

Arizona Statewide

News for Foster, Kinship and Adoptive Families Across Arizona

Fall 2013



877-543-7633

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

In This Issue

Shining Stars: Andres
and Jessie, Raneesha
■ 1

Children's Heart
Gallery Unveiling
Held in Tucson ■ 2

Understanding the
Effects of Trauma on
Children in Foster
Care ■ 2

Looking Back, Looking
Forward — Youth
Panel Speaks Out ■ 3

The Importance of
Talking About Suicide
■ 3

Ask Dr. Sue About
Fighting Childhood
Obesity ■ 3

Foster Parent Input
Sought ■ 4

Legislative Changes
■ 4

A Bright Future:
Helping Children Feel
Safe and Loved ■ 4

AZAFAP Turns 10 ■ 5

Mark Your Calendar
for Adoption Day ■ 5

Shining Star: Seth
■ 6

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.

Meet This Month's Shining Stars:

Andres and Jessie

Andres likes school and has good grades. He says his favorite subject is math. He also enjoys football, basketball, music and dancing.

Easy-going, Andres can get along with anyone. He does well with older or younger children in the home. Andres would do best with active parents who promote structure, patience and are willing to support and encourage him.

Andres was born in 1999.

Full of energy and curiosity, Jessie loves to put together 500-piece puzzles. He has put together more than 10 and has them proudly framed.

Jessie likes football, basketball and track. He is such a track enthusiast he'd sleep in his track shorts in anticipation for his track meets. He won several ribbons in the city track meet for long jump, the 4 x 4 relay and the 100-yard dash.

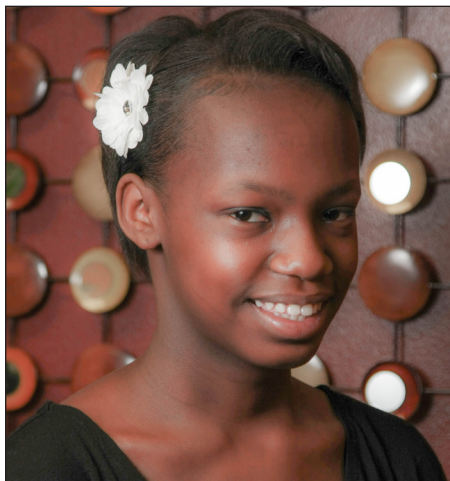
Jessie's favorite subject in school is math. He practices his multiplication skills every day and is very proud that he can do over 80 problems in under a minute.

Jessie was born in 2001.



The brothers are a joy to be around and they are optimistic about finding a loving, caring family to provide them unconditional love, consistency and support so they can reach their full potential.

Raneesha



Raneesha is lively, engaging and intelligent. While shy at first, she becomes quite outgoing once you spend a little time with her. She enjoys staying busy and is open to try any new, fun activity. Raneesha enjoys school and particularly favors science and reading. She has a particular knack for writing stories and letters. She has set goals for herself and hopes to become a doctor one day! When she is stuck in the house, she likes TV, but you can usually find her in her room listening to music. Her favorite artists

are Chris Brown, Trey Songz and Justin Bieber.

While she likes to try new foods, her favorites are hot wings, Mexican food and pizza. She also enjoys the things most girls her age enjoy such as staying up late to watch movies with her friends. She is also very fashion forward and would love to be able to have someone with whom she can discuss the latest fashions. Raneesha does not mind doing chores or helping around the house and she knows that everyone in a family must pull their own weight.

When asked about what she misses most about being part of a family, Raneesha will tell you that she just misses the overall togetherness and closeness. Specifically, she misses staying up late to watch movies and having a family to laugh at jokes with. Raneesha relishes the thought of being a big sister and having someone to dote on.

Raneesha would excel with a loving family who enjoys doing things together. She is the kind of girl who lights up a room.

Raneesha was born in 1999.

