

# Arizona Statewide

News for Foster, Kinship and Adoptive Families Across Arizona

Summer 2012



877-543-7633

Arizona Department  
of Economic Security  
Division of Children,  
Youth and Families

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## Meet This Month's Shining Stars: Sharlesha and Shyla

Sharlesha and Shyla are a loving pair of sisters devoted to one another. Ten year old Sharlesha excels in math and is becoming a social young lady. She likes to shop, go to the park and is eager to help around the house. She is also learning Spanish and loves traditional Mexican food. Sharlesha is a caring child who watches out for her sister, Shyla.

Shyla, 4, is an energetic and spunky preschooler. She likes arts and crafts, coloring and playing dress up. Shyla always puts her best effort forward. She is a spirited affectionate child who loves being with her sister.

Both young ladies love jumping on the trampoline and swimming. They want an active family who will offer positive nurturing. Sharlesha says she wants a mother who can spend time doing girly things and a father who will enjoy spending time with her — someone who can keep up with their active lifestyle.

Sharlesha and Shyla have four siblings who they visit with and hope their forever family will get to know. One



of their favorite outings is to watch their brother play football. Sharlesha and Shyla are beautiful girls who are ready to meet their forever family.



## Andreus

Andreus — or “Dre” — is a sweet, polite and social young man.

Dre, 11, would like to be a doctor when he grows up. He enjoys reading and says that his favorite books are the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series.

Dre loves to play football, do gymnastics, read and play video games. Dre needs to be the only child in his forever home as he has difficulty getting along with peers of any age or gender.

He would thrive in a one or two parent family that enjoys being active and can provide him with a loving and stable home. A family that is patient, consistent and committed is what he needs. Would you be that forever family for Andreus?

For more information on Arizona's children in need of foster or adoptive families, please call:  
877-KIDS-NEED-U (877-543-7633)  
or visit our website [azkidsneedu.gov](http://azkidsneedu.gov).



# Celebrating Foster Care Awareness Month

Each May, National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity, not only to raise awareness for the need for more foster homes, but also to recognize and reward the families who have so generously opened their doors to children in need. Events included:

The DES Foster Care Month Celebration, held in the Atrium at the downtown Phoenix offices on Tuesday, May 1, at 10:00 a.m., brought DES staff together to tie blue ribbons on the trees. Each ribbon represents a child in foster care. The ribbons remained throughout the month.

The Tucson Blue Ribbon Event was held on Saturday, May 5, at Thoroughbred Nissan. Nearly 600 people gathered to honor Pima County foster families.

The family-friendly event, which included bounce houses, food, music and a raffle, ended with their traditional balloon launch.

Also on Cinco De Mayo, foster families in Payson enjoyed a picnic at Rumsey Park. On May 19, Prescott area foster families were treated to free admission at the Prescott Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary. In addition, numerous events were held by licensing agencies across the state.



Above: Families in Tucson prepare for the launch of more than 2,600 balloons, one for each Pima County child in foster care; Above right: PS-Mapp trainers Cheryl Twiggs and Belva Stites and Foster Care Policy Specialist Pat Carey tie blue ribbons at the DES celebration. Right: Many activities entertained children in Tucson.



## AZAFAP Hosts Courage for Children Awards

The Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents (AZAFAP) hosted its annual Courage for Children Awards on May 19, 2012, at Aunt Chilada’s in Phoenix.

Families honored at the “Foster Care Fiesta” were:

**No Place Like Home Award — Lee and Greg Bieber, Maricopa;** awarded to a foster and/or adoptive family that has cared for children in the system for a minimum of twenty years (does not have to be consecutive).

**Healer Award — Yvette and Arnold Harraway, Peoria;** awarded to a foster or adoptive family that has worked extensively with their children’s medical and/or behavioral health issues.

**All in the Family Award — Crystal and Luis Reyes, Phoenix;** awarded to a foster care or adoptive family that overcomes great obstacles to care for a family member’s children.

**Take a Break Award — Patti and Keith Waldrup, Phoenix;** awarded to a family that cheerfully and dependably provides respite for other foster and/or adoptive families.

**Second Mile Award — Senovia and Anthony Perez, Mesa;** awarded to an outstanding family that goes the ‘second mile’ for their foster and/or adopted children.

**I Can’t Hear You Over the Noise Award — Bob and Margaret Monteith, Buckeye;** presented to an adoptive family that has adopted teens or foster families that specialize in fostering teens.

**Family to Family Award — Gina and Lawrence Lusk, Laveen;** presented to a foster family that is especially good at working with biological families toward reunification or adoptive families toward ‘unification.’

