and resources to complete the assessment and submit the requirements listed in paragraph (G) of this rule prior to the expiration of the foster home certificate.
 - (1) If the agency is unable to complete the recertification prior to the expiration, the foster care certificate will expire on the date of expiration.
 - (2) If the foster care certification expires, the agency shall, within ten days after the expiration date of the certification:
 - (a) Provide written notification to the caregiver of the following:
 - (i) That the foster care certification has expired.
 - (ii) That if the family would like to obtain foster care certification, the family must reapply for initial certification pursuant to rule <u>5101:2-5-20</u> of the Administrative Code.
 - (b) An agency shall enter the required data into SACWIS to close the provider because the foster care certification has expired.
- (I) The determination of the specific number, age, and gender of children the foster home is certified for is the joint decision of the caregiver(s) and the assessor, based on the caregiver's strengths and needs, and the physical structure of the residence.
 - (1) All placements in a foster home shall be in compliance with this determination and with the provisions of rule <u>5101:2-5-32</u> of the Administrative Code.
 - (2) Upon the request from a foster caregiver, the JFS 1673-A "Child Characteristics Checklist" may be updated as often as needed.

Five Year Review Date: 6/15/2025

MONDAY'S WITH RANDY

Randy will be having informational meetings every second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom. If you have not received the Zoom invite, please email Nicole Tsarnas, Foster Parent Association President at: tsarnasfamily@hotmail.com

WELCOME NEW FOSTER PARENTS



Jerimiah and Laryn Creighton—January 21, 2020 Jason and Megan Lewis—January 21, 2020 David and Kassandra Casto—March 4, 2020 Anthony and Kelcie Schiraldi—March 16, 2020 Kisha Pierce—April 2, 2020 Johsua and Josie Ginkinger—May 12, 2020 Jason and Allyse Hawkins—May 28, 2020 Gilbert and Marissa Wiley—September 18, 2020 Susan Mateo—October 7, 2020 Jo'Vohna Hughes—October 20, 2020 John and Kahley Speziale—November 12, 2020 Matthew and Lena Smith—December 11, 2020 Lakela Williams—December 17, 2020 Michael and Calliope Perry—January 13, 2021 Jeffrey and Brianna Rust—January 20, 2021 Edward and Dawn Wojciechowski—January 26, 2021 William and Diana Hartwig—February 17, 2021 Kara Glick—March 26, 2021 Adrienne Winlock—March 29, 2021 Jessicca Hall—April 13, 2021

Jalae and Ishmael Brown—April 26, 2021



Pastor Bob and Mary Noble

Pastor Bob and Mary Noble have been a huge asset to Mahoning County Children Services and will be missed. The Noble family was licensed with Mahoning County Children Services on March 26, 2001. Since that time, they have fostered and welcomed forty-six abused, neglected, and dependent children into their home. They provided unconditional love, safety, stability, and support to these children who needed a place to call home until they could safely return home.

When a child was reunifying with a parent or going to a kinship family, you could always count on Bob and Mary to have their vehicle full of the child's toys and clothes, sometimes it would take Bob and Mary two trips. Children placed in the Noble's home were truly loved and well cared for. Bob and Mary certainly worked cooperatively with their assigned caseworker and the members of the Children Services team for the child.

Their home was always beautifully decorated, warm, and welcoming to the foster children. If you never visited their home during Christmas, you missed out. There was a Christmas tree in each room with a different theme and the front yard had numerous blowups and inflatables. It was honestly very magical.

They are the founders of Fostering Dreams. This is an organization dedicated to helping foster children with the mission statement "It is our mission to broaden the experiential spectrum beyond that which foster parents or foster agencies can offer. Through our events, we strive to help foster children understand they are special, deserving, and to free them to dream, to hope, and to believe things can and will be better."

Mahoning County Children Services would like to wish Bob and Mary Noble lots of luck in their retirement from fostering and to thank them for their many years of service and dedication to the children of Mahoning County.

