

Adoption Network Cleveland 2010 Year-In-Review

(October 1, 2009 – September 30, 2010)



By The Numbers

- 4,156 calls were responded to through our Adoption Helpline.
- 608 families were assisted by Adoption Navigators.
- 540 people received support by attending General Support and Discussion Meetings, an increase of 9%.
- 277 volunteers completed over 2,700 hours of service.
- 38 searches were facilitated to completion.
- 14 youth in foster care were matched with Permanency Champions (mentors) and an additional 53 mentor matches were maintained.

Programs

- Oversaw cases of 128 youth assigned to Child Centered Recruitment workers through partner agencies, resulting in 5 youth placed in adoptive homes, 7 adoptions finalized, 20 permanency plans and 25 additional cases in process. A total of 425 youth have been placed in adoptive families since 2004.
- Offered assistance in the adoption of 37 children and youth through our Adoption Navigators.
- Held the teen discussion group *Get Real* for 174 attendees at a total of 32 meetings.
- Welcomed 27 birthmothers and nearly 50 friends, family and other supporters to the *18th Annual Birthmother's Day Ceremony* held on the Saturday before Mother's Day.
- Completed 573 contacts with post adoptive families through the Adoption Navigators.
- Welcomed 164 families to six social outings for families who have adopted youth from the child public welfare system.
- Held Post Adoption support groups for 91 parents and 139 youth.
- Supported 114 adoptive parents with educational advocacy.
- Held the *Family Ties* multi-part series for families who have adopted or are working on an adoption, with an attendance of 20.
- Trained 191 adoption professionals and parents through 26 Ohio Child Welfare Training Program sessions.
- Recruited 20 churches, salons and barbershops to become Ambassadors to recruit adoptive families for kin and sibling groups as part of Partners for Forever Families, an Adoption Opportunities Grant Partnered with the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services. Additionally, created a variety of marketing materials, including posters, street kiosks and fliers.
- Partnered on the Moving Hearts Gallery with Partners for Forever Families and Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services.
- Produced ten Digital Me's – a unique multi-media recruitment tool for youth in foster care waiting for families, especially appropriate for teens.
- Offered *Adoption 101: Where Do I Begin?* to 89 participants in four sessions throughout the year, an increase of nearly three times the number of participants.
- Hosted two adoption finalization celebrations for families who had completed adoptions, with 60 attending.
- Assumed leadership of the Post Adoption Cluster at the request of the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services.
- Hosted monthly Learning Community for Child Centered Recruitment workers to share successes, challenges and learning opportunities.

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Awareness

- Raised awareness of 5,587 individuals about our work through 56 presentations and resource fairs in the community.
- Featured in the media 26 times and mentioned an additional 45 times. Highlights include:
 - Two features about our Community Forum with Representative Marcia L. Fudge, including Channel 5 *Kaleidoscope* and Channel 3's *Romona's Kids* highlighting a youth panelist.
 - WKYC Channel 3 live interview with Betsie Norris regarding our legislative work and its connection to the debut of *"For the Life of Me"* in the Cleveland International Film Festival.
 - *Shaker Life* magazine: "A Lifelong Journey." Extensive interview with personal photos of Executive Director Betsie Norris.
 - Seven features on TV, radio and print in Cleveland, Akron and Columbus about our Birthmother's Day Ceremony – including FOX8 morning show interview with board member Val Czerwien and half hour radio interview with Betsie Norris.
 - *The Plain Dealer* and *cleveland.com* article by Regina Brett: "Adoption Network Cleveland Needs Your Help" regarding the last push for the William N. Skirball Endowment Challenge Grant.

Events

- Led effort to organize a community forum with Rep. Marcia Fudge on foster care and adoption with Partners for Forever Families.
- Co-sponsored *Dreams Come True*—Testimony and Praise Event at Eastside Christian Reformed Church.
- Held the *Creating Futures Benefit and Silent Auction* at the House of Blues, which was attended by 150 individuals and raised \$18,000.
- Gathered 100 attendees and raised \$5,200 at Freeway Lanes of Parma for the *Third Annual Lanes for Change* bowling benefit.

Advocacy

- Assisted at the Ohio Supreme Court Summit on Children about adopting children and youth from permanent custody.
- Worked to build relationships and identify sponsors for a bill supporting adoptee access to records in Ohio.
- Took a lead role in forming Adoption Equity Ohio and launching www.AdoptionEquityOhio.org.
- Hosted graduate level intern Kate Livingston, who researched Ohio history and issues related to adoptee access to records.
- Helped to plan and implement "Filling Family Portraits," a rally at the Ohio Statehouse to raise awareness about children and youth waiting for adoption.

Of Special Note

- Completed a three-year partnership as an investee of Cleveland Social Venture Partners on capacity building, including business planning, technology and marketing.
- Met a \$400,000 challenge grant from the Skirball Foundation to establish the William N. Skirball Endowment Foundation. (Thanks to all who contributed!)
- Hired three staff members:
 - Kelvette Beacham, *Youth Connections Coordinator*
 - Patricia Hill, *Program Director for Adults*
 - Laura Weber, *Volunteer and Event Coordinator*