Children’s Heart Gallery Unveiling Held in Tucson

As a way to raise awareness of the needs of Pima County children for foster and adoptive homes, the Division hosted an unveiling of the Children’s Heart Gallery on Friday, August 23, 2013. The event was held in conjunction with the KIDS-NEED-U Regional Training event, which took place the following day. Both events were held at the Westin LaPaloma.

Those attending the event heard from Deidre Calcoate, statewide adoptions manager

and Pauline Machiche, program manager for the Pima Region. Both women, also adoptive mothers, shared some of their personal journey. A similar event was held in Flagstaff on October 4 and 5.

On Saturday, September 21, the second Tucson photo shoot was held at the Loews Ventana Canyon Resort. On Saturday, October 19, the Children’s Heart Gallery will host its fifth photo shoot in Prescott. For additional information about the Children’s Heart Gallery, or to volunteer to assist at an upcoming event, please visit childrensheartgallery.org.



Raising Awareness
Deidre Calcoate, statewide adoptions manager and Pauline Machiche, program manager for the Pima Region, spoke at the Tucson unveiling of the Children’s Heart Gallery on August 23. Both women are adoptive mothers; they shared some of their personal journey to raise community awareness of the need for more foster and adoptive homes in the Pima Region.

The Children’s Heart Gallery was founded in 2012. Thus far, 53 children have been photographed for

Understanding the Effects of Trauma on Children in Foster Care

During the recent KIDS-NEED-U Regional Training, Raul Almazar, Senior Consultant, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Center for Trauma Informed Care, gave a keynote address titled Enhancing Recovery in Trauma Informed System Care: Changing our Perspective.

According to Almazar, witnessing violence is a part of trauma that is frequently overlooked. Trauma is an individual experience and therefore cannot be compared between different individuals. What is considered traumatic for one person may or may not be traumatic for someone else. Triggers which cause us to be upset are things reminding us of past traumatic behavior. Trauma is not an excuse. Instead, it is an explanation.

In order to truly help children in foster care, it is important to understand the context of these children’s experiences. These children have historical trauma, perhaps even inter-generational trauma. We need to not pass judgment. In order for these children to heal, trust must come first.

Boys and girls react differently to trauma.

People with a history of trauma have a message in their heads that says, ‘You’re nothing. You’re worthless. You probably deserved it.’ So why do we send them to a quiet place where they hear the voices even louder?

—Raul Almazar

Boys are more affected by neglect and girls are more affected by abuse. Children who are abused have high stress hormones which can affect sleeping patterns.

The brain is a social organ which thrives on relationships. We must ensure those relationships are healthy. For instance, when faced with a crisis it is common tendency to

say, “What’s wrong with you?” It would benefit both sides if it was said, “What’s happened to you?” The tendency is for people to be in control in a crisis but it is much better to offer comfort.

By offering comfort, it is easier to soothe children. In young children especially, rhythmic, repetitive movement such as rocking helps develop the part of the brain by saying

someone will help them. This is the beginning of emotional regulation. A mobile in a crib and a pacifier are the beginnings of self-regulation in babies. Rhythmic, repetitive things, such as a drum, are also good ways to help soothe people.

It is important to change perspective in order to understand the effects of trauma. Only then will the children receive the care and support they need in order to truly heal.

CMDP Website
The Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) website has a wealth 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 www.azdes.gov/cmdp.

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Looking Back, Looking Forward — Youth Panel Speaks Out

At the August 24th KIDS-NEED-U Regional Training event in Tucson, a panel of youth who have aged out of foster care shared their insights on life in the foster care system. The panel, comprised of three young women and two young men, offered the following as tips and suggestions for foster parents.

Get your children involved in the community.

Involve them in sports activities, take them to church, allow them to volunteer for community service. The more they are involved, the more people they will get to know and be able to talk with. Permanent connections can be developed through these relationships.

Be understanding. We all come from different backgrounds, places, circumstances and cultures.

Remember that words are powerful. Once they’re out there, you can’t take them back. Your words will stick with

that child forever. Watch what you say and do.