**Annual “Courage for Children” Award — Nancy and Tyrone Williams, Phoenix;** presented to an group or individual who leads systemic change that improves services for children in Arizona through legislative, political or social action.

### AZAFAP Ally Award Recipient

The Fountain Hills High School Hospitality Management Program (pictured below) received recognition for its volunteer support of the AZAFAP mission. The group volunteered many hours refurbishing bicycles for children in foster care.



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# A Personal Journey: Adoption Manager knows the trials and rewards of a child in foster care

Deidre A. Calcoate, Statewide Adoption and Resource Home Development and Support Manager for the DES Division of Children, Youth and Families, knows firsthand about the journeys of both an adopted child and that child’s adoptive family.

Calcoate, an adopted child, is also an adoptive mom. She is proud of her daughter, Megan, and openly shares whatever she knows with the child she welcomed into her home 22 years ago.

While the issues surrounding adoption are complex and the journey may sometimes be difficult, Calcoate is certain about one thing: Adoption is a journey worth taking.

Adopted immediately after her birth, Calcoate says that her adoption was “a well-kept secret in my family. I did not find out that I was adopted until I was grown. My mother and father did not want me to know. I knew that I was different, as I did not look like any of my family.

“My birth uncles and aunts were around during my youth, but I was not aware that they were my relatives. My adoptive mother never told me I was adopted and she refused to allow others to have that conversation with me,” she explained.

Now she knows that her father was Jewish and her mother was African-American and Native American. “Both of my parents are deceased, but I have a connection with my maternal birth family and they provided me with information,” she added. “When there is a family gathering, they make it a point to tell me who I look like and who I act like.”

The pain that comes from knowing you’re different but not knowing why is one that Calcoate did not repeat with her own adopted daughter. “I decided that it was important to tell the truth to our daughter from the beginning. I remember the confusion I felt when looking in the mirror and the betrayal I felt when I found out that I was adopted.”

Calcoate encourages others to consider adoption, but to do your homework. “Talk with others who have fostered and adopted. Do not be afraid to ask questions.”



Calcoate with her daughter Megan and family.

She also urges all adoptive parents to be up front with their children. “Be honest and open to and about the child being adopted or fostered. It is important for the well-being of the child that they be allowed to grieve the loss of their biological family.... Just because their birth parents could not care for the child does not make them bad people.”

For Calcoate, who has been the statewide adoption manager for just over a year, there is much work to be done. “Our children, who through no fault of their own, find themselves in need of a family either for a short period of time or for the rest of their lives, deserve the highest and best that I can give and that is what I try and do every day.”

“My journey – from being adopted, to adopting, to becoming the (DES) Adoptions Manager – has been painful at times and rewarding at others. I am grateful for the journey and the experiences and I hope to continue to use them to support and assist others.

To have an impact on another life is amazing!”

## Ask Dr. Sue

### Caring for a Substance-Exposed Newborn

Caring for a substance-exposed newborn may present challenges to foster and adoptive parents. Here are some tips that may help:

#### Comfort Measures

- Let the baby rest between feedings and diaper changes
- Avoid over stimulation by siblings and family members
- Establish sleep and wake routines
- Keep the baby tightly wrapped in a blanket for comfort.

#### Feeding

- Give the baby small, frequent feedings
- Offer a pacifier to satisfy the baby’s sucking reflex; not all sucking is about hunger.
- Talk with the baby’s pediatrician about calorie needs.
- You may need to wake the baby every four hours to ensure the baby’s caloric needs are met

#### For Irritability and Sleeping Difficulties

- Don’t allow the baby to become too upset
- Keep the room dark and calm, without loud noises
- Swaddle the baby in a flexed (bent slightly at the waist and knees) position
- Rocking with an up & down (vertical) motion is more calming than (horizontal) side-to-side rocking.
- Keep the baby at arm’s length when holding

#### Muscle Tone and Posture

- Gently move baby’s arms and legs

- A massage may help the baby relax
- Use supportive positioning for baby
- Let the baby spend time on the tummy during the day (Remember to always supervise the baby when in this position; a substance-exposed baby is at greater risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS))

#### SIDS Prevention

- Always have infants sleep on their back, unless they are having supervised tummy time
- Avoid overheating. Dress the baby for the climate
- Do not over-bundle, but rather keep the baby in appropriate dress & blankets for the temperature
- Avoid second hand smoke exposure
- Keep the baby off of soft surfaces, pillows, blankets, and mattresses which increases the risk of SIDS

#### Developmental Interventions

- Enroll the toddler in an Early Head Start and Head Start program.
- Read to and interact verbally every day with the baby
- All infants should be screened for hearing loss at birth

— Dr. Susan M. Stephens, M.D., is the Medical Director of the Arizona Comprehensive Medical & Dental Program.

