



NOAS

FOSTER ♥ CONNECT ♥ SUPPORT

Connections for youth - Support for families



Providing current & former foster youth with lifelong
permanency and positive connections.

connections for youth – support for families



ABOUT NOAS

Our mission: We exist to inspire, develop, and nurture enduring support and connections for current and former foster youth and those at risk of coming into care.

NOAS was founded in 1978 to serve children and families. Our programs are built on our mission as we believe that all children and families have the right to access the supports they need to thrive. We strive to connect and empower children and families that embrace diversity, encourage healing, and celebrate resilience.

We offer a variety of different mission-driven programs to best support the children, young adults, and families we serve.

♥ **Foster Care**

♥ **IGNITE Foster Youth Mentoring Program**

♥ **Bridges for former foster youth ages 18-21**

♥ **Trust Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI®)**

♥ **CORE Teen**

♥ **Child Permanency Recruitment**

♥ **OhioKAN (Kinship & Adoption Navigator)**

♥ **Adoption**



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NOAS FAMILIES ARE...

There are many myths about who can foster or adopt.

Families who want to help are:

- People with or without children
- Individuals who are single, married, divorced, partnered or LGBTQ+
- People who rent or own a home
- People who have a steady income
- People who believe in being young at heart... no matter what the biological clock says

Families who want to help should:

- Be able to handle unexpected changes, stresses and challenges
- Have a strong belief in maintaining commitments made
- Have the ability to be consistent and set limits
- Be able to accept without judging
- Have a good reliable support network (ie: alternative caregivers)
- Have the time and flexibility required to meet multiple needs of child/ren (ie: appointments and or visits)

ARE THERE COSTS TO FOSTER OR ADOPT YOUTH?

NOAS does not charge fees to families who foster or adopt. That's right, when you foster or adopt through NOAS we do not charge fees for our training classes, home study (foster/adopt), application, matching services or post placement (foster/adopt) services. Some small costs that families often incur include obtaining local and state background checks, physical/mental health exams, a well-water inspection (if applicable). Foster parents are paid a daily rate which is intended to help cover room, board, and a stipend for their services. They are also paid for attending some training classes. Ongoing money is often available to support your adoption as well.



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BECOME A FOSTER PARENT

There are roughly 16,000 children in temporary care and not enough families to care for them in our community. As a foster parent, you will receive 24/7 support from our experienced team of professionals, ongoing education, monthly parent resource groups and the reward of making a difference in a child's life.

We welcome temporary caregivers from all walks of life! There are some common misconceptions about who can be a foster parent, but we are here to dismantle those: You DON'T have to be wealthy, married, heterosexual, a specific religion or race, or be experienced to be a foster parent! Learn more at our Foster to Adopt Curious Class.

BECOME AN IGNITE MENTOR

After seeing the urgent need for supportive role models, NOAS developed the **IGNITE Foster Youth Mentoring Program: MENTOR One Who Needs Someone**. The program matches both current foster youth ages 12-17 and former foster youth aged 18-21 with a healthy adult connection in their community.

Ignite mentors enjoy going on fun outings with their mentees and are able to meet the following requirements: Be 25-years-old, reside within the NOAS service area, complete 12 hours of training, able to pay a \$100 pre-screening fee, pass a background/driving record check and drug test and able to commit to volunteer at least six hours a month for one year.

BECOME AN ADOPTIVE PARENT

Our team is dedicated to developing and supporting lifelong adoptive families for children who cannot be reunited with their families of origin. Each year there are more than 3,000 Ohio children waiting for a forever family. Some temporary foster caregivers may be able to adopt foster children if they cannot return home and parental rights are removed by the court.

Our professional team is here to provide preparation, assessment, and ongoing support to families like yourself who want to provide a lifelong connection to children, teens and sibling groups in foster care. At NOAS, we pride ourselves in providing children from Ohio with loving families like yours!



THE FOSTER TO ADOPT PROCESS

Foster Care and Adoption is a BIG decision—it can be exciting, scary and happy, or unbelievable—all at the same time! We promise to explain the process to you, and help you every step of the way.

1. Express Your Interest

You've taken the first step! As you continue through the process, we encourage you to collect information from various sources. Check adoption websites and libraries. Ask questions...and if you don't understand the answers...ask again! It's important that you choose the agency best suited to meet your specific needs. We encourage you to move at a comfortable pace. We're here to answer your questions, and we want you to feel confident in your decisions. Call us at 800-686-6627 ext.126.

2. Attend Pre-Service Classes

One of the first and most important steps you will complete is pre-service training. Required by the State of Ohio, the classes are designed to educate you about the children in foster care, and to prepare you to parent them. We offer the classes throughout the year at various times and locations — schedules are on the NOAS website.