Treat the children in your care the same way you treat your own children. One young adult described a placement where he had to eat meals alone; he was not allowed to eat meals with the rest of the family. Another participant spoke about a placement where the parents took her clothes and gave them to their bio children.

If you’re going to be a foster parent, be serious about it. Youth described attitudes of homes that they appreciated, including foster parents who:

- Ask the child about a favorite food, then served it.
- Show genuine interest in the child, but don’t pry.
- Have a room ready for the child and make the child feel welcome, like you are expecting them.
- Remember that pets are therapeutic and can really help put a child at ease.

The Importance of Talking About Suicide

One of the workshops at this year’s KIDS-NEED-U Regional Training events was a suicide intervention discussion led by Deidre Calcoate. Noting it is difficult to ascertain accurate statistics because people may not leave behind notes, Calcoate pointed out children as young as four years old have attempted to die by suicide.

Nevertheless, as a culture we are very reluctant to talk about death by suicide. Often people are in denial, thinking it happens in other families but cannot happen in their own. Others may be reluctant to talk about it for fear of giving others ideas or because of their own fear of death.

“There is no evidence that proves if a person talks about death by suicide they will actually do it,” she said. “But talking can create a safe environment for other conversations.”

Calcoate encouraged participants to move beyond their own discomfort to help the other person be comfortable. “To further their trust, you have to talk to them about what

you need to do to keep them safe,” she added. This may include getting others involved. We may need to explain that keeping them safe does not mean helping them hide. Keep in mind: This isn’t a “death” sentence; it could be a “life” sentence.

Calcoate also emphasized the importance of listening without reacting as children tell their stories. “Sometimes it seems that our kids are being cavalier, but it’s their story and they’ve told it so many times,” she explained. “When you listen, please don’t cringe. Some of these stories will hurt your heart.

“We cannot avoid talking about suicide just because we’re scared,” Calcoate concluded. “Suicide is a serious community issue. At least six people are affected by one person’s suicide.

“We often feel that we don’t have a right to talk with someone — to get in their business — but we must. We must speak up to keep them safe.”

Ask Dr. Sue Fighting Childhood Obesity: 5, 2, 1, 0

Nearly one in three children in Arizona is considered overweight or obese, according to the Data Research Center for Child and Adolescent Health. Healthy nutrition starts in infancy. Once your baby begins eating solid foods, introduce nutritious foods early on and often. Sometimes toddlers need to try a food 10 times before they actually accept and enjoy it. It is also important to encourage play time as soon as they start crawling and walking. As your children grow, continue to help them live a healthy active lifestyle.

To lead a healthy active life, families can strive to reach these goals: **5,2,1,0**

Eat 5 servings a day of fruits and vegetables

- Choose fresh fruit instead of juice
- Try a new fruit or vegetable each week
- Choose a fruit or vegetable for a snack
- Try a new recipe using fruits or vegetables
- Create a rainbow shopping list of colorful fruits and vegetables

Spend less than 2 hours a day in front of a screen

- Plan your TV time (and stick to it)
- Don’t eat in front of the TV
- Reach for a good book
- Keep TVs, video games and computers out of the bedroom

Spend at least 1 hour every day doing something active

- Play a game of tag
- Grow a family garden
- Cook healthy meals together

- Ride a bike or take a hike
- Try a new sport
- Go on a walking scavenger hunt through the neighborhood
- Involve the family – take a walk, go to the park, walk the dog

Limit sweetened drinks (to near 0 a day)

- Drink more water
- Don’t forget about low-fat milk
- Remember: Sports drinks and energy drinks are loaded with sugar

In addition to **5,2,1,0** families can make small changes in their family routines to help everyone lead healthier active lives. Try:

- Eating breakfast every day
- Regularly eating meals together as a family
- Limiting fast food, take out food and eating out at restaurants
- Preparing foods at home as a family
- Eating a diet rich in calcium
- Eating a high fiber diet

By making healthy habits fun and finding ways to engage your children, you are helping them develop good patterns for the future.