"The best kind of people are the ones that come into your life, and make you see the sun where you once saw clouds. The people that believe in you so much, you start to believe in you too. The people that love you, simply for being you. The once in a lifetime kind of people"



Nicholas and Carolyn Harvey

Nicholas and Carolyn Harvey have been exceptional and dedicated foster caregivers for Mahoning County Children Services for over 19 years. They have been a safe place to call home, a shoulder to cry on, a strong advocate for success, and a constant voice of encouragement for each child entering their home. Mr. and Mrs. Harvey have always been willing to work with higher needs children and provide them with the support needed to be successful. Whether they had to make frequent trips to schools, attend countless doctor visits, or have different agencies involved, they were always able to accommodate for the success of child a placed with them.

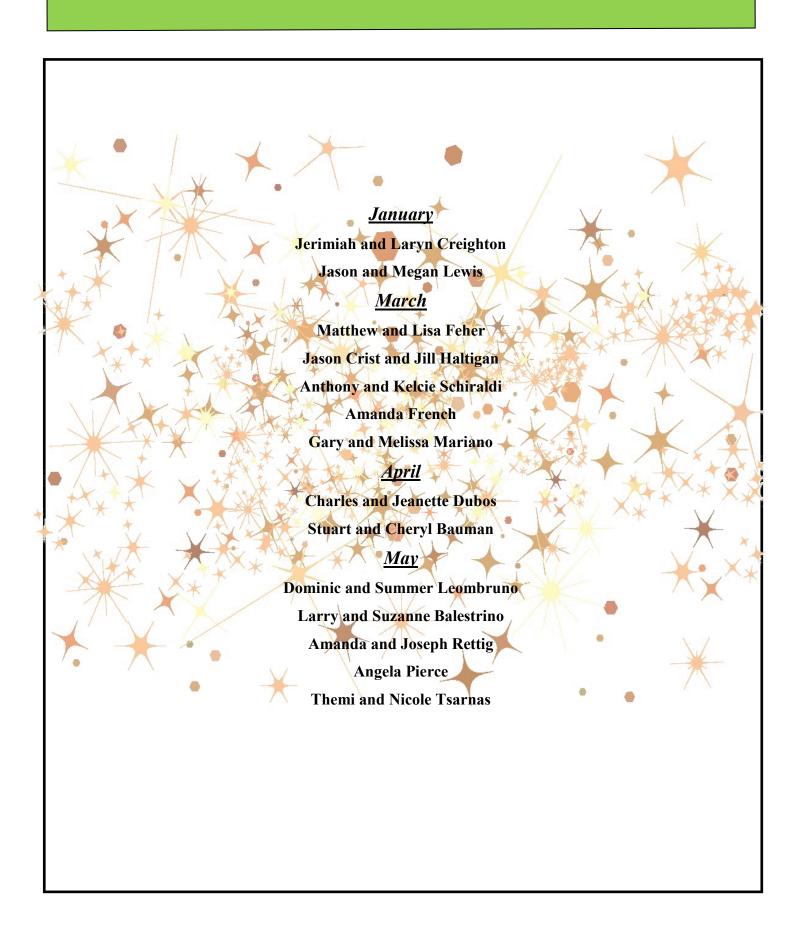
If you had the pleasure of working with Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, you knew they were always welcoming and an all-around loving family. They were also no nonsense when advocating for the children in their home. Mr. and Mrs. Harvey went the extra mile when transitioning children or supporting families. Even after children transitioned from their home, they continued to keep in contact and foster that relationship. During their time as foster caregivers, they were always eager to be a part of the Children Services team. Always sharing of their time, love, and commitment for the success of the children in their home.

Mahoning County Children services would like to thank Nicholas and Carolyn Harvey for their dedication and commitment to so many children and families of Mahoning County. You are truly appreciated and will be missed by so many of us.