3. Submit Your Application

After completing all of the required classes, you will complete the application packet as completely and accurately as possible and return it to NOAS. If you have questions we are available to assist you. Ask your pre-service trainer or call our office.

4. Home Study

Once your application has been received, a NOAS social worker will be assigned to begin your Home Study (Family Assessment). The process, which usually takes 5 to 6 months to complete, is designed to help us gain an understanding of you, your family, and your environment. Throughout the study we will be working with you to determine what type of child (or children) will be the best match for you.

5. Approved Foster and Adoption License

Once you complete all the required steps to be a certified foster and adoptive family, you will be approved by the State of Ohio for two years. You can immediately take placement of foster youth in your home. Your NOAS worker will notify you when a child needs a temporary placement which can be days, weeks or longer. Those wanting to foster to adopt will proceed through the next few steps to be matched with a child or sibling group intending to be permanent. Recertification of the license will occur every two years as long as you are able to continue to take additional placements or until the children in the home are legalized.

6. Matching Process (Adoption Only)

Once your home study has been approved, you are ready for the next step. Keeping in mind the preferences you expressed during your home study, and working closely with you, your NOAS worker will assist you in the search to find a child(ren) for your family. Children are what this is all about! After your home study is approved with NOAS, families can learn about children who are waiting for adoptive families.

Placements are not made based on how long a family has been waiting, but rather through a matching process. Through a team effort involving both parents and social workers, a match is made by considering the child's needs and the family's ability to meet those needs.

7. Visiting (Adoption Only)

This stage begins after you and your NOAS worker have identified a child for your family, AND after the child's custodial county has selected you as the adoptive parent(s). A typical placement begins with a meeting at a restaurant or park, followed by an afternoon visit to your home, then builds to weekend visits, and overnight visits, until eventually the child moves into your home.

8. Placement

Both before and after a child is placed with a foster or adoptive family, NOAS staff are there to assist the family. Staff are knowledgeable about the process and sensitive to the feelings all family members experience. They are available to offer help, support and encouragement. Once a placement has occurred, a social worker will continue to visit the home at least once a month until reunification or permanency is achieved.

9. Adoption/Legalization

NOAS staff works to smoothly coordinate the legalization process between the family, custodial agency and the court, and are there to support the family on this most important day.

10. Post Adoption Services - We're a Phone Call Away

After an adoption is legalized, our agency's required involvement comes to an end, however NOAS staff remain available to families whenever there is a need—whether it is 3 months or years after legalization. A NOAS Worker can assist families in locating needed services, linking them with respite or just connecting adoptive families with one another for support.

The staff of NOAS is here to support you every step of the way!

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FOSTERING & ADOPTING

About the Children

How old are the children available for fostering or adoption through NOAS? NOAS places primarily, **school-aged children, ages 6 to 17**. These are children of all races, gender identity, orientation, and expression. Younger children can be placed if you are willing to take a temporary placement or sibling group.

What do you consider special needs? The children NOAS serves have had traumatic life experiences that may have impacted development. They have been removed temporarily or permanently from their home. It is important to maintain sibling relationships and place together when possible. Some may have mental health, behavioral, and learning challenges that require assistance.

Where do the children come from? The waiting children are in the custody of children services agencies and reside in foster homes, group homes or residential treatment centers throughout the state of Ohio.

Can the biological parents take the child back? No. If a child is in permanent custody, the parents can not take the child back as the courts have permanently severed parental rights. If a child is in temporary custody, the goal is reunification to the parent(s).

The Ohio Adoption Photo Listing web page is fosterandadopt.jfs.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/ofc/adoption/adoption-photolist

About the Families

I have fostered and/or adopted through another agency in the past. Can I work with NOAS? You can transfer your approved home study to NOAS. To start the process we will request that you sign a release of information so we can have access to your records. You can only be licensed with one agency at a time.

How long from classes to placement? Once an application is received we have up to 6 months to complete a home study. Foster placements are typically urgent and happen more quickly whereas adoptive placements are more planful and take more time.

If I work outside the home, can I still foster/adopt? Yes; however a flexible schedule is essential for taking a child to required appointments, etc. If child care is needed, it is the responsibility of the foster/adoptive parent.



QUALIFICATIONS

TO BECOME A FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION PARENT

Applicants must be at least 21 years old.

Applicants must have at least 2 bedrooms.

Applicants must have a sufficient & stable form of income.

Applicants must have a valid and good standing driver's license or a reliable plan for transportation.

Applicants must be in good physical and mental health as determined by a physician.

Applicants must be free from any drug or alcohol addiction or be in recovery.

Applicants must pass a criminal background check and an Alleged Perpetration Check.

Both parents must complete all training sessions.

16,000 CHILDREN

in Ohio are in temporary foster care and not enough families to care for them.

OVER 3,000 CHILDREN

in Ohio are in permanent foster care currently waiting to be adopted.



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