Call to Order

- **Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, called the Governor’s Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. with 21 members and 9 staff and guests present. **Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, then reviewed the procedures of the Council meeting and welcomed all those joining both in-person and via Zoom.

Opening Remarks
• Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, welcomed Councilmembers to the Council meeting and shared that it is great to be back in-person.

Roll Call
• Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, conducted a roll call of the Council with quorum met.

Approval of Minutes
• Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, requested a review of the January 13, 2022 meeting minutes.
  ○ Mark Upton moved to accept the January 13, 2022 minutes.
  ○ Torrie Taj seconded the motion.
  ○ The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 10:10 a.m.

Special Recognition
• Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, honored CarePortal on behalf of the Governor’s Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment as they have reached a milestone of impacting the lives of over 10,000 Arizona children and families. Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, presented Jonathan Sanborn with a Commendation from Governor Doug Ducey for CarePortal’s partnership and dedication to supporting Arizona’s most vulnerable children and families.
• Johnathan Sanborn thanked Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, and the Council for their recognition of CarePortal. Mr. Sanborn recounted CarePortal’s launch at Grand Canyon University five years ago with Governor Ducey and stated that CarePortal is not the hero, they are the plumbing that provides the connection between Arizona churches and families in crisis and he noted the amazing work of these parties.

Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation
• Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, introduced Kris Jacober, Executive Director of Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation (AFFCF) for a presentation on the services they provided to foster children. Before Ms. Jacober began her presentation, Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, shared that she was an AFFCF Board Member for 25 years and during her tenure Ms. Jacober took AFFCF to new heights in providing services to Arizona children. Ms. Jacober thanked Kathryn A. Pigeon, Co-Chair, for her praise and being a founding board member of the organization.
• Ms. Jacober began her presentation by sharing the mission of AFFCF and shared that for more than 38 years, the foundation has said yes to every request that has been within their guidelines with the first award being provided in 1984 for a music lesson for a child in Prescott, AZ. Ms. Jacober emphasized that the foster care landscape was different in 1984 as the majority of children in foster care lived with a foster family. In 2021, the majority of AFFCF awards were for summer camp. AFFCF also pays for a great deal of supplemental clothing due to the state’s stipend of $150 a year for clothing for each child in foster care.
• In 2014, the Keys To Success program launched in order to support youth transitioning out of foster care. It is estimated that in 2022, AFFCF will enroll 300 youth in Maricopa County with career development, education support and assistance finding a job. In total, 92% of youth in the Keys to Success program are employed and 96% of those old enough to attend college, are either in college, vocational schools or in post secondary education. Ms. Jacober explained that early in AFFCF’s history, the Board felt that youth should continue to be supported after the age of 18 in their educational efforts through post-secondary scholarships. Currently, there are 70 AFFCF scholars at community colleges and universities. She further shared that in 2018, the Penson Fund was introduced and is earmarked for youth pursuing their post secondary education who experience an emergency situation such as emergency rental assistance, car repairs, technology needs, etc.
• Michael Faust asked Ms. Jacober if she could share what AFFCF did with funding from the Department of Child Safety (DCS) last year. Ms. Jacober stated that AFFCF uses federal funding received through the state to provide services to youth who have transitioned out of foster care. And since June of last year, AFFCF has been able to spend down almost $3,000,000. From June 2021 through September 2021, funding was earmarked for youth up to 26 years old and from October 2021 through September 2022 funding is earmarked for youth ages 14 to 20 years of age. Ms. Jacober stated that the first round of funding was used primarily to
support payment of rent, strollers and computers. During the second round of funding, they are now paying for a lot of driver education courses. Michael Faust added that this has been a learning experience for the state as the state experiences challenges with individual transactions and the state should be open to an alternative approach. More specifically, he noted the need to identify what community-based partners do well, what the state does well, and how agencies collaborate to provide necessary services. DCS and AFFCF are currently working on contracts for any youth turning 16 years old to attend drivers education classes. Michael Faust then asked Ms. Jacober if she could touch on the GCU activity in May. Ms. Jacober informed the Council that DCS, AFFCF and GCU are putting together a summit on May 19, 2022 for all qualified foster care organizations, faith based organizations and anyone else working in foster care to come together with the goal of sharing information about DCS’ goals for kids and families and how they can work together as foster care stakeholders.

- **James D. Molina** thanked AFFCF for funding all 18 of his program participants to go to camp and the bikes they provided.
- The full presentation can be accessed at https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10.