"We must find the time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives"

- John F. Kennedy

ANNIVERSARIES



AGENCY POLICY

Mileage

- Mileage needs to be turned in electronically on the agency approved form by the 7th day of the following month. Each section needs to be filled in correctly including foster parent's signature and up to date information.
- Mileage recorded needs to be accurate no rounding up. Please refer to MapQuest when recording mileage (shortest distance) because this is what is used when mileage is being audited for accuracy.
- Only record one destination per line on the mileage form using addresses not names of locations:

 A.
 2801 Market St. to 222 W. Federal St.
 2.3

 222 W. Federal St. to 2801 Market St.
 2.3

 B.
 222 W. Federal St. to 660 W. Earle
 2.7

 660 W. Earle to 330 E. Scott Street.
 3.7

 330 E. Scott St. to 222 W. Federal St.
 1.2

• Receipts need to be submitted for reimbursement for parking and tolls.



EMERGENCY LIST REMINDERS

Important things to remember when you are on the Emergency List or are considering becoming an Emergency Placement:

- Must answer the phone or return calls to the agency representatives
- Must notify agency immediately if you are not able to continue to be on the Emergency Placement List
- Must take children sight unseen. A gentle reminder when you are on emergency, take whatever steps you feel necessary to be sure you hear your phone all times day and night. While we realize everyone is busy, it is important to know we are trying to get a child to the safest placement as quickly as possible, not answering the phone or by saying "no", you are impeding the placement of a child.
- Placements are often made in the dark. Be sure your house is well lit and marked to make it easier for workers to find.
- Reimbursement for an emergency placement is \$60 per day for the first 30 days. After 30 days, it goes to the regular daily rate.
- Have car seats and cribs/beds available for children you are agreeing to accept on emergency.

MINA'S CLOSET

OUR MISSION

Mina's Foster Closet is a non-profit organization providing new and gently used clothing, toys, baby gear, bookbags, toiletries, furniture, and other needed items to Foster Parents and Kinship Guardians.

CHANGE A LIFE TODAY

Mina's Foster Closet relies on the donations of the community and those who want to support our mission of blessing foster children.

Visit:

www.minasfostercloset.com

AGENCY PROVIDERS

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Please use Warren Fire or Conmar, Inc. Fire Extinguisher Company for your fire extinguisher needs.

Please Note: The Agency covers the cost of the yearly maintenance for one fire extinguisher unless more than one was deemed necessary by your local fire department, and this was previously approved by the agency.

CPR / FIRST AID TRAINING

CPR/FIRST AID Requirement

Remember to register for adult/infant/child CPR and First Aid once every recertification period. Certification is a Mahoning County Children Servives requirement for your foster care license.

You may access these classes online at the American Heart Association/American Red Cross or contact your licensing worker for more information.

All CPR/First Aid training must be an in person training. No CPR/Fist Aid cards will be accepted from an online training.

IMPORTANT ONGOING TRAINING INFORMATION

Training is very important to ongoing foster parents. Because of this, the agency strives to bring you as many relevant and informative trainings as possible. Our training schedule is set by the regional offices and the expectation is we will have at least 8 participants at every training.

Previous trainings have had to be cancelled due to lack of participants. Please try to attend if possible.

All ongoing training sessions for the spring session will be from 6:00—9:00p.m.

Please park in the garage and use the second set of glass doors. Look for the training signs on the 3rd Floor and follow them to the training room. Reminder sometimes it can be chilly in the training room, so you may want to bring a sweater or sweatshirt. Please dress comfortably.

As always, refreshments will be served.

TRAINING REMINDER

Please make sure when you attend a training to sign in and name the agency/county where you are from, otherwise, you may not get credit

REMINDER PLEASE DO NOT BRING CHILDREN TO TRAININGS

You can earn up to 3 credit hours for reading a book; however; you must contact your licensing worker for a book review outline that is required for training credit. You can also earn 3 training hours by watching *Despicable Me, Juno, Like Dandelion Dust* or *Meet the Robinsons* and completing the movie guide. You can contact your licensing worker about getting the movie guide. Movies can be rented from your local video store, Redbox, Netflix or your local library.