# Clothing Closets and Other Resources

All around Arizona, members of the community want to help families who care for children in foster care. One way they do that is by providing resources for the children in CPS custody, especially clothing for children who come into care with nothing. Some clothes closets began to fill a need in the community. Others, started by foster and adoptive parents, began more out of necessity. Either way, they look forward to serving.

The volunteers at Dreamweaver’s Closet (pictured below) serve families in western Maricopa County. Located in Peoria, the closet is attached to the Montessori Kingdom of Learning School. Dreamweaver’s Closet serves all who come without charge. One of their goals is to negate the stigma associated with foster care, adoption and homelessness through community education.

Dreamweaver’s Closet is also supported by Girl Scout Troop 1070. The scouts donate time to help sort donations and have given their free time to also make fleece blankets for children coming into care. Dreamweaver’s Closet is open by appointment only to families (including biological families) and case managers.

On the east side of the Valley of the Sun is Helen’s Hope Chest. A service of Mesa United Way, Helen’s Hope Chest helps foster children with their basic needs such as clothing, school supplies, books and toys at no charge. It is named in honor of Helen Paula Simmons, a woman who was in foster care for many years but was never adopted.

Thanks to generosity of the City of Mesa, Helen’s Hope Chest has a 4,256 square-foot, 16-room home. Different rooms accommodate the basic needs of infants, toddlers, children, teens and young adults. Rooms also are dedicated to gifts and toys



for special occasions, sports equipment, school uniforms and supplies, basic toiletries, and books.

Jose’s Closet is in Apache Junction. Named for a boy in foster care who died in 2007 of leukemia, the closet was founded by Jose’s foster mom Wendy Esquibel (pictured above). There is a \$40 annual membership fee and a requirement to volunteer an hour for each hour of shopping, but included with that fee is clothing, shoes, birthday and holiday gifts for each child in the family, not only children in foster care. Jose’s Closet also has gently used furniture, sporting equipment and costumes for a small additional fee.

On the second Saturday of the month, GoodTHREADS Clothing Exchange in Tucson, created by Goodmans Interior Structures, provides children’s clothing for foster, adoptive and kinship parents. Parents are encouraged to bring gently used, clean clothing that your children have outgrown as an ‘exchange’ but this is not necessary.



## Creating a Family Internet Agreement

*The previous issue of the Arizona Statewide included suggestions on Internet Safety. An important piece of this is the Family Internet Agreement. — Editor*

Just as families have house rules for behaviors and other expectations; it may also be helpful to formally express the expectations around using the family computer. Here are some recommendations.

- Set clear boundaries prohibiting children from sharing personal information online. This should include the child’s name, the foster family name, personal financial data such as credit card account numbers and any other identifying information including addresses and the name and location of the school the child attends.
- Agree that the child will not send photos of him or herself without the permission of the foster parents or CPS Specialist.
- Determine the amount of time the child can spend online, the time of day and

outline which sites are appropriate to view.

- Discuss appropriate Internet behavior, such as no bullying and other types of Internet etiquette.
- Agree that the child will not open any emails or attachments from unknown people.
- Talk through what the child should do if he or she receives or sees anything that makes him or her feel uncomfortable. Designate a “safe adult” for the child to talk to about this.
- Agree that the child will not download or install any software on the computer.
- Agree that the child will not share his or her password with anyone except possibly foster parents.
- Agree that the child will not to meet in person anyone the child has met online without an adult going along. People on the Internet may not be who they claim to be.

### Find Clothing Resources and More Here!

Many of the organizations listed below are run by foster and adoptive parents and are open by appointment only. Contact the organization directly to schedule an appointment.

**Dreamweaver's Closet**  
13111 N 94th Dr.  
Peoria  
602.527.0005  
dreamweaverscloset@gmail.com

**Helen's Hope Chest**  
415 N. Pasadena  
(480) 969-5411.  
Helen's Hope Chest  
415 N. Pasadena  
Mesa, AZ 85201  
hhc@mesaunitedway.org

**Jose's Closet**  
Thunder Mountain Middle School  
Center Stage Christian Church  
3700 East 16th Avenue  
Apache Junction, AZ 85119  
480-309-1743  
wendy@josescloset.org

**GoodThreads**  
La Paloma Family Services, Inc.  
870 W. Miracle Mile  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
Second Saturday of the month from  
12:30 – 4:00 p.m.

