

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

Family – This word has many meanings to many different people. But the one thing that is true for all families is that they need care and support to remain strong. And when a family is in crisis, the need for this care and support is even greater. Family is a strength all Oklahomans can rally around. You don't have to have a lot of money or time to make a difference in the life of a fragile family. Get involved and find out what you can do to help the families in your community. A majority of Region 4 is rural so the need for collaboration among many stakeholders or community partners is vital for families to succeed.

There were more than 10,000 children and youth in Oklahoma's foster care system in State Fiscal Year 2013.

Of this number, 2,127 of those children came from Region 4.

(Source: FY 2013 DHS Annual Report)

HAVE A FEW MINUTES?

Learn the facts about the foster care system in your area, Region 4, and gain a better understanding of the needs of those touched by this issue.

- Bridge Resource homes for foster care and adoption are places where children live when their own homes are unsafe due to abuse or neglect.
- Number of children in out-of-home care in Region 4 at the end of State Fiscal Year 2013: 2,127
- The estimated number of Native American children in Region 4 that have court involvement as of April 2014: 1,440
- Number of approved foster care beds in Region 4 at the end of State Fiscal Year 2013: 1,761
- Percent of children who reunified with their families in Region 4 at the end of State Fiscal Year 2013: 22%

Donate goods such as baby essentials, suitcases, books, games, computers, sports equipment, musical instruments, clothing, school supplies, food, and toiletries to social service agencies. You can do this by contacting your local DHS office and partner agencies to determine their specific needs.

Spread the word about the need for more foster and adoptive homes and supports for fragile families on your personal or organizational websites and social media.

Wear a Blue Ribbon all year round to show your support for abused or neglected children in your area and especially during April for Child Abuse Prevention Month, May in support of National Foster Care Month, and in November for National Adoption Month.

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

HAVE A FEW HOURS?

Volunteer with a local program that serves children in Oklahoma's foster care system to provide personal, social and academic enrichment opportunities for youth in your community.

Make a welcome basket for a child moving to a foster or adoptive home. Contact your local DHS county office for information. You can also make a food basket or service coupons (free respite care for one day or night, free home-cooked meal, free lawn mowing, etc.) for a fragile or struggling family in your community.

Recognize a person or organization helping youth in foster care or fragile families in your community by writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper in praise of the person or organization.

Make presentations to your civic group, PTA, faith-based congregation or other local organization. Encourage your community to come together to find families and resources that help children in foster care and families in crisis thrive.

HAVE A FEW WEEKS?

Become a respite care provider to support foster families in your community by contacting the Bridge Resource Support Center at 1-800-376-9729. You may also offer respite care to a struggling neighbor or community member.

Tutor a child in foster care or in a fragile family. Because they must change schools frequently or sometimes have social or behavioral challenges to overcome, many children in the foster care system or from fragile families would benefit greatly from academic support. Contact your county DHS office, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA and YWCA to ask about how to become a volunteer tutor.

Help young people who are in foster care or whose families are struggling become leaders by organizing a youth leadership or support group. Contact the Oklahoma Family Network at (877) 871-5072 or the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Oklahoma at (800) 583-1264 for a support group in your area.

Encourage business leaders in your community to support young people in foster care. Ask your company to distribute this information or hang a Change a Child's Lifetime campaign poster in your office to educate and involve employees and customers. The poster and other "Change a Lifetime" materials are available for order in limited quantities or to download at <http://bit.ly/ChangeALifetime>. Call the DHS Print Shop at 405-962-1709 to order.

Organize a clothing, baby essentials, school supplies or holiday gift drive for babies and youth in foster care. Contact your local DHS office for more information about specific needs in your community.

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

Collaborate with DHS and local child welfare organizations to develop marketing promotions for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, National Foster Care Month in May, National Adoption Month in November and all throughout the year.

Help a youth in foster care or in a struggling family gain employment skills or find a job by contacting the DHS Independent Living Coordinator for your community. Call your local DHS office for more information.

HAVE MORE TIME?

Volunteer to write home assessments for families going through the foster home approval process. Your local DHS office can assist you in determining the agency in your area that conducts these home assessments.

Support a foster family or struggling family in your community. There may be a family in your office, congregation, child's school, etc., who is a foster family or whose family is struggling. Being a support for that family's needs assists the children in their home.

Become a Court Appointed Special Advocate. CASA volunteers are trained citizens appointed by judges to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children. Learn how at www.oklahomacasa.org.

Become a foster or adoptive home. Caring foster and adoptive families are needed for children from birth to 18 years old, especially for teens, siblings and children with special needs. Call the DHS Bridge Family Resource Center to learn more: 1-800-376-9729.

We ask Foster Parents to:

- **Provide temporary care, love and emotional and physical support to the child and serve as a mentor actively helping the parent improve their ability to safely care for their children while staying connected and assisting in the transition to reunification, legal guardianship, or adoption to another family; and/or**
- **Serve as the legal guardian for the child while maintaining a child's connection to kin, culture and community. Connecting children with their culture and heritage has proven to be an added benefit for future planning and sustaining their well-being; and/or**
- **Adopt the child while maintaining the child's connection to kin, culture and community.**

Caring families are especially needed for teens, siblings and children with special needs.