SIPS ask your licensing worker for SIPS.

These are supplements to help with completion of a minimal amount of training hours.

Each SIPS can only be completed once.

Online addresses: www.fosterparent.com and www.fosterparent.

Webinars are also a great way to get your hours. Akron Children's Hospital offers many informative webinars regarding children's health issues. Please note you can earn up to 12 hours in a 2 year time frame by reading a book, watching a movie, doing SIPS, or going online.

Trainings

Please remember that your 40 hours of ongoing training is due <u>no later than 30 days</u> prior to your license expiration date.

MAHONING COUNTY						
All trainings will be held at the Mahoning County Children Services' building at 222 W. Federal St., 3 rd Floor, Youngstown, OH 44503. You can register through E-track at https://e-track.teds.com/EveryOne/TEDSEveryOne.jsp or by calling your licensing worker. To show our appreciation, light snacks and beverages will be provided from the agency at our trainings.						
Monday, May 17 6:00—9:00 p.m.	948-2 Managing Grief and Loss as a Foster and Adoptive Parent Presented by Susan Darden Kautz	Monday, May 24 6:00—9:00 p.m.	923-FF5A-S Healthy Sexual Development of Children and Teens Presented by Bert Nero			
Saturday, June 26 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.	981-31 Lessons from the Life of a Transracial Adoptee: What Every Parent Should Know Presented by Kevin Hoffmann	Monday, June 28 6:00—9:00 p.m.	950-3 An Overview of Legal Issues for Foster Caregivers Presented by Christina Rose- brough Zody			
Wednesday, August 4 6:00—9:00 p.m.	949-2 Impacting Visitation for Success Presented by Anthony President	Wednesday, August 25 6:00—9:00 p.m.	923-77-S Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Presented by Cindy Wallis			

<u>COLUMBIANA COUNTY</u>					
All trainings will be held at Columbiana County Job and Family Services, Government Service Center: 7989 Dickey Dr., Lisbon, Ohio 44432. You can register through E-track at https://e-track.teds.com/EveryOne/TEDSEveryOne.jsp or by calling your licensing worker.					

TRUMBULL COUNTY All trainings will be held at 2282 Reeves Rd., N.E., Warren, OH 44481. You can register through E-Track at https://e-track.teds.com/EveryOne/TEDSEveryOne.jsp or contact your licensing worker.					
Monday, May 17 6:00 —9:00 p.m.	928-FF8A-S Engaging Primary Families	Saturday, June 5 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.	922-FF13-S2 The Caregiver's Voice: Being a Valuable Part of an Effective Child Welfare Team		
Wednesday, June 23 6:00—9:00 p.m.	989-20 Turn Out Parent Burnout	Thursday, August 5 6:00—9:00 p.m.	948-20 Managing Infertility Grief and Loss as a Foster and Adoptive Parent		
Wednesday, August 25 6:00—9:00 p.m.	941-22 Helping Children with Peer Pressure				

NORTHEAST OHIO ADOPTION SERVICES

~	d at the Warren Office, 5000 East Itps://e-track.teds.com/EveryOne/T		
Saturday, June 26 1:00—4:00 p.m.	923-10 Holy Chaos, Batman: Understanding and Addressing Risk and Behavior Presented by Brian Lowery	Tuesday, July 13 6:00—9:00 p.m.	983-19 Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: The Forgotten Child Presented by Cindy Wallis
Saturday, August 14 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.	926-FF10-S Defusing Crisis Sit- uations Safely and Sanely Presented by Ann Bagley	Thursday, September 12 6:00—9:00 p.m.	949-14 Lifebooks Presented by Cindy Wallis
Saturday, October 2 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.	949-59 Sibling Relationships in Foster Care: Keeping Them Connected Presented by Deanna Prezioso	Saturday, October 2 1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.	952-23 Preventing Placement Disruptions Before Placement Begins Presented by Deanna Prezioso

