

# Public Policy Agenda 2023-2024

The Public Policy Committee of Adoption Network Cleveland seeks improvements in Ohio's adoption, foster care and child welfare policies and to develop best practices for all parties involved in the process. Adoption Network Cleveland (ANC) will mainly focus

its efforts during the 135th General Assembly on:



**Sibling Connections:** Ohio law allows the relationship between a parent and a child to determine the relationship between siblings. Adopted children are legally severed from their siblings and it is unclear whether permanent custody ends a sibling relationship. Although federal and state law requires children in foster care be allowed to remain in contact and visit with their siblings, this right does not extend into adoption and can be withheld by caseworkers without direct judicial consideration. ANC believes siblings should be a source of comfort and stability to children as their relationships to the adults in their lives change, and we are committed to promoting policies to promote and support sibling rights, education of child welfare professionals regarding the importance of siblings, and additional oversight.

**Child Welfare Funding:** As human services budgets continue to be strained, ANC remains committed to identifying and supporting creative ways to protect and grow services and support for adoptive and foster families, kinship caregivers, and youth. We seek to encourage kinship care as this is often the best way to promote stability and the least disruption for children in need of out of home care.

**Ethical and Equitable Practices:** ANC believes that personal growth and adjustment are enhanced where ongoing, cooperative, and trusting relationships are developed for all parties in adoption, kinship, assisted reproduction, and child welfare situations where each party's rights and interests are safeguarded throughout the process. Adoption Network Cleveland will continue to seek ways to promote balanced and respectful practices, with a racial equity lens and attention to policy that balances the rights of birth and adoptive parents with a focus on the best interest of the child involved, into the adulthood of that child.

**About Adoption Network Cleveland:** Adoption Network Cleveland recognizes adoption as a complex, lifelong and intergenerational journey for all those whose lives are touched by it. Founded in 1988, Adoption Network Cleveland provides programs and services to connect and empower all members of the adoption triad (adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents), youth in out of home care, foster parents, kinship caregivers, siblings, and child welfare related professionals.



## For more information

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