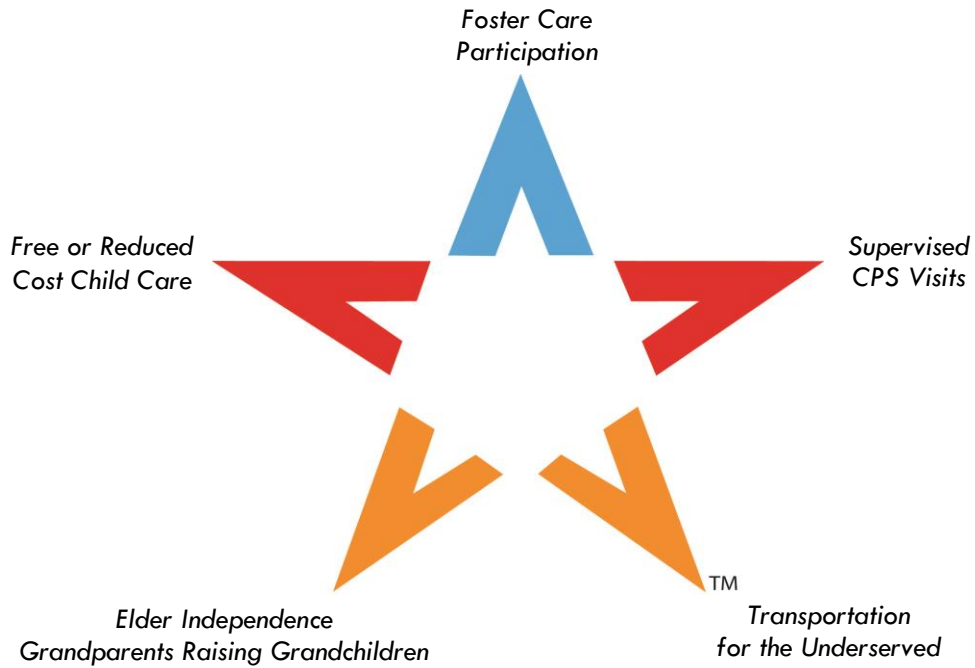


# ArizonaSERVES



February 2014

Executive Briefing



# ArizonaSERVES

## EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

### MISSION

Mission as set forth by Executive Orders 2010-07 and 2010-16:

“The Task Force shall serve as a statewide faith and community initiative resource for the Governor and the State of Arizona, and shall:

- ❖ Promote outreach and maximize resources to address the needs of the community which includes, but is not limited to, identifying strategies to:
- ❖ Encourage foster care participation;
- ❖ Facilitate the provision of free or reduced cost child care services through existing licensed facilities;
- ❖ Provide supervised Child Protective Service visits;
- ❖ Promote elder independence and assist grandparents raising grandchildren; and
- ❖ Provide transportation for the underserved.

Communicate the Task Force’s recommendations for inclusion on [www.ArizonaSERVES.gov](http://www.ArizonaSERVES.gov), a website created to foster communication between the community and the faith-based and non-profit organizations about available resources;

Continuously identify the needs of children, elderly, disabled, low-income and other vulnerable residents and assist in leveraging community resources to improve the systems of services;

Promote service and volunteerism in the State of Arizona; and

Improve collaboration to meet the greatest needs of the people of Arizona.”

In March of 2013, the mission of the ArizonaSERVES Task Force was narrowed to:

- Encourage foster care participation; and
- Provide supervised Child Protective Service visits

This adjustment was made in direct response to leaders of the faith community who believed a tighter alignment of missions would enable the community of faith to have a greater impact on the Child Welfare needs of Arizona.



## TASK FORCE

The Task Force has been led by Dr. Terry M. Crist since it was first seated on August 13, 2010.

Dr. Crist has convened the Task Force a total of seventeen times along with staffing by Governor Janice K. Brewer’s Policy Advisors – Ms. Christina Estes-Werther, Ms. Beth Kohler Lazare, Ms. Cassandra Larsen, Ms. Leah Koestner, and currently Ms. Jamie Bennett; and Mr. Chuck Fitzgerald with the Arizona Department of Economic Security’s (DES) Office of Faith and Community.

The table below lists current Task Force members.

