The Department of Child Safety’s mission for 2017 was clear: Successfully engage children and families to ensure safety, strengthen families, and achieve permanency.

**DCS Vision:** Children thrive in family environments free from abuse and neglect.

Below are DCS highlights from the past year.

**February 2017**
DCS expanded CarePortal to include Maricopa County as well as Pima County to broaden resources that help vulnerable families stay together.

DCS presents Safety Science to the legislature, marking the department’s transition from a culture of blame to a culture of safety and accountability.

**August 2017**
Arizona implements **SAFE AZ** (Safety Assessment Family Evaluation) to focus on consistent child safety decisions through the promotion of family engagement and assessing caregiver capacities to manage safety threats.

Arizona is among the **first states in the nation** to launch a mobile app to better serve children and families in the field.

**December 2017**
Arizona has moved from last to first place relative to year-over-year reduction in children in out-of-home care. While most states posted a 4% average increase, Arizona experienced a 10% decrease from Feb 2016 to Mar 2017.*

* Casey Family Foundation

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**December 2016**
Open reports reduced from 145 per case worker to 22, an 85% improvement.

**May 2017**
Backlog of over 16,000 uninvestigated reports officially cleared from March 2015 and is 297 as of November 2017.

**July 2017**
1,300 DCS workers received tablets to connect families in crisis with services and reduce the amount of time spent on paperwork.

**September 2017**
The number of children entering the foster care system was safely reduced to 11,426, compared to more than 13,000 in FY 2015 and FY 2016. Quality placements were key in this safe reduction, as children re-entering care has not increased.

**November 2017**
Number of foster children benefiting from expanded kinship stipends tripled from 708 to 2,146.
Prevention Efforts

SENSE Program Expands to All of Arizona.

The Substance Exposed Newborn Safe Environment program, which provides services after the birth of a substance exposed infant, expanded to Pima, Yavapai and Pinal Counties in 2017. The program uses a coordinated Family Service Plan and aims to keep infants safe in their home while the parents learn new skills and work to maintain sobriety. Data from Maricopa County has shown 90 percent of families that completed the SENSE program had no DCS reports 6 months after completion of services.

Baby Box Program

The DCS Baby Box program aims to spread the word about safe sleep practices and encourages parents of newborns to complete a safe sleep training where they learn the ABC's of safe sleep: baby sleeps safest Alone, on their Back, and in a Crib.

The box, which can be used as a crib for by new parents, includes a health care kit and other essentials like electric outlet covers, pacifiers, hygiene products, and clothing provided by the community to help Arizona kids thrive. Nearly 400 boxes have been distributed to DCS-involved families over the past year.

Community Engagement

• From Apache Junction to Page, volunteers help Arizona's most vulnerable children know they are loved.

• Hundreds of foster families gathered to pack over 39,000 nutritious meals for malnourished children, shining Arizona's light around the world.

• Community partners joined with DCS to provide memorable experiences for Arizona kids in foster care.