**Hushabye Nursery**

- **Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair**, introduced **Tara Sundem**, Executive Director of Hushabye Nursery for a presentation on their work with babies and families experiencing maternal opioid use disorder and neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, went on to say that Michelle Moore and Sandy Metzler from Mother’s Grace, an organization that she is involved with, went for a tour of Hushabye Nursery and when asked what their takeaway was they stated: homelike, warm, nurturing, and mothering. Ms. Sundem thanked Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, for her feedback and for asking Hushabye Nursery to present to the Council.

- **Ms. Sundem** began her presentation by sharing that Hushabye’s care model transitioned from ‘save the babies’ to ‘save the families’ through a deeper understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Hushabye Nursery questioned how they can help a baby that is born with at least two adverse childhood experiences and how to prevent them from having four or more ACEs. This knowledge led to a change in services provided since Hushabye opened in November 2020. Ms. Sundem then shared that it is estimated that a baby is born exposed to substances every 15 minutes and that she believes this number to be low as there are many home births and many families are not mandatorily drug tested. She then shared a video of a newborn baby experiencing withdrawal and stated that five years ago Hushabye Nursery was only seeing a handful of these babies in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU). In contrast, last week St. Joseph’s Hospital had 16 babies suffering from withdrawal from just one Medicare provider. Ms. Sundem went on to describe the withdrawal symptoms babies experience and shared that these babies are often only able to sleep in blocks of 5-10 minutes. For some babies, the withdrawal process can take months. Hushabye’s mission is not just to make it easier for babies initially, but to make sure that by the time they enter Kindergarten they know more about their developmental delays and deficits. Hushabye does not yet have outcome data in this arena, but their hope is that they have built trust with their families and that they will continue accessing services through Hushabye, and in the process, outcome data will be collected. Currently, Hushabye meets moms and dads prenatally that are struggling with substance and dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. Hushabye strives to de-stigmatize substance use, meet families where they are, and provide resources with the help of community partners. Hushabye has found that when they meet families prenatally, babies are healthier at delivery.

- **Ms. Sundem** described the Hushabye Opioid Pregnancy Preparation and Empowerment program (HOPPE) which engages with parents prenatally, connecting them with services and support through the HOPPE program. Program participants are able to provide verification of what they have accomplished throughout their pregnancy to their providers and case managers, such as drug court hearings, safe sleep classes, car seat safety courses, etc.

- **Ms. Sundem** then explained the difference between the NICU model of care and Hushabye’s model of care. Hushabye’s model treats babies in quiet, dark, calm environments with private nurseries where moms and dads can stay 24/7. Hushabye staff understand opioid use disorder (OUD) and medicated assisted treatment
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(MAT). Case managers, as well as peer support specialists, are also located on-site and trained to support families working with DCS. The average length of stay for NAS infants at Hushabye is seven days while the average stay in the NICU is 22 days. AHCCCS is the insurance provider for 95% of Hushabye families. Hushabye’s cost is $1,000 a night compared to $7,000 at a NICU, with an average stay at a NICU costing between $40,000 to $60,000. Ms. Sundem concluded that since the Nursery opened in November 2020, they have served 235 babies.

- Berisha Black asked how long Hushabye works with families after they leave the hospital. Ms. Sundem shared that they work with families as long as the families want to engage with them. Hushabye conducts follow-up appointments with families at 48 hours, a week, two weeks, a month, and along the immunization schedule. Additionally, they work very closely with the developmental follow-up clinics so families do not fall through the cracks.

- Jeffrey James Taylor stated how impressed he was with the presentation and appreciates that Hushabye continues to work with families during a relapse. He also provided a brief explanation of the Opioid Act enacted four years ago, sharing that the current cost of fentanyl on the streets is $2-$3, compared to the Oxycontin equivalent of $60. He stated that the issue is going to get worse before it gets better and he honors the work that Hushabye is doing. Ms. Sundem shared one mother’s success story, stating that at fifteen weeks pregnant the mother worked with Hushabye to be admitted into a detox facility and she is in the process of going into a residential rehabilitation upon release.

- Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, asked how most of the moms come to Hushabye prenatally. Ms. Sundem replied that the majority of prenatal referrals are from the MAT programs, community medical services and intensive treatment systems.

- Claire Louge asked if Hushabye interfaces with the Safe, Healthy Infants, Families Thrive (SHIFT) initiative. Ms. Sundem stated that they are on the SHIFT collaborative as they were one of the members that began the initiative. SHIFT is a Maricopa collaborative that works with pregnant families experiencing OUD or SUD and connects them to resources when the baby is born to help achieve the best outcomes possible.