Dr. Sylvester Ajagbe	Zane Anderson	Robert Brown	Susan Corsaro-Johnson
Jay Cory	Dr. Terry M. Crist	Mary Ellen Cunningham	Judith Fritsch
Cindy Hardy	Peg Harmon	Kevin Hartke	Cathi Herrod
Dr. Gary Kinnaman	Betty Lynch	Mike Normand	Chris Roussin
Billy Thrall	Sofia Tobar	Mark Upton	Jane Wabnik
Nicola Winkel	Staff: Jamie Bennett, Chuck Fitzgerald		

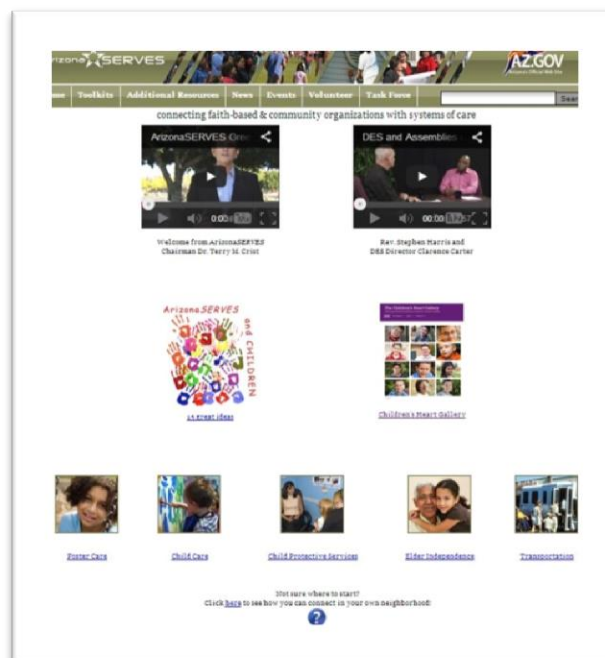
The ArizonaSERVES.gov website contains toolkits which allow community members and organizations to learn how to effectively engage with Arizona’s safety net systems of care.

More than 27,000 visitors have had a chance to hear the stories of those we serve, to view current data sets, to learn about best practices, to request information, and to connect quickly to meaningful service opportunities.

Videos, maps, photographs, presentations, handouts, contact information, and more may be found on each of the areas of focus.

Task Force meeting archives are also available.

[www.ArizonaSERVES.gov](http://www.ArizonaSERVES.gov)

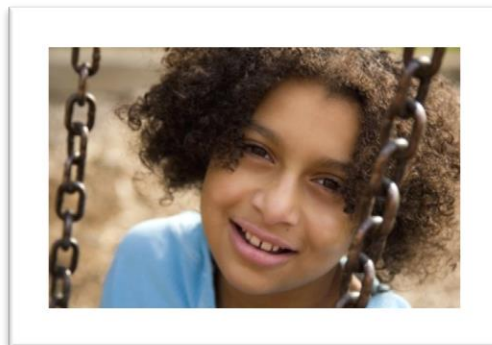


## ARIZONA 1.27 Children Need Families - Families Need Community

Arizona 1.27 is a church-based movement aimed at engaging the local church in the Arizona child welfare system.

Led by ArizonaSERVES Chair Dr. Terry M. Crist, Arizona 1.27 was born out of a response to the current foster care crisis but is built to be a long-term solution for our state's most vulnerable children and their families.

The Arizona 1.27 approach is to train local churches on how to best recruit and care for the members of their church engaged in the ministry of foster care and adoption.



Arizona 1.27 utilizes best practices in training churches so that they can care for their families with excellence and through support teams offer every member of that congregation a means of caring for the foster or adoptive child. They ask church members of participating congregations to go through some additional steps to ensure that they are more fully prepared to receive a child into their home and have the best chance at having a successful placement.

The Arizona 1.27 view is that everyone engaged in foster care and adoption should consider the spectrum of that ministry's needs. They encourage our families to compassionately care for the caseworker, the biological family of the child and other stakeholders in the child's life whenever possible. Furthermore, they believe there are a call and a place for every Christian in this ministry. Everyone can serve by taking a child into their home or supporting someone who does. Here are few Arizona 1.27 statistics:

- ❖ Formally launched at the beginning of 2013, has grown from a coalition of 3 to 30 churches
- ❖ Currently operates in Maricopa County (Maricopa County represents approximately 60% of the child welfare population) and is actively pursuing several new counties including but not limited to Pinal, Pima, Coconino, Gila and Yavapai
- ❖ Partner churches currently span from Buckeye to Queen Creek, Carefree to Chandler and represent 80,000+ evangelical congregants in Maricopa County
- ❖ 1,800+ people attended an Arizona 1.27 Orientation in 2013
- ❖ 400+ people have continued on from an Arizona 1.27 Orientation to the next steps in the foster and adoption licensing process. Many other Arizona 1.27 Orientation attendees (not interested in foster or adoptive parenting) have been exposed to other means of engaging in child welfare—such as Foster Care Review Board, CASA, serving on a family support team, mentoring, etc.
- ❖ It was recently said by a group of foster care and adoption agencies that Arizona 1.27 families are coming to “meet the need of the children” rather than look for their own personal preferences in a child—signifying an important culture shift

Arizona 1.27 is very encouraged about the response from churches and families stepping up to meet the need, but has significant concerns about the lack of preventative resources available for those children and families at risk of entering the system.

