



## Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference and Trade Show

November 13 – 16, 2011

Greater Columbus Convention Center  
Columbus, Ohio

# That's not my family tree

## Student Issues

Tuesday, November 15, 2011

2:00 p.m.

C 114–115

Dianne Kuntzman, board member, Portage County ESC

Cheryl Emrich, executive director, Portage County ESC

Linda Neiheiser, office of psychological services, Cleveland Municipal

### Policy Services

OSBA provides a variety of services to assist you with keeping your district's policies up-to-date and reliable to all administrators including:

**Manual development** — three levels of direct assistance by OSBA specialists, tailored to meet your district's specific needs

**Online services** — Web-based conversion of policy manual with links to other policies, regulations and the Ohio Revised Code

**Update and review services** — systematic procedures for keeping policy manual current

Contact OSBA at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA for more information.

Please complete an online conference evaluation either during or after the event at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/CC11Evaluation>

### OSBA Mission

*OSBA leads the way to educational excellence by serving Ohio's public school board members and the diverse districts they represent through superior service and creative solutions.*

### Ohio School Boards Association

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# **That's Not My Family Tree**

*Supporting Our Foster Children in Education*

**Student Issues: 2:00 pm  
Tuesday, November 15, 2011**

## **Speakers:**

**Dianne Kuntzman, Board Member  
Portage County Education Service Center  
Foster Parent, Portage County DJFS - Children Services**

**Cheryl Emrich, Asst Superintendent  
Portage County Education Service Center**

**Dr. Linda Neiheiser, Psychologist  
Office of Psychological Services, Cleveland Municipal Schools**

**Lisa Winkleman, Case Manager  
Portage County Family & Community Services**

**Daniel Kuntzman, Foster Parent  
Portage County Dept Jobs & Family Services—Children Services**

## **School Assignments that may trigger Issues**

- Family Trees
- Autobiographies
- Lessons pertaining to Genetics and inherited characteristics
- Mother's Day and Father's Day projects
- Holiday celebrations
- Baby pictures
- Birth data and medical history

**ATTITUDE:** By Teachers, Principals, Counselors, Staff, Schools

**AGING OUT:** Turning 18 years old in the System.

- Child is Legally an Adult
- Biggest challenge facing foster care youth
- In Ohio nearly **1500 youth Age Out** each year.

- Nearly 50% of youth end up in prison.
- A large number of former foster children become homeless, or substance abusers as adults.

## **WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO?**

Request and review student's school records and IEP's

Reassess whenever possible, due to many school settings and individuals involve / or lack of individuals involved in education process.

Encourage Foster Parents, Guardians, Social Workers, Counselors, and Educators to work together and to communicate with each.

Ensure that life skills/preparation for independence instruction is being offered to all foster care students.

**SCHOOLS can promote a sense of mastery and success within warm, secure learning environments. Educators have the opportunity to provide the stable basis that students in foster care need.**

## **Major Problems and Difficulties facing Foster Children in the foster care system and the educational system.**

In Ohio, over **12,000 children** in the Foster Care System at any one time.

Foster Children spend an average of over 24 months in care.

Ten (10%) percent will spend more than 5 years in Foster Care.

In Ohio, we have 88 counties and 88 different county systems.

What are the problems these children are facing?

New environment, new teachers, new schools

Result: Feelings of Loss, Grief, Anger, Frustration, Fear,  
Defiance, Apathy, Detachment of Feelings

Child may have been physically or mentally abused

Results: Depression, anxiety, denial, sleeplessness,  
Self harm, substance abuse, discipline issues,  
PTSD: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Frequent moves, repeatedly in system,

Academically Challenged: Behind in school, perform below  
peers in skills, lower test scores,  
failure to pass State Tests,

Discipline Problems, Suspension and Expelled from school

Foster children rate 24%

National rate – school children 7%

Very likely to have been retained

Lack of student information available to Foster Care System,  
to Foster Parents, and to School Officials