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

Foster Parent Input Needed for Practice Improvement Case Reviews

Practice Improvement Case Reviews (PICRs) are an integral part of the Division of Children, Youth and Families’ Quality Improvement System. Each month, randomly selected initial assessment and ongoing cases are reviewed to evaluate practices related to the Division’s goals of achieving child safety, permanency and well-being.

Practice Improvement Specialists located throughout the state gather information from the case record and interviews to complete a case review instrument. Through these case reviews, we identify strengths and challenges in our practice, policy, training, services and partnerships.

While initial assessment cases can typically be completed using the case record, case participant input is essential in reviewing ongoing cases. In most reviews, the Practice Improvement Specialist will interview the

biological parents, foster or kinship parents and children (if age sixteen or older) to hear about their experiences first-hand. The case documentation alone isn’t enough. The real life stories of case participants provide a richer and deeper understanding of what really happened in a case and how we might adjust our practices and services to improve outcomes for children and families.

If you receive a call from a Practice Improvement Specialist, please take the time to answer his or her questions and share your insights. With your help, the Division is able to provide vital information to management, special projects committees, workgroups and the Child Welfare Training Institute to identify and initiate improvement activities. Most importantly, your feedback leads to better safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children all around the state.

Legislative Changes

During the last legislative session, Arizona legislators passed SB 1108, which prohibits the Department of Economic Security from requiring foster parents to immunize the foster parent’s natural or adoptive children as a condition of foster home licensure.

The Quick Connect system will continue to request information about the immunization of children residing in the foster home but will no longer require a physician’s statement. Applicants will not have to provide a reason for the lack of immunizations.

Instructions provided in the Governor’s signing letter state, “...I have directed the DES to develop a placement policy that restricts the placement of young children and infants in homes where the foster parents have not immunized their own children....”

In other changes, HB 2074 will extend the foster home licensing period to 2 years, while continuing the requirement for foster parents to complete 6 hours of training per year. HB 2074 only applies to family foster homes.

Helping Children Feel Safe and Loved

It is so important for our children to feel safe, loved, and valued. There are a multitude of moments in every day to say, “It is my job to keep you safe.” “You are so special.” “You are so smart.”

A Bright Future for Your Child

Unfortunately, many children in foster care believe that they have done something wrong to cause them to be placed with us. They won’t say it, but they may act it subconsciously. Children feel that they have no control so they will sometimes do whatever they can to feel like they have the upper hand.

How important is it for our children to know what to expect? No matter how old they are, they need to know that when and if you leave their view, you will be back. They need to know where you are going, when you are going and when you will be back. At the same time they need to know their own schedule. Is today a visit day? What time? Who will pick me up? Where will they take me? Who will I see? Will they bring me back to you? Daycare? School?

Depending on the age of your child, you can communicate through your words to tell them. You can hold up your fingers and count, “You will see your Mom in four wake-up days.” A pocket calendar for some children is great. In the calendar you can color code it or

put stickers or just write down the events that are coming up for them. (Dr.’s, tutor, visit, vacation, movie day, birthday celebration, etc.) Additionally they need to know that the day’s plan has your approval. They will know this by you saying, “Have a great time!”, “Don’t forget to tell Mom about how good you are doing in school.”

Our children have a lot to say but don’t expect them to ask you to tea to reminisce about what is on their mind. Please know that everything our children say has meaning. Just having a little notebook handy will help you sort through some things later. What we hear can either lend itself to a future conversation or may be just what you need to share with the therapist before their next appointment.

Timing is everything. You can even take some of what you heard earlier in the day to be part of your bedtime conversation. Sometimes just the tranquility of the evening can lend itself to your child letting down their guard and letting you in just a little bit at a time. Conversations need to be on a child’s terms though. In other words, if you are asking questions or attempting to strike up a conversation but your child has absolutely nothing to offer, take it as a sign that now may not be the right time. We need to build our child’s trust and this generally will not happen overnight.

— Mimi Condon is a foster and adoptive mom. Her column, “A Bright Future,” is a regular feature in the Arizona Statewide.