**Clothes for Keeps**  
PO Box 2452  
Carefree, AZ 85377  
(623) 229-2942  
http://clothesforkeeps.org/  
clothesforkeeps@gmail.com

**Caron Lorber**  
near 16th St. and Thomas  
Phoenix  
602.721.2255

**Caring is Sharing**  
Mary Clark  
35th Ave. and Union Hills  
623-703-4815

*If you know of other resources, please let us know for future newsletters.*



**Additional Support for Foster Parents**

Beginning July 9, the Division will launch a toll-free line for foster parents who need to speak with the CPS Specialist for the child in their care but are unable to reach them. By calling 1-877-KIDSNEEDU (1-877-543-7633) and selecting **Option 3**, a representative from the Division will be glad to assist you. We value our foster parents and hope that this additional support will be beneficial.

**Save the Date — Foster Care Fusion Training Events**

DCYF is excited to announce *Foster Care Fusion*. These one-day training events will be offered in three separate areas of the state: Phoenix, Tucson and Prescott. Open to all foster, adoptive and kin families, Foster Care Fusion will offer families an opportunity to meet and network with others in their area. It will also have material relevant for foster, kinship and adoptive parents, with a focus on accessing mental health services. Six hours of advanced training credit will be available for those who attend an entire day.

*Foster Care Fusion* — Prescott will be September 15 at the Prescott Resort.

*Foster Care Fusion* — Tucson will be September 22 at the Westin La Paloma.

*Foster Care Fusion* — Phoenix will be October 6 at the Scottsdale Chaparral Suites.

Stay tuned for additional information and registration details.

# Belva Stites Celebrates 40 Years of Service to Arizona’s Children

For the past 40 years, Belva Stites has exemplified leadership and teamwork within the Division of Children, Youth and Families. Belva began her extraordinary DES career in February 1972 and has achieved many important milestones during her lengthy social service career.

In the earlier years, Belva worked as a DES Social Services Specialist, providing case management and foster home licensing. She then became a Community Child Care Licensing Specialist, ensuring that group homes, child placement and adoption agencies met state standards. After many productive years in that position, Belva became the Statewide Foster Care Policy and Program Development Specialist for Child Protective Services (CPS).

Belva worked closely with CPS case managers and their supervisors, as well as Arizona’s Foster Care Review Board, child welfare partners and stakeholders throughout Arizona’s communities. Currently a Supervisor for the State’s Foster Parent Pre-Service Training Program, she is instrumental in implementing a standardized comprehensive training program for Arizona’s foster parents.

Belva is also well-known at the national level of the child welfare arena. She served

for many years as an elected Officer in the National Association of Foster Care Managers and is viewed as an expert in her field.

She is the recipient of several awards that recognize her service. In 1988, Belva received a Special Performance Award. As stated by Belva’s supervisor, “It is without hesitation and with full support and recognition of her contributions to foster children that I wholeheartedly recommend Ms. Stites.” DCYF is glad to continue to reap the benefits of 40 years (and counting!) of Belva’s wisdom. Thank you, Belva, for all you do for the vulnerable children and families of Arizona.



## Car Seats and Child Restraint Systems

A new law passed by the legislature this year changes requirements for seats and child restraint systems. Effective August 2, 2012, House Bill 2154:

- Requires each passenger who is at least 5 years of age, but under 8 years of age, and who is not more than four feet nine inches tall to be restrained in a child restraint system.
- Requires a law enforcement officer who stops a vehicle in apparent violation of

this section to determine from the driver the age and height of the child in the vehicle and to assess whether the child in the vehicle should be in a child restraint system.

- Defines child restraint system as an add-on child restraint system, a built-in child restraint system, a factory-installed built-in child restraint system, a rear-facing child restraint system or a booster seat as defined in federal regulations.

## Stay Safe In and Around Swimming Pools

Splashing in a swimming pool is a sure way to have summer fun. But it’s important to make safety a priority to protect children and others in and around the water.

Drowning is a leading cause of injury death for young children ages 1 to 4, and the fifth leading cause of unintentional injury death for people of all ages, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). For children ages 1 to 4 years, swimming pools pose the greatest risk of submersion injury.

For every child less than 15 years old who dies from drowning in a pool, another 10 receive emergency care for nonfatal submersion injuries, according to the CDC. Nonfatal drowning can cause brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities including memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functions. The good news is that drowning can be prevented.