[www.AZ127.org](http://www.AZ127.org)

## CHILDREN'S HEART GALLERY

The ArizonaSERVES Task Force began to assist the DES Division of Children, Youth and Families in the fall of 2012 to find forever homes for children with a case plan goal of adoption.

A photo gallery website was created and has had more than 49,000 nationwide visitors since it launched in December 2012.

The “JohnJay and Rich Kids Care Foundation” has created an innovative mobile gallery set to launch in the spring of 2014 for use throughout Arizona.

The DES Volunteer Engagement Center enlisted volunteer professional photographers, hair stylists, and creative writers to capture the best possible images and stories of these children.



The table below lists photo shoots hosted by the community.

Date	Donated Location	Community Volunteers	Children Served	Children Placed in Forever Families
9/12/2012	Phoenix: Biltmore Resort	27	13	9
12/1/2012	Tucson: Loews Ventana Canyon	38	26	18
3/9/2013	Mesa: City of Grace	75	15	7
9/21/2013	Tucson: Loews Ventana Canyon	36	26	3
10/19/2013	Prescott: Heights Church	25	10	0
10/26/2013	Surprise: City Park	7	11	1
1/11/2014	Phoenix: Civic Space Park	94	42	0
	<b>Totals:</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>38</b>

Children utilizing the service of the Children's Heart Gallery are typically those who face the greatest challenges in finding a forever family. Yet in less than 18 months, more than 25 percent of the children photographed are in relationship with their forever families.

[www.ChildrensHeartGallery.org](http://www.ChildrensHeartGallery.org)

## ARIZONA BLUE RIBBON – CELEBRATING FOSTER FAMILIES

ArizonaSERVES leads a collaboration of community organizations for celebrating foster families during National Foster Care Awareness Month.

The inaugural event took place on May 11, 2013 at Chase Field in Phoenix with 198 foster families participating (1,261 people) in a fun-filled day that included an Arizona Diamondbacks' baseball game.

A note from a foster parent after the event: "I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the blessing of baseball this weekend. We are a new foster family, recently stepping into this adventure. It has been beautifully challenging at times, and continues to stretch our family in wonderful ways. For our foster girls, this was their first MLB baseball game ever. They clapped. They cheered. They ate way too much. They smiled from ear to ear. Thank you for giving them this opportunity. For our biological boys, avid baseball fans, you honored them for sharing their family. They sat on the edge of their seats, not wanting to miss a pitch, analyzing all of the stats. For Mom and Dad, we enjoyed a night out with the family. Surrounded by other foster families, we were covered in love. Just enjoying the game with the sheer number of others walking the same path, filled us up with encouragement for the road ahead. So from our family, thank you."



The 2014 event will be held on April 26, 2014 with a goal of 350 participating foster families (2,500 people).  
[www.ArizonaBlueRibbon.org](http://www.ArizonaBlueRibbon.org)

## ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS – FOSTERING HOPE

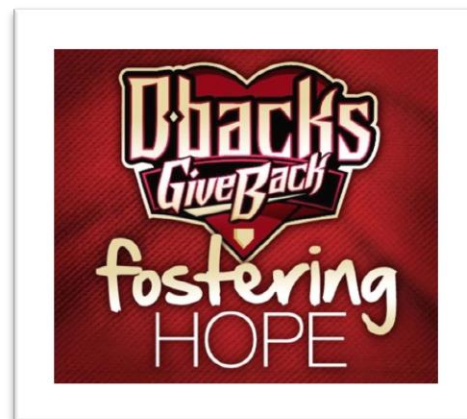
ArizonaSERVES has provided encouragement and technical assistance to the Arizona Diamondbacks' Give Back League in support of their foster care and adoption initiative called Fostering Hope. Fostering Hope works on raising community awareness regarding foster care and adoption, providing CPS visitation assistance, and mentoring of children in foster care.

In 2012, these Diamondback employees established a Guinness World Record by linking 27,665 paper dolls together to raise awareness of the needs of 14,000+ children in Arizona's foster care system.

Other projects include the remodeling CPS family visitation rooms, reuniting separated siblings for visits, and mentoring teens in foster care.

The team plans a foster sibling reunion camp for June 2014.

[www.facebook.com/fosteringhopeaz](https://www.facebook.com/fosteringhopeaz)



## CPS OFFICE SUPPORT

ArizonaSERVES and the DES Office of Faith and Community coordinate the building and strengthening of partnerships between community organizations and local CPS office personnel.