OLCR Administrator Named

The DES Office of Accountability is pleased to announce that Mary Bankoff has been named the new Administrator for the Office of Licensing, Certification and Regulation (OLCR). She has worked with DES for more than 10 years, beginning as an Administrative Law Judge in the DES Appellate Services Administration’s Office of Appeals, and served as a Presiding Judge for over three years. Most recently, Bankoff was the Administrator of the Office of Planning, Analysis and Reporting where she helped to develop a Fraud Management, Detection and Prevention Plan.

Help Us Make This Newsletter Better!

The Arizona Statewide is designed for you, our wonderful families! We appreciate you and want to make sure we are providing the information you want in the format you prefer. To that end, we would like to invite several families to participate on an advisory board. Participants will provide input on the newsletter content. Please contact Roxann Miller, editor, to volunteer. You can reach her at 602-542-2359 or email her at rlmiller@azdes.gov.

Sesame Workshop Launches Campaign for Children of Incarcerated Parents

Children of incarcerated parents are more likely to face other adverse childhood experiences, including witnessing violence in their communities or directly in their households or exposure to drug and alcohol abuse. In order to improve the outcomes of these children, the federal government and Sesame Workshop have teamed up to provide resources. Sesame Workshop's newest initiative, *Little Children, Big Challenges*:

Incarceration provides bilingual (English/Spanish) multimedia tools for families with young children (ages 3–8) who have an incarcerated parent, including *A Guide for Parents and Caregivers*; a children's storybook; a new Sesame Street video; an *Incarcerated Parent Tip Sheet*; the *Sesame Street: Incarceration* mobile app, and more.

The resources are all available for free at SesameStreet.org/Incarceration.

Surrogate Parents Needed

The Surrogate Parent Program was established at the Arizona Department of Education to ensure that all students with disabilities have an adult representing them during special education meetings. The program serves over 240 students with disabilities across Arizona. Surrogate Parent Volunteers are provided training about the special education process and can serve students within their own communities or across the entire state of Arizona. Currently there are only 70 active volunteers covering the needs of 240 students in 15 counties. If you are interested in learning more about the program, please visit <http://www.azed.gov/special-education/special-projects/surrogate-parents/> or e-mail surrogateparents@azed.gov.

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.

AZAFAP Turns 10; Offers Free Membership

The Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents is celebrating its 10 year anniversary in 2013. Founded in 2003 to serve the foster, adoptive and kinship families who care for Arizona's most vulnerable children, the organization is run by volunteers

AZAFAP believes there is strength in numbers, and in speaking with one voice for Arizona's foster and adoptive families. They also offer advanced training hours and other



resources for member families.

In celebration of their 10 year anniversary, AZAFAP is inviting all foster, adoptive and kinship families to join the Association for FREE. Enhanced memberships that include extra member benefits are still available for \$50 for a couple and \$35 for individual membership.

Learn more about AZAFAP and the benefits of membership at www.azafap.org.

DCYF Foster Parent Warm Line

The DCYF Foster Parent Warm Line is a toll-free number for resource parents who are experiencing crisis situations and cannot reach their Child Protective Services' (CPS) case manager in a timely manner. By calling 1-877-KIDSNEED-U (1-877-543-7633) and selecting Option 3, resource parents will be connected to a Warm Line designee. The line is staffed from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Messages may be left at any time of the day or night.

The Warm Line staff's goal is to respond to those messages within the next business day so resource parents feel supported in

getting their needs met in serving our children. The Warm Line is intended to provide resource parents with information, assistance with authorizations for services, timely communication and support. It does not take the place of direct and regular communication between the CPS case manager and the resource parent.

Since its inception in July 2012, nearly all parents who have utilized the Foster Parent Warm Line have experienced resolution to their questions. Resolutions have been particularly successful regarding child care and payment processing issues.

Quitting Tobacco Becomes Easier for Ariz. Teens

In Arizona, just over 17 percent of teens under the age of 18 use tobacco. Despite knowing the health effects; teens do continue to try tobacco due to peer pressure and/or curiosity.