- Michael Faust asked for clarification regarding the number of babies safely discharged to a biological parent. Ms. Sundem replied that she believes around ⅔ of the babies served through Hushabye are discharged to a biological parent, but she can get Michael Faust the true number at a later time. Michael Faust then asked which ACC plans Hushabye is contracted with. Ms. Sundem replied five out of the seven. Michael Faust mentioned including this information in the statewide child abuse and neglect prevention plan.

- Torrie Taj thanked Ms. Sundem for her work the past five to six years and her ambition to find a model that works.

- Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, asked if they have a need for volunteers. Ms. Sundem answered yes as they need people to cuddle and hold babies, host baby showers and work in the baby boutique. Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, then asked how individuals interested in volunteering can connect with Hushabye. Ms. Sundem shared that anyone interested can visit Hushabye.org and look into the volunteers tab that lists opportunities.

- The full presentation can be accessed at https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10.

ACE’s Consortium and Resiliency Council

- Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, introduced Angie Burleson, Executive Director of the ACE’s Consortium and Resiliency Council for a presentation on their current initiatives. Ms. Burleson thanked the Council for being able to present. Ms. Burleson went on to say that studies have shown that a child needs to have one supportive caring adult in their life and Hushabye’s family model is taking that approach to mitigate childhood trauma and the impacts of ACEs. Ms. Burleson began her presentation by providing a history of the ACE’s Consortium as a grassroots organization in 2007. The Consortium is composed of a Trauma Sessions in School Committee, a Rural Community Committee, Healing Historical Trauma Committee, Interfaith Committee, and Training Workgroup. All of the work is done through these committees/workgroups and
focuses on the needs of the community and the best ways to support efforts to mitigate the impact of ACEs. The Consortium does this through statewide community events.

- May is Trauma Awareness Month and the Consortium will be hosting rural community events to discuss what trauma and resilience looks like. The Consortium has also been involved in advocacy, including reviewing policies, procedures and legislative items that the Consortium can support to help adults and children throughout the state. The Consortium is working with Arizona Health Improvement Plan, Pandemic Recovery and Resilience to build out the statewide ACEs awareness plan, which brings together stakeholders from across the state to identify gaps and how to best provide support. **Ms. Burleson** went on to discuss the success of the Consortium’s training of trainers certified program, which was created at the end of 2019. In early 2020, the pandemic hit and they had to pivot from in-person facilitation to online meetings. To date, 308 individuals across Arizona have been trained to be certified ACEs trainers, along with individuals from other states.

- **Ms. Burleson** went on to explain that over the past six to seven years, the Consortium has been working with Trauma Sensitive Schools to review how ACEs awareness can be incorporated into the school environment. A result of this effort is the Resilience Coordinating Council, a newly created council funded through the Vitalyst Health Foundation Spark Grant. The council was created in response to Vitalyst’s Trauma Sensitive Schools Report in 2020, a statewide assessment reviewing what trauma-informed practices were taking place in schools, the incoming knowledge level of staff, and identification of gaps in knowledge. The goal of the Council is to bring stakeholders together to discuss ways to bring initiatives forward. Lastly, **Ms. Burleson** announced that the Consortium was recently awarded a grant from the Maricopa County Health Department to conduct a Maricopa Countywide ACEs Training program, focusing on schools, community organizations and youth. For schools, there are three levels of training depending on their staff’s incoming knowledge level. These levels include: 12 hrs of training for the entire year for those with no knowledge; 8 hrs of training for the entire year for those with little understanding; and 4 hrs of training for the entire year for those with high understanding. The Consortium is also able to provide stipends for identified trauma-informed ambassadors within schools who provide wrap around support to school staff. The Consortium is partnering with Candelen to facilitate training with certified ACEs trainers. More information on this program can be found at [https://azaces.org/maricopa](https://azaces.org/maricopa).

- **James D. Molina** thanked **Ms. Burleson** for what the Consortium is doing and asked if there is a cost associated with the school training. **Ms. Burleson** answered that there is no cost and that there are mini grants available for schools to receive $30/hour for staff, up to 25 staff. **James D. Molina** then asked if he could get a copy of the presentation digitally. **Maria Cristina Fuentes** responded that all materials will be posted on the GOYFF website after the meeting.

- The full presentation can be accessed at [https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10](https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10).

**ASU Preparatory Academy at Pilgrims Rest**

- **Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair**, introduced **Heidi Alexander**, principal of ASU Preparatory Academy Pilgrim Rest for a presentation on the launch of ASU Preparatory Academy at Pilgrim Rest.

