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## **Cuyahoga County Staff Collaborates with LAMB International to assist the Government of Kyrgyzstan**

The Department of Children and Family Services will join the Leadership Activating Ministry (LAMB) on a two week trip to provide humanitarian relief, training and mentorship in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on March 28th.

Two of the four co-founders of LAMB, Lynn and Ruby Johnston, provide training on leadership and child welfare all over the country. The Johnston's will accompany four social workers and a prosecuting attorney to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to provide consultation and training to the Kyrgyzstan government on how to build a child welfare system in their country. No child welfare system currently exists in Kryrgyzstan.

The 5 county employees attending the trip are, Catherine Brindza, Jessica LeCastre, Ian Lucash, Michelle Myers, of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, and Jennifer Wenderoth. The agency has granted each worker the time to go to Kyrgyzstan but each worker will pay his or her own expenses which includes, travel, food and lodging. Staff will fly from Cleveland via Moscow to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Agency staff will demonstrate how cases come into the agency, how they work through the intake department, how case planning is administered in the ongoing department, how appropriate placements are determined, following through to adoptions.

The agency will send one hundred Life Books translated in Russian. Life Books are therapeutic tools used to document important occurrences and memories in the life of a child. Agency staff will engage 50 Kyrgyz children with Life Book activities.

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### **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Department of Children and Family Services is to assure that children at risk of abuse or neglect are protected and nurtured within a family and with the support of the community.



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**The Cuyahoga workers also will conduct seminars with Kyrgyz officials, and child care professionals; work with children and older youth at three orphanages; and deliver food and humanitarian aide to disabled adults.**

**The LAMb group, a Christian social service organization, originally sponsored trips targeting missionary work, but decided to incorporate humanitarian, training and mentorship efforts to serve other countries. LAMb partnered with DCFS in 2008 on a humanitarian trip the Ukraine.**

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