The average age that a smoker first tries a cigarette is between 11 and 12; by the time they reach age 19, 90 percent of current adult smokers are addicted.

Modeled after and implemented by the highly successful Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine), the CIGNAL will use the same

proven approach but will direct callers under the age of 23 to specially trained youth coaches.

The CIGNAL is a free service and can be reached via the toll-free number 1-800-556-6222. For callers under the age of 18, parental consent is not needed. Medications and other quit aids such as the patch, gum and lozenge will not be provide to anyone under 18. Teens interested in this method of quitting are encouraged to talk to their doctor. Learn more at www.theCIGNAL.com

Dates Set for Arizona Adoption Day Festivities

November will be a busy month for Arizonans interested in adoption! Thus far, there are five celebrations scheduled in five counties around the state.

Adoption month festivities kick-off on Saturday, November 2 at 9:00 a.m. at the Pinal County Courthouse in Florence.

Pima County's Annual Adoption in the Park begins at 10:00 a.m., also on November 2. Held at Udall Park in Tucson, the event includes a picnic and games for the family. Park ramadas will be converted into courtrooms.

Yuma County's Adoption Day will be on Saturday, November 23, at the Yuma County Juvenile Justice Center.

In Prescott, the festivities will be held at the Prescott Courthouse beginning at 10 a.m. on Saturday, November 23.

Also on November 23, Maricopa County's Adoption Day Celebration will be held at the Durango Juvenile Court Center in Phoenix. Maricopa County's celebration is traditionally one of the largest in the nation, exceeding New York, Chicago and Los Angeles with regard to the number of adoptions finalized.

Meet This Month's Shining Star: Seth



Seth likes instruments and paper airplanes. He enjoys art projects and making special craft projects for loved ones.

He is a smart and curious child. He likes to help his foster father with outdoor 'guy chores' and loves participating in family gatherings.

In school, Seth plays basketball and chess. He says he enjoys Mexican food, especially burritos. Seth has an interest in cars. He thinks it would be great to combine features from both a Camaro and a Mustang into a specially engineered sports car.

Seth is in need of a forever family who promotes structure, patience and a willingness to work with him.

Seth was born in 2002.

Seth is one of the children featured in the Children's Heart Gallery. Since it began in September 2012, 53 children have been photographed for the Children's Heart Gallery. Of these, 27 children have found their forever families.

Visit childrensheartgallery.org for more information.

Arizona Statewide

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Steinhoff named new ICWA Specialist

Vickie Steinhoff is the Division's Indian Child Welfare Act Specialist. Steinhoff is from Wisconsin and has more than 10 years experience with tribal youth programs on and off reservation.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) focused on Professional Communication with elective studies in Native American Culture. Her graduate academic experience (M.A.) included analysis of several Native American organizations and she has received additional training from the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Midwest Implementation Center on WICWA.

In addition, Steinhoff has been a foster mom, serving five years as a tribal licensed foster home and 3 years as a state licensed foster home.

In a future issue of the Arizona Statewide, Steinhoff will be sharing tips on ways foster families can help the children in their care maintain their culture.

Steinhoff replaces Lewis Lane, who retired in 2012.

Renew Your License EARLY!

Please remember that all requirements for the renewal of your foster care license must be met and submitted to your licensing agency **before your license expires**. When a foster home license is not renewed prior to expiration foster home payments cannot be issued by DES because the foster home becomes temporarily "unlicensed."

Please make sure your Fingerprint Clearance Card is current and that all of your required annual training is completed **BEFORE** your foster home license is up for renewal. Fingerprint Clearance Cards are valid for six years from issue.

With the length of a family foster care license being extended from one year to two years, it is more important than ever to submit all your renewal documents **prior** to your license expiration date.

The responsibility for having a **TIMELY** foster home license renewal is shared between the foster parent and their licensing agency.

Contact your licensing worker if you have additional questions.