

# NOAS

## PreService:

## Orientation

## Learner Guide

### Learning Objectives

- Identify the goals of child protection
- Explain the difference between foster care, kinship care, and adoption

### Introduction

- Congratulations on starting your journey to becoming a foster, kinship, or adoptive family. One of the first steps in the approval process is completion of the Preservice training series.
- Two helpful websites:

It Take's Heart

Ohio Caregiver's Corner

The OCWPT Preservice Curriculum is a 24-hour training series. (NOAS Families – 25.5)

At the conclusion of the training series, you will be able to accurately self-assess if caregiving or adoption is the right choice for your family.

Each person whose name will appear on the certificate must take the preservice training in full.


The homestudy is the formal \_\_\_\_\_ the prospective foster or adoptive family.


The Homestudy is the first step in making sure the family is the right fit for the child. It is conducted by a specially trained caseworker, called an assessor.


## Elements of a Homestudy

The Homestudy involves you, with the support of your agency:

- Completing a paperwork packet
- Gathering references
- Having your home inspected
- Participating in interviews
- Getting a criminal background check

 There are some felony convictions that disqualify you from fostering or adopting. Other felonies and certain misdemeanor offenses require you to meet rehabilitation standards.


 Make sure you attend your agency's policy and procedures training. Every agency operates a little differently.


 The Homestudy is a \_\_\_\_\_ assessment process. You can view the Homestudy information that is not deemed confidential by the agency. There should be no surprises.

## Goals of Child Protection

The three goals of child welfare are

1. Safety
2. Permanency
3. Well-being

 The primary purpose of child protection is to protect children from harm. Children who need out of home placement to ensure their safety are always placed in the least restrictive setting.

 How do you think the child protection system did in its efforts to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for Shane?

## Foster Care, Kinship Care, and Adoption

How do foster care and kinship care differ?

How do foster care and adoption differ?

Which option seems to be the best fit for your family at this time and why?

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## Demographics of Children in Care

How many reports of possible maltreatment do children services agencies receive?

- There were approximately 142,000 reports to Ohio children services agencies in 2021 (ODJFS data dashboard, 1-21).
- In about 56% of the cases, it was determined that no further investigation was needed.
- While it is extremely important to report suspicions of child maltreatment, about half the time the report will not warrant an investigation.

There can be more than one reason a child is removed from their home.

#### Reasons children were removed in Ohio in 2021

- **Abuse** – Approximately 1,900 children were removed for abuse, including physical abuse and sexual abuse, domestic violence and emotional maltreatment/mental injury (ORC 2151.031).
- **Neglect** – Approximately 3,500 children were removed for neglect including abandonment, refusal to provide proper or necessary care, injury or threat of harm due to the omission of the parent.
- **Family Issues** – Approximately 6,500 children were removed for parental/family issues. This includes the child being removed for any of the following: parental drug or alcohol abuse, inadequate family housing, the inability for a parent to cope with their ongoing mental health concerns and the incarceration or death of a parent. A high percentage of these removals involved substance misuse by the parents.
- **Multi-System Youth** –The Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) surveyed agencies in 2021 and found that 24% of children in care were diverted from juvenile corrections (9.3%), or entered care primarily due to a behavioral health need (12.1%) or developmental/intellectual disabilities (2.4%) (PCSAO, 2022).

There are many reasons children come into care. **Parental/family** issues are the most common. **Substance misuse** is a factor in many cases.

#### How many children are in care?

- There were over 15,300 children in care in Ohio as of January 2021
- About 67% were in temporary care of the agency, most likely with a goal of reunification.
- About 23% were in permanent custody of the agency, which means they are legally free for adoption.

- About 4% were in a Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA). PPLA is an option for older youth for whom neither adoption nor reunification is a good option.

