

PARMA AREA - JUNE 2013



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Connection

What if?

by Jeremy Kiner, Co-Director

Right now, in Cuyahoga County, there are more than 1,600 children in the custody of Children and Family Services. Of this number, there are roughly 600 children who have no identified permanent family and are eagerly awaiting adoption. What a staggering statistic. But to think, we're not talking about orphans half-way around the world. We're talking about right here in our own community.



The question is: What role should the local church play in responding to this problem? Should the local church be actively involved in finding a resolution? These questions have led me to some giant "What if's?"

What if every church in the Parma and surrounding area had one or two families that made the decision to adopt, or even foster, one of these kids? What if each church committed to simply building awareness of this issue among their congregations and neighborhoods? What if we did something? Anything. On the flip-side, what if... we did nothing?

There are approximately 80 churches or so in the Parma and adjoining communities. We know that the Bible's mandate to care for the fatherless and orphaned is clear and repeated, but what can we do right now?

I've listed below 3 ways that you and your church can get involved to help clear the backlogs of kids waiting for a home and family. I sincerely ask that you take some time to think and pray about how you can share in this responsibility. In our community, we have ample resources at our fingertips. The church has such a great opportunity to make a difference in many of these childrens' lives. But we must act now, not later.

Time will pass and, if no action is taken, many of these kids will age out of the system, or get placed outside of the county - away from friends, school, and comfort zone. My hope and prayer is that our local churches will rise up to the challenge and commit to helping these children find forever homes right here in their community.

These children need the community to care. County services and institutions have reached their limit of their ability to help. The 600 kids that remain in limbo are those on the margin. Let it not be said of the churches in the Parma and surrounding area that we did nothing. What if....

3 Ways Your Church Can Do Something Today

1. Share this information with your leaders and congregation. Building awareness is the first step.
2. Contact Bryan Stanton, Family Counselor at the Parma Area Family Collaborative, at 440-887-4881. Bryan is available to bring information and resources to your congregation to help support those interested in fostering or adopting.
3. Pray for these children, especially those aging out of the system, who may never have the hope of a forever family. They desperately need us to stand in the gap for them.

Call Us: 216-200-7030

www.ComAmb.org

Email Us: contact@comamb.org

DISPELLING THE MYTHS OF FOSTERING

by Bryan Stanton, Family Counselor, Parma Area Family Collaborative

The following are a few questions and answers that might dispel some of the common myths of fostering.

What are the requirements? A foster parent must be at least 21 years of age and have sufficient income to meet their own basic needs and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. You can be single or part of a couple who have had a stable relationship for at least 1 year. There are no educational or religious requirements and home ownership is not necessary.

Is there help to foster? The agency pays a daily board rate as a reimbursement of expenses. In addition, a monthly clothing allowance is added. A medical card is provided for medical, dental and therapeutic services. Mileage reimbursement is provided for necessary travel of our children. Support groups, scheduled visits and 24-hour access to the agency are examples of the wide range of supportive services available to the foster home.

What is the next step to begin the process to be licensed as a foster parent/family? Persons interested in foster care must complete 36 hours of pre-service training. In these 12, 3-hour sessions, information is provided about our programs, requirements, expectations, the home study process and very detailed information about the children needing homes and the issues facing them and their families. Sessions are held year round at various times. Small-sized classes promote group participation.

The Parma Area Family Collaborative is a grant-funded program in partnership with the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in Cuyahoga County. Part of our mission is to recruit and support local foster and adoptive families. To learn more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, please contact the Parma Area Family Collaborative at (440) 887-4873.



HEROES

Father & Kid Night

Friday, August 2nd 7-9pm

Fishing, games, & snacks!

Loaner rods & reels will be available. Dads, no fishing license required.

Hosted by:
**Lakeview Church
of God**

7555 York Rd.
Parma, OH 44130

Event & Activities are FREE!



Community Ambassadors Connection Newsletter is going digital. We will be sending out all future Newsletters by email. To keep receiving this Newsletter please make sure we have your email address on file.

Call (216) 200-7030 or email us at contact@comamb.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 27, Thursday - 8:15 - 10:00am

Parma Area Family Collaborative Meeting, 11212 Snow Road, Parma, Ohio 44129

August 2, Friday - 7:00 - 9:00pm

HEROES -FREE Father-Kid Night at Lakeview Church of God, 7555 York Road, Parma, Ohio 44130

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