

Connections for Foster Families

July 2016



Resources Parenting Corner Shout Outs Thank You Safety Tips Good News Stay Connected



Meeting Your Needs

It's been a scorcher of a summer so far! And for many foster families, summer adds an additional strain on the budget, and changes family dynamics and schedules. We understand how challenging this can be at times, so thank you for the tremendous sacrifice you make every day to open your hearts and homes to very needy and vulnerable children. *The sacrifices you make changes their lives forever.*

At the Department of Child Safety, we want to make sure that you have the resources you need to meet the needs of your foster children. We are committed to working hard to meet your needs.

Resources to Help Meet the Needs of your Kids



Free Back-to-School Backpacks

Sometimes it's the little things that make a big difference. A group of charitable organizations have joined forces to collect backpacks with school supplies for foster children. Families with a Notice to Provider from DCS are eligible to apply for new backpacks at www.azhelpinghands.org. Backpack Pick-Up Dates are July 23, 29 and 30 at Arizona Helping Hands in Scottsdale. For details, please visit their website or call (480) 889-0604.

A Tasty Tip & Dollar-Stretching Deal!

P.O.W.W.O.W.

(Produce On Wheels – With Out Waste)



Produce On Wheels – With Out Waste (P.O.W.W.O.W.) offers a wonderful opportunity to purchase large amounts of nutritious fresh-from-the-farm produce at minimal cost.

And guess what else?
The Programs Director of the organization is a foster parent!

Go load up for less.

For only \$10, you can buy up to 60 lb. of farm fruits and vegetables at various community locations statewide.

For more information, locations and schedule, please visit www.borderlandsfoodbank.org



Good News

Awareness is growing that there is an overwhelming need for foster and adoptive families in Arizona. Governor Doug Ducey has been wonderfully supportive.

Many doors are opening with community partners, including Arizona Cardinals head coach Bruce Arians and his Arians Family Foundation, Bashas', Johnjay & Rich (KISS-FM) and their Johnjay & Rich Care for Kids Foundation, Office Depot Foundation, iHeart Radio, Clear Channel Outdoor, KTAR, Bonneville Radio, and many other wonderful partners. As you are able, be sure to share the need for more foster and forever families for the thousands of children still needing someone to love them!

A great way to tell the story is by sharing the [foster video](#) and the many informational resources on our www.KeepAzKidsSafe.org page.

Foster Families Change Lives

Looking Back – Looking Forward



When Dimon Sanders came into foster care at the age of 8, she struggled to accept the foster parents who were trying to help her. "I was a troublemaker then," Dimon explained. Over the next six years Dimon went through 13 foster homes.

But that was then. "I had a lifetime of pain and issues from before I was taken away from my bio parents and while in the foster care system," Dimon stated, adding, "I had a lot of trust issues."

It was the stability of her relationship with Cynthia Dean, her Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) that helped Dimon move ahead.

Dimon began to trust again and be open to new possibilities. Her grades improved. At an after-school activity sponsored by the National Society of Black Engineers she met Apache Sanders, who came to talk with students about science and engineering. What began as a mentoring relationship grew and in 2014 Dimon was adopted by the Sanders family.

Now, as the reigning Miss City of Maricopa's Outstanding Teen, Dimon focuses on service to other children in foster care, including speaking to prospective foster and adoptive parent panels. "The coolest thing about panels are that I have an opportunity to give them a small glimpse of my life in preparation for their kids," Dimon explained. "I also love that I get to team up with my mom and volunteer with her!"

"There is no doubt in my mind that my path would be totally different if it weren't for my parents. If I can reach back and encourage families to foster and adopt, then I'm helping the next. Thank you, foster parents, for all that you do. I would not be who I am if I haven't had met my Mommie and Daddy!"



George needs a FOREVER family – Can You Help Us Find One?

This month's 'Shining Star' – George



Meet George, a kind-hearted boy who loves Christian music and would like to be a preacher when he grows up.