#### Type of care


- About 54% were in foster care.
- Almost 27% were in kinship care; Kin are relatives or non-relatives with a long-standing relationship with the child or birth family.
- About 3% were in an adoptive placement.
- Almost 13% were in a group home or residential center.
- Most children in temporary custody are placed in foster care, but a significant amount are in kinship care and this number is growing.


#### What are the ages of children in care?

- Under 1: 1,100
- 1-6: approximately 5,600
- 7-12: approximately 3,700
- 13-18: approximately 4,500
- The majority of children in care are school-agers and teens.

#### What are the races of children in custody?

- 55% White
- 31% African-American
- 13% Multiracial
- 1% Unknown/unreported


 The majority of the children in custody are white, but a significant number of children are Black or multiracial.

 It should be noted that Black and multiracial children are represented at much higher rates in the child protection system compared to their representation in Ohio's general population.

### What are the needs of the children in care?

The needs of the children can vary.

- **Trauma** – Studies confirm anecdotal evidence that most, if not all, children in care have experienced trauma, and many of them have experienced multiple traumas. These trauma experiences can affect development, emotions, and behavior.
- **Mental Health** – Some studies suggest that more than 80% of youth in foster care experience a mental health condition or acute need related to trauma
- **Health Conditions** – Some children in care may have medical conditions or disabilities that will require specialized medical care or supplies, therapy, and educational services.
- **Education** – Unfortunately, children will move placements for a variety of reasons. It is estimated that with each move, they lose about 4-6 months of academic progress. Many of these children work below their grade level and require special education services.
- **Complex Needs** – Ohio is completing implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act, which reduces the number of youths in residential programs by transitioning them to therapeutic foster care. As a result, foster parents will provide care to children with complex emotional and caregiving needs.
- **Crossover Youth** – Youth who are involved in both the child protection and juvenile justice systems are often referred to as crossover youth. It is estimated that up to 29% of children involved in the child protection system also have cases in the juvenile justice system.

 The majority of children in care have had **significant traumatic experiences** that have led to complex needs. In addition, children who historically would have been placed in juvenile detention centers and residential centers are now being placed in foster care.

### What are the strengths of children in care?

- Many children who have experienced trauma have developed strengths to help them get through the trauma.
- These include problem solving skills and the ability to read people and sense threat.
- Children who are resilient and have had support and assistance in processing trauma may be able to make meaning of their trauma and use the experience to create positive outcomes for themselves.
- All children have personal strengths. The child's worker will help you identify, and support, the strengths of the child placed in your home.

How many children leave care and where do they go?

- 7,600 children were discharged from children services in the calendar year 2021
- Approximately 42% were reunified with their primary family
- Approximately 30% were placed in guardianship or went to live with other kin
- Approximately 14% were adopted
- Approximately 9% were emancipated (transitioned out of care)



1. In over 50% of the cases, it was determined that no further \_\_\_\_\_ was needed.
2. There are many reasons children come into care, including alcohol and drug use by youth. \_\_\_\_\_ is a factor in many cases.
3. Most children in temporary custody of the agency are placed in foster care \_\_\_\_\_ but a significant amount are in kinship care.
4. Most children in care are school-agers and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A significant number of children in care are Black or multiracial. Children of color are \_\_\_\_\_ in the child protection system.
6. Most children in care have had significant \_\_\_\_\_ experiences that have led to complex needs.
7. All children in care have personal \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Most children are \_\_\_\_\_ into the care of the primary family or kin.





### **Resources**

Caregiver's Corner: <https://ocwtpcaregiverscorner.weebly.com/>

ODJFS It Takes Heart: <https://fosterandadopt.jfs.ohio.gov/>

Child Welfare Information Gateway: How Do I Become a Foster Parent?

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/resourcesfosterfamilies/how-to/>

Ohio Attorney General's Foster Care webpage: <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/fosterfamilies>

Kinship Family: These are my daughters - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTTE3EldpZE>

Maryann's Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsLshhETnYk>

Dickey family: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHEQUAO6NfQ>