- **Ms. Alexander** began her presentation by sharing part of her personal story concerning her ACE score. She was a part of the foster care system, a mom in poverty, and education was an equalizer in her life. **Ms. Alexander** then explained Pilgrim Rest’s relationship with Arizona State University (ASU) and the mission of the academy. ASU Preparatory Academy at Pilgrim Rest is a science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) school. In education, traditionally there are individualized learning plans, reserved for students with exceptional abilities and for students in special education. The ASU Preparatory Academy model provides every child that same level of intentional individual planning of learning. Families, teachers and the children are included in the creation of their individualized plans and the children monitor their plan goals. **Ms. Alexander** highlighted their partners, Rosie’s House, where families can send their children for low to no cost for additional music instruction, a snack, a place to do homework, and a place to stay safely until 6 p.m. **Ms. Alexander** highlighted EastLake Park and its historical significance in the African American community including speeches from Booker T. Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Tanner A.M.E. across the
street. In partnership with Pilgrim Rest, Eastlake Park, for $25 a year, provides social-emotional support and recreational activities to families after school from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. in collaboration with other organizations.

- At Pilgrim Rest, the arts are a large focus in student learning plans. Every child takes part in this musical component and each child receives their own instrument. Additionally, visual arts are part of the curriculum. Curriculum will include art history, art techniques and highlighting artists of color. Lastly, Ms. Alexander highlighted that 6th grade was added to the school due to parent requests. Additionally, a peer leadership and mentoring program was added, which allows older students to mentor younger students and provide academic support. As a caveat, Ms. Alexander stated that sometime in the near future Pilgrim Rest believes that they will be the only school in the country that will have a fully immersive, almost metaverse experience, for students to step into.

- **Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair**, asked if this year was Pilgrim Rest’s first full year. Ms. Alexander answered the school is scheduled to open in August 2022 and that this was her first full year as the Founding Planning Principal, using this first year to create relationships with the community and planning for the school. **Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair**, then asked how many children can be accommodated per grade. Ms. Alexander answered that Pilgrim Rest can accommodate three classes per grade level, 25-27 students per class, up to 400 total students.

- **Richard D. Yarbough** thanked Ms. Alexander for the wonderful presentation and stated that they are on the cusp of introducing some technology to the school that will make ASU Preparatory Academy at Pilgrim Rest the only school in the country that has this educational tool. Pilgrim Rest is an unprecedented collaboration of community partners who are making this a reality as they have been working with ASU for over five years and have received a strong embrace from the community. Many concepts in the school have come from things that have been discussed during Council meetings, including no out of school suspensions and staff to be trained in ACEs/trauma-informed care in order to put students in a position of success, not failure. They have seen an erosion of things like young people looking up to elders and in order to address that, the peer leadership and mentoring program was put in place with grade intervals. Pilgrim Rest will be partnering with ASU Prep’s middle and high school students to mentor their 5th and 6th graders. Ms. Alexander stated Pilgrim Rest’s overarching philosophy is to pull children in, regardless of their age, as they need our love, concern and very best.

- The full presentation can be accessed at [https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10](https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10).

**Update from DCS**

- **Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Michael Faust**, the Director for the Arizona Department of Child Safety for an update from the department.

- **Michael Faust** thanked **Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, for her introduction and began his presentation by highlighting that every industry is experiencing labor shortages and DCS is no exception. DCS staff go into communities 4,000 a month to engage with families even though DCS currently has the lowest number of specialists since Director Faust stepped into this role seven years ago. Call volume was depressed in the early stages of the pandemic but it is now higher than pre-pandemic numbers at about 4,000 reports a month. Michael Faust shared that the state is responding to every call that they get but is limiting their role in families lives, intervening only when necessary with the families who need that level of intervention. Currently, DCS specialists are keeping pace with the amount of cases that are being opened and closed, to prevent a backlog. Overall there is a 10% increase in all reports compared to the previous year. DCS is not sure if this is due to the needs of the community or the emergence from the pandemic. What DCS does know is that there is a significant increase in the number of reports from school sources. Michael Faust believes this is due to kids not attending school in-person and now that they are, reports are up. However, DCS expects these numbers to equalize as time moves forward and this will allow DCS to have a better understanding of need or greater level or reporting. Michael Faust then mentioned the work DCS is doing with **Rachel Mitchell** in creating a statewide standardized mandated reporter training that will be delivered to educators and made available to churches and medical professionals. Michael Faust then mentioned that **Claire Louge** and the team at Prevent Child Abuse Arizona are working on supplemental training for those mandated reporters who believe that calling the hotline is the pathway to services. There was also an increase in the number of reports from
law enforcement directly related to domestic violence, which is now beginning to level out. Michael Faust added that there needs to be more work done on interventions to properly engage families and keep families together. Michael Faust went on to explain that he is not advocating that any family stay together if they are being abused and harmed. However, treatment is necessary for healing. Separation might be important in the short term, or in the immediacy, but healing absolutely needs to be included. Michael Faust shared that in 2016, 1,000 kids a month would enter out-of-home care. Currently, 600-625 kids are entering out-of-home care each month. He believes there are still less intrusive interventions such as serving more families in-home which takes a little more creativity and brings stakeholders together.