The purpose is to provide local community support to CPS staff as they work with the children and families in their care. Goals are:

- To improve the quality of existing family visitation rooms (58 rooms have been adopted)
- To ensure a sufficient number of family visitation rooms
- To improve donation support for local CPS efforts
- To increase community knowledge regarding the role and responsibility of CPS
- To provide meaningful service opportunities for faith and community organizations



Community relationships have been established, and are providing support, for CPS staff located in:

Apache Junction	Casa Grande	Gilbert	Glendale
Globe	Hotline	Kingman	Lake Havasu City
Mesa	Parker	Peoria	Phoenix
Show Low	Somerton	Tempe	Tucson
Yuma			

## OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ❖ “Our Kids, Our Care” foster and adoptive family recruitment event was held February 1, 2014 in Tucson at Victory Worship Center. ArizonaSERVES, Family Life Radio, 4 Tucson, DCYF and licensed providers, churches, foster families, and other stakeholders make up the planning team. [www.ourkidsourcare.com](http://www.ourkidsourcare.com)
- ❖ “Ten City Covenant Roundtable.” ArizonaSERVES was the presentation center piece in NYC on October 9, 2013. The Task Force and its efforts were highlighted as an innovative way of connecting the faith community with government programs to address pressing needs, especially regarding the recruitment of foster care and adoptive families.
- ❖ A “Gap Closing Collaborative” charter was signed by the partnering organizations on August 28, 2013 with an action plan for addressing the over-representation of African-American children in Arizona’s child welfare system. The collaboration includes ArizonaSERVES, the Department of Economic Security, Casey Family Programs, the Arizona Community Foundation and the Faith Opportunity Zone with the purpose of finding foster and adoptive families for African-American children in Arizona’s child welfare system.

- ❖ “CAMP” the movie, premiere event was sponsored by ArizonaSERVES, Hope & A Future, Casey Family Programs and the Department of Economic Security. Approximately 300 community leaders attended the premiere on April 19, 2013 and heard comments from Governor Jan Brewer, Jacob Roebuck, Wayne Tesch, Director Clarence Carter and William Bell. The movie subsequently played at various Arizona theaters to raise awareness of the impact summer camps have on children in foster care.
- ❖ “Caring for Our Children and Youth Summit,” October 5, 2012. ArizonaSERVES, CityServe Arizona and the West Valley Human Services Alliance convened a one day faith community event in Phoenix to bring awareness and connections to vulnerable children; emphasis was placed on foster care and adoption. <http://wvhsa.acfbci.org/caring-for-our-children-and-youth/>
- ❖ “Focus on the Family – Wait No More Adoption Event,” February 11, 2012. Task Force member Mark Upton started the new No Child Waiting Coalition for engaging churches in Maricopa and Pima Counties regarding Foster Care and Adoption. This coalition, along with ArizonaSERVES, brought Focus on the Family to Phoenix in February 2012 to help find adoptive homes for 356 children; 285 now have an identified placement. [www.nochildwaiting.org](http://www.nochildwaiting.org)
- ❖ “Faith in Action” Phoenix, October 2011; and Engage Tucson, April 2012. ArizonaSERVES supported events for engaging faith communities to serve alongside agencies already serving in local neighborhoods. Special emphasis was placed on foster care participation.
- ❖ Open Table Young Adult Model, June 2011, ongoing. The Open Table developed a community model specifically designed for young adults who have aged-out of foster care. This model assembles a board of directors to mentor and assist a young adult as they make decisions for living independently. [www.theopentable.org](http://www.theopentable.org)
- ❖ “Benevolence and Beyond Summit.” ArizonaSERVES and the West Valley Human Services Alliance convened a one day event on February 11, 2011 in the Phoenix area to redefine poverty as a lack of healthy relationships; emphasis placed on children in group foster homes and children aging-out of foster care. <http://wvhsa.acfbci.org/benevolence-n-beyond/>
- ❖ “Helping the Helpers – equipping those who interact with family caregivers” Summit was held on March 8, 2013. ArizonaSERVES and the West Valley Human Services Alliance convened a one day event to connect community leaders to resources and information for strengthening family caregivers. <http://wvhsa.acfbci.org/helping-the-helpers/>
- ❖ “Without a Ride, Life Unravels – Transportation for the Underserved Summit,” February 11, 2012. ArizonaSERVES and the West Valley Human Services Alliance convened a one day event to connect community leaders to resources and information for providing transportation for the underserved. Living Solutions for Seniors and the Benevilla Grocery Shopping Program were created to assist with transportation needs as a result of this event. <http://wvhsa.acfbci.org/transportation-for-the-underserved>

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