### How can drowning be prevented?

- **Always supervise children when in or around water.** Designate a responsible adult to watch young children while in the bath and all children swimming or playing in or around water. When supervising preschool children,

provide “touch supervision” — be close enough to reach the child at all times. This is not the time to multi-task. Do no read, play cards, or talk on the phone while supervising children.

- **Use the Buddy System.** Always swim with a buddy. Select swimming sites that have lifeguards whenever possible.

- **Practice Seizure Disorder Safety.** If you or a family member has a seizure disorder, provide one-on-one supervision around water, including swimming pools.

- **Learn to Swim.** Formal swimming lessons can protect young children from drowning. However, constant, careful supervision is always needed, and barriers, such as pool fencing, to prevent unsupervised access are necessary.

- **Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).** In the time it might take for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills could make a difference in someone’s life.

- **Do Not Use Air-Filled or Foam Toys.** Air-filled or foam toys, such as “water wings,” “noodles,” or inner-tubes are not meant to replace life jackets or personal flotation devices.



Arizona Statewide is published  
by the Arizona Department of  
Economic Security, Division of  
Children, Youth and Families, to  
inform foster, kinship and adoptive  
families across the state.

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602-542-2359

## Who Do You Trust With Your Child?

The Department of Economic Security (DES), in cooperation with the Arizona Coordinated Prevention Campaign, has launched “Who do you trust with your child?” a child abuse prevention and awareness campaign to help parents choose a safe caregiver and prevent child maltreatment.

The campaign includes a website, [www.childhelp.org/mychild](http://www.childhelp.org/mychild), which contains posters and brochures to direct Arizonans to more information about choosing a safe caregiver. Posters and brochures were prepared by the Arizona Coordinated Prevention Campaign, a group of professionals dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Members include: Arizona Broadcasters Association; Casey Family Programs; Child Crisis Center; Childhelp; Department of Economic Security; Department of Health Services; Eight, Arizona PBS-Educational Outreach; Phoenix Children's Hospital; Prevent Child Abuse Arizona; Southwest Human Development.

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, report it now. The Arizona Child Abuse Hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445).

## Grandfamilies Place of Phoenix

New Affordable Apartment homes for Multi-Generational Families are being built at 5150 S. 18th Place in Phoenix. Amenities include a pool, sports court, clubhouse with a computer center and a barbecue and picnic area — all in a park-like setting. Each apartment features washers and dryers, all electric appliances, ceiling fans, private patios or balconies and extra storage. Rent starts at \$500 for a two-bedroom; \$575 for a three-bedroom. Income restrictions apply. For more information, call (602) 354-4897.

## Choose Immunizations

Most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases can have on a child, a family, or community. Thanks to vaccines, many of these diseases are not common in the U.S., but they persist around the world. That's why we need to remind parents that immunizations are still the best way to protect their children from 14 vaccine-preventable diseases and to continue to encourage parents to follow CDC's recommended immunization schedule. We also need to provide parents with resources to meet their information needs about diseases and vaccines. Learn more at <http://1.usa.gov/InPEhA>.

## CMDP Covered Services

Foster caregivers do not pay for medically necessary or dental fees for children in foster care. Members and foster caregivers should not be billed for any services that CMDP covers. Be sure you list CMDP as the responsible party. Do not give your own personal information. If you have to sign any forms, please write “(foster parent's name) for DES/CMDP.” Should you receive a bill, contact a CMDP Member Services representative at 1-800-201-1795.

## Renew Fingerprint Clearance Cards!

Fingerprint clearance cards may take several months to be issued. Therefore, it is critically important for families to begin their license renewal process early. Please work with your agency to get all renewal materials submitted early.

## We Need Homes!

DCYF is experiencing a severe shortage of foster and adoptive parents. If you know someone who would be a good foster or adoptive parent, please encourage them to call 1-877-KIDS-NEEDU (877-543-7633) for information. Homes are needed for children of all ages and ethnicities, but especially for American Indian children, African American children and sibling groups.

## iFoster.org Provides Discounts for Children and Families

iFoster is a free members-only community for transition-age youth in foster, kinship or adoptive care, and the families and agencies that support them. The service is also for biological families at risk of entry into child welfare. iFoster provides life changing resources for at-risk children and youth to put them on the path to becoming independent successful adults. Discounts include national, regional and local retailers; food, clothing and school supplies; personal and household items; restaurants, entertainment, sports and recreation. Join the community at [www.ifoster.org](http://www.ifoster.org).

## CMDP Website

The Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) website has a lot of health care information. The site has past editions of CMDP newsletters for members and health care providers. It also has a list of health care providers and a list of preferred medications. Check it out at <https://www.azdes.gov/cmdp/>.