



The Overcoming Hurdles In Ohio Youth Advisory Board

My name is Hollie Toth, and I am a former foster youth from Lorain County.

My little brother and I have always been extremely close. We are only 11 months apart, and growing up it was just me, him and my mom. My mother was unable to care for us due to her disabilities, and my brother and I were placed into foster care.

For two weeks, we were separated. I felt so alone and lost. Not only was I taken away from my mom, but I was also separated from my brother.

I was terrified that I would never see him again, and worried that he wasn't safe. We were able to go into another foster home together, and I was so relieved to have a little bit of normalcy.

It is so important to keep siblings connected because, as a child or teen in foster care, you are already going through a HUGE change and it's scary. Having a sibling with you makes this process a little easier, and you have someone to go through this experience with you.

I know that sometimes in larger sibling groups not all of the siblings can stay together, but please let them have someone to keep a little bit of home with them.

Thank you for taking the time to read over my testimony,

Hollie