



Public Policy Agenda

2015 - 2016

The Public Policy Committee of Adoption Network Cleveland seeks improvements in the process by which adoptions are facilitated and to develop best practices for all parties involved in the process.

The main areas where Adoption Network Cleveland will focus its efforts during the 131st General Assembly are:

Permanency: Adoption Network Cleveland advocates for laws that support permanency within a family for all waiting children and youth and for the removal of laws that are a barrier to permanency. This includes post-adoption support services and other ways to prevent disruption and rehoming, keeping siblings together, and empowering youth in foster care to be more involved in their own case planning.

Funding: As human services budgets continue to be strained, Adoption Network Cleveland remains committed to identifying creative ways to protect and grow services for adoptive and foster families and youth, particularly in the areas of subsidies to families and financial assistance for college. During this General Assembly, we intend to give specific attention to extending foster care to age 21, and State implementation of recent changes to federal law.

Openness in Adoption: Adoption Network Cleveland believes that personal growth and adjustment are enhanced where ongoing, cooperative and trusting relationships are developed among adoption triad members (adoptive parents, adoptees and birthparents). Adoption Network Cleveland will continue to seek ways to promote and safeguard openness in adoption, including through the use of post-adoption contact agreements, and to maintain contact between siblings who do not live together.

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, birthparents and adoptive parents), youth in foster care, foster parents, siblings and adoption professionals.

Awards

2015 The Eleanor R. Gerson Leadership in Social Justice Award
from Greater Cleveland Community Shares presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2015 Women who Excel Award's Progressive Entrepreneur
from *Smart Business* magazine, presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2015 Virginia Colson Award for Service to Families and Children
from the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies: OACCA, presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2014 Parent Group of the Year
from the North American Council on Adoptable Children, presented to Adoption Network Cleveland

2014 Advocate of the Year
from the Ohio Adoption Planning Group, presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2012 Champion Award
from the National Center for Adoption Law and Policy, presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2011 Adoption Excellence Award
from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, presented to Executive Director Betsie Norris

2009 Adoption Excellence Award
from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, presented to Adoption Network Cleveland



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