- In August 2019, more kids were placed in kinship care and less in community foster care. This was a significant shift as the majority of kids in Arizona, historically, resided with community foster care. Michael Faust mentioned that he is not advocating for one over the other, but what he is saying is that if kids can be kept with their families then that is what is desired. There is always a role for community foster families. Currently there are about 6,200 kids placed with kinship families and he thanked Governor Ducey for advocating for an increase in the kinship stipend and for challenging the state to do a more effective job at licensing kin so more support can be provided. Currently, 56% of kids are with family, 46% are with unlicensed (primary kinship) and 10% are with licensed foster families. Michael Faust believes it is possible to increase the number of kids placed with family to 65%-70% if the state needs does a better job of bringing awareness to the need. There are currently 1,800 kids in congregate care facilities and Michael Faust believes that number should be far less. Once again, there is a role for congregate care, but thought should go into specialization, and identifying the right kids for congregate care and how those kids are being supported to ultimately join with family. Lastly, Michael Faust talked about runaway youth and shared the biggest dangers they face are trafficking and substance use.

- In 2018, there were 700 kids in extended foster care and currently there are 1,250. DCS’ goal is to serve 100% of all kids who turn 18 years old for three additional years, find them a safe place to stay, build a skill that differentiates them from their peers, and help them build lasting adult relationships.

- Michael Faust thanked Kris Jacober for her presentation earlier on AFFCF and stated that many of her key points will be highlighted during the GCU Summit on May 19th.

- María Cristina Fuentes added that they will have a robust presentation ready for the GCU Summit highlighting the key issues discussed during today’s Council meeting.

- James D. Molina asked what time the GCU Summit is on May 19th. Michael Faust answered that he did not currently know the time of the GCU Summit.

- Jeffrey James Taylor then provided an update to the Council on the Parity for Foster Children Placed with Kin Bill. The bill passed the House on a 52-7 vote and was passed by the Senate Appropriations Committee on a 11-1 vote. The bill is expected to be on the Governor’s desk shortly.

- The full presentation can be accessed at https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2022/03/10.

Workgroup Updates

- Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, introduced Claire Louge, Chair of the Prevention Workgroup, for an update on the workgroup. Clair Louge updated the Council that in the fall of 2021, the workgroup toured New Freedom Facility, a large facility for those reentering society from the prison system. Additionally, there is an effort to bring Triple P-Positive Parenting Program services as part of New Freedom’s broad array of services for parents.
  - Jeffrey James Taylor stated that he has toured the facility two or three times with members from the Governor’s Office and it is phenomenal what the program is doing by providing recovery groups for around 300 people. The size of the program concerned him initially but the organization is knowledgeable and they don’t overmanage nor undermanage and it is a true community of recovery and re-entry.
  - Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, asked if the program was male and/or female. Claire Louge responded that the program is both male and female and that everyone that works there is a former inmate.
● Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, introduced Katie O'Dell, Chair of the Outreach Workgroup, for an update on the workgroup. Katie O'Dell updated the Council that this year the workgroup is focused on recruiting foster and kinship families. The workgroup is pulling data so they can set out a goal on how many families they would like to recruit as communities of faith and community organizations to balance out congregate care. The workgroup would also like to strategize on participating in the GCU event that is upcoming and sharing their ideas with churches and communities.
  o Michael Faust agreed with Katie O'Dell’s statement and Maria Cristina Fuentes then added that the workgroup welcomes advice from faith leaders on how to recruit other faith leaders on how to help them with the churches. She then stated that the data that shows the number of kids by zip code in their neighborhoods are important to faith leaders as these are the kids that they can impact. Having those deliberate conversations will then lead to attainable goals for that specific church and community.

● Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair, requested for an update from Rachel Mitchell, Chair of the Children’s Justice Task Force, but Rachel Mitchell stepped off the call, thus an update on the workgroup was not provided.

Future Meeting Date
● Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair, reminded Councilmembers that the next meeting will occur May 12, 2022 at 10 a.m.

Adjournment
● Mrs. Ducey, Co-Chair, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  o Paul S. Mulligan moved to adjourn.
  o James D. Molina seconded the motion.
  o The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.

Dated 10 of March 2022
Governor’s Council Child Safety and Family Empowerment
Respectfully Submitted By:
Anthony Amezquita
GOYFF