Given three wishes, George would ask for more wishes, to meet Jesus face-to-face, and for there to be a better world with "less bad things" going on.

While George is proud of how good he is at Minecraft, he would like to get better at his balance in basketball. Art is his favorite school subject because he enjoys drawing and making different types of projects. George also enjoys riding his bike and playing basketball and flag football.

When George and his friends get together, they like to talk, watch movies and just hang out.

George loves most food, but his favorite meal is enchiladas.

If he could go anywhere in the world, George would pick Hawaii because "it looks really pretty and they have coconuts!"

George was born in 2001. Find out more about George [HERE](#).

Parenting Corner



Children in the -2 to 5- year range

Children in this age group are learning self-regulation, or the ability to control their impulses and express their emotions appropriately. Children with difficulties in learning self-regulation may have increased tantrums, irritable mood and defiance.

Tips for managing emotional outbursts (tantrums) in -2 to 5- year olds:

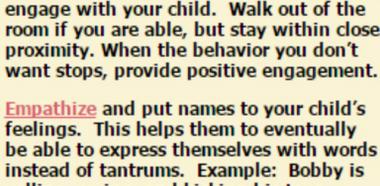
Be Consistent! Provide simple rules, follow through to enforce the rules each time, and engage in positive play with your child daily to build a stronger relationship.

Redirect your child's behavior. Attempt to catch your child before they have a tantrum. If not before, you can try to distract them in the moment. Example: "WOW! Can you do jumping jacks with me?!"

Positive Praise, Positive praise, and more positive praise! Children should be receiving 10 positive praises to one negative. Example: "Becca, I like how you put your Legos in your bucket!" "Thank you, Matt for using your nice hands when touching the baby." Be specific here - pay attention to things they are doing well.

Ignore the tantrum if the child is not hurting themselves or others. Ignoring does take some skill...it is important not to have eye contact, show expressions, or engage with your child. Walk out of the room if you are able, but stay within close proximity. When the behavior you don't want stops, provide positive engagement.

Empathize and put names to your child's feelings. This helps them to eventually be able to express themselves with words instead of tantrums. Example: Bobby is yelling, crying, and kicking his toys because he can't go swimming. You could say, "I know you are disappointed we are not swimming today."



Here are some tips for Pre-Teen/Teen Parenting:

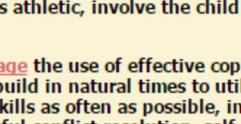
Learn the youth's emotional triggers (are they social, environmental, internal, sensory oriented?, etc.). Learn what behaviors to increase - what does youth do well, what are his/her strengths?

Utilize these as replacement behaviors, focusing on what you want youth to do rather than what not to do. Ex: If the youth is athletic, involve the child in sports.

Encourage the use of effective coping skills, build in natural times to utilize these skills as often as possible, including successful conflict resolution, self-control and behavior regulation, and self-confidence.

Encourage choice - provide choices that are reasonable to both parties. (Ex: Would you like to do your homework before or after dinner? Would you like to clean your room on Saturday or Sunday?) Find out what works at school/after school program so that there is consistency in approaches.

Safety First - #DoubleCheck



DCS is running a social media campaign reminding everyone to **#DoubleCheck** for kids in cars in our excessive heat and to **#DoubleCheck** for kids around water. Look for messages on the DCS Twitter and Facebook accounts and help spread the message to ensure the safety of Arizona's children.

For more information about the dangers of heat and its effects on children in cars, visit NoHeatStroke.org

For more information about water safety, visit the Phoenix Fire Department's [website](#)

Connect with us on Social Media!

Our social media accounts are updated every day to inform, encourage, and communicate helpful information to the citizens we serve. Please connect with us to stay up to date and also to share the need of the over 19,000 children that still need forever families!

Arizona Department of Child Safety

Ph: 602-255-2500

Website: www.azdcs.gov