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

To learn more, please visit: www.okbridgefamilies.com

Dedicate yourself to a career that helps children and families. Become a professional social worker. Look for jobs on the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services website at <http://www.jobaps.com/ok/>.

REGION 4 DHS OFFICES

Region 4 Adult and Family Services Office

2320 Arlington St., Suite C

Ada, OK 74820

Office Phone: (580) 310-7075, Fax (580) 310-7086

Region 4 Child Welfare Services Office

729 S. 32nd St.

Muskogee, OK 74401

Office Phone: (918) 684-5335, Fax (918) 684-5399

Adair County

Section Line Rd.

Rt 1, Box 42

Stilwell, OK 74960

Office Phone: (918) 797-2900 or 1-800-225-0049, Fax: (918) 797-2996

Atoka County

401 N. Greathouse Dr.

Atoka, OK 74525

Office Phone: (580) 889-3394 or 1-800-225-0051, Fax: (580) 889-3451

Bryan County

4302 Hwy. 70 West

Durant, OK 74702

Office Phone: (580) 931-2500 or 1-800-225-0062, Fax: (580) 931-2599

Cherokee County

Street Address: 1298 W. Fourth St.

Tahlequah, OK 74464

Mailing address: P. O. Box 1067

Tahlequah, OK 74464

Office Phone: (918) 207-4500 or 1-800-225-9868, Fax: (918) 207-4632

Choctaw County

2565 East 2070 Rd.

Hugo, OK 74743

Office Phone: (580) 317-2900 or 1-800-225-0076, Fax: (580) 317-2964

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

Coal County

One N. Main St.

Coalgate, OK 74538

Office Phone: (580) 927-2379 or 1-800-572-6829, Fax: (580) 927-2342

Creek County

10 N. Mounds

Sapulpa, OK 74066

Office Phone: (918) 746-3300 or 1-800-572-6834, Fax: (918) 746-3397

Haskell County

Street address: P.O. Box 659

Stigler, OK 74462

Mailing address: #9 Highway E.

Stigler, OK 74462

Office Phone: (918) 967-4658 or 1-800-638-3641, Fax: (918) 967-8647

Hughes County

801 Kingsberry Rd.

Holdenville, OK 74848

Office Phone: (405) 379-7231 or 1-800-493-7980, Fax: (405) 379-2376

Latimer County

Street address: 1809 Highway 270 East

Wilburton, OK 74578

Mailing address: P. O. Box 609

Wilburton, OK 74578

Office Phone: (918) 465-5800 or 1-800-493-7978, Fax: (918) 465-5850

LeFlore County

Street address: 511 S. Harper

Poteau, OK 74953

Mailing address: P. O. Box 370

Poteau, OK 74953

Office Phone: (918) 649-2300 or 1-800-493-7960, Fax: (918) 649-2481

McCurtain County

1300 S.E. Adams

Idabel, OK 74745

Office Phone: (580) 208-3400 or 1-800-815-7562, Fax: (580) 208-3500

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

McIntosh County

Street address: 25 Hospital Rd.

Eufaula, OK 74432

Mailing address: P.O. Box 231

Eufaula, OK 74432

Office Phone: (918) 689-1200 or 1-800-219-3238, Fax: (918) 689-1265

Muskogee County

Street address: 727 S. 32nd

Muskogee, OK 74403

Mailing address: P.O. Box 608

Muskogee, OK 74402

Office Phone: (918) 684-5300 or 1-800-815-7573, Fax: (918) 684-5363

Okfuskee County

119 S. First St.

Okemah, OK 74859

Office Phone: (918) 623-3100 or 1-800-884-1528, Fax: (918) 623-3165 or (918) 623-3166

Okmulgee County

5005 N. Wood Dr.

Okmulgee, OK 74447

Office Phone: (918) 752-2000 or 1-800-884-1582, Fax: (918) 752-2090

Pittsburg County

1900 South Main

McAlester, OK 74501

Office Phone: (918) 421-6100 or 1-800-270-0792, Fax: (918) 421-6218

Pontotoc County

2320 Arlington Ste. B

Ada, OK 74820

Office Phone: (580) 310-7050 or 1-800-270-0798, Fax: (580) 310-7127

Pushmataha County

104 S.E. "B" St.

Antlers, OK 74523

Office Phone: (580) 298-3361 or 1-800-270-0803, Fax: (580) 298-2129

Seminole County

206 E. Second St

Wewoka, OK 74884-2604

Office Phone: (405) 257-7400 or 1-800-270-0796, Fax: (405) 257-7480

Oklahoma Communities of Care

An Oklahoma Systems of Care Initiative

Sequoyah County

Street address: HC 61, Box 20

Sallisaw, OK 74955

Mailing address: 1611 S. Kerr Blvd.

Sallisaw, OK 74955

Office Phone: (918) 776-8000 or 1-800-270-0805, Fax: (918) 776-8112

Wagoner County

102 N.E. Seventh St.

Wagoner, OK 74467

Office Phone: (918) 614-5000 or 1-800-734-7518, Fax: (918) 614-5128

Dedicate yourself to a career that helps children and families. Become a professional social worker. Look for jobs on the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services website at <http://www.jobaps.com/ok/>.