



Council on Child  
Safety and  
Family Empowerment

GOVERNOR DUCEY'S OFFICE OF YOUTH, FAITH AND FAMILY  
COUNCIL ON CHILD SAFETY AND FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

**Meeting Minutes**

**November 14, 2019**

**10:00 AM**

**Governor's 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**

1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

A general meeting of the Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment was convened on November 14, 2019 at the Governor's 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

<b>Members Present (16)</b>	
<b>Kathryn A. Pidgeon</b> , Co-Chair, Adoption Attorney	<b>Berisha Black</b> , Director, Arizona Foster Care Initiatives
<b>Darlene Newsom</b> , CEO, UMOM New Day Centers	<b>Jay A. Cory</b> , President and CEO, Phoenix Rescue Mission
<b>Colleen McNally</b> , Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Maricopa County, Retired	<b>Jeffrey James Taylor</b> , Chair, Salvation Army Advisory Board
<b>Kate Brophy McGee</b> , Arizona State Senator	<b>Katie O'Dell</b> , State Director, AZ 1.27
<b>Leslie Y. Reprogle</b> , Founder, Agape Adoption Agency Arizona	<b>Molly Dunn</b> , Director, FosterEd Arizona
<b>Mark Upton</b> , President and CEO, Christian Family Care	<b>Vicki Mayo</b> , Founder and CEO, The Touchpoint Solution
<b>Mike Faust</b> , Director, AZ Department of Child Safety	<b>Zora Manjencich</b> , Assistant Chief Counsel, Attorney General
<b>Torrie Taj</b> , CEO, Child Crisis Arizona	<b>Paul S. Mulligan</b> , President and CEO, Catholic Charities
<b>Members Absent (8)</b>	
<b>Obed Escobar</b> , Regional Director, Alliance Defending Freedom	<b>Janet L. Garcia</b> , Arizona Senior Director, Casey Family Programs
<b>Andrea Stuart</b> , Executive V.P. Staff Services & Care, Arizona Baptist Children's Association	<b>Lorrie Henderson</b> , president and CEO of the Jewish Family & Children's Service organization
<b>James D. Molina</b> , Director, Step up Arizona	<b>Terry M. Crist</b> , Pastor, Hillsong Phoenix
<b>Richard Yarbough</b> , Executive Director, Pilgrim Rest Foundation	<b>Warren H. Stewart Jr.</b> , Pastor, Church of the Remnant
<b>Staff/Guests Present (25)</b>	
<b>Maria Cristina Fuentes</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Leona Morales</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Susan Alameda</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family	<b>Gaelyn Davis</b> , Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family
<b>Michelle Fennois</b> , National Center for Youth Law	<b>Robin Pearson</b> , Voices for CASA Children
<b>Janet Story</b> , Maricopa County National Adoption Day Committee	<b>Jenny Cook</b> , Boost a Foster Family
<b>Michelle Noe</b> , Boost a Foster Family	<b>Maria Villalobos</b>
<b>Christal Ziegler</b> , Honoree	<b>Gary Webb</b> , OCJ Kids
<b>Blake Van Es</b> , #LOVEUP Foundation	<b>Kristin Hower</b> , #LOVEUP Foundation
<b>Abbey Schroeder</b> , McSally For Senate	

**1. Call to Order**

**Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon**, Co-Chair, called the Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment meeting to order at 10:08 AM.

**2. Opening Remarks**

**Director Maria Cristina Fuentes** welcomed everyone to the Governor's Child Safety and Family Empowerment Council. She explained that Mrs. Angela Ducey would not be attending the meeting.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon** asked members to review the copy of minutes from the September 12, 2019 meeting. **She** requested a motion to approve the minutes. **Mr. Mark Upton** moved to approve the minutes as drafted and **Ms. Mollie Dunn** seconded. The motion passed with unanimous vote.

**4. Special Recognition**

**Director Fuentes** recognized Cristal Ziegler, for her dedication and commitment to helping foster families through the adoption process. Director Fuentes highlighted Cristal's work and shared Cristal's own journey began as a foster mother and turned into an adoption success story. **Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon** presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

**5. National Adoption Day**

**Director Fuentes** introduced Mrs. Kathryn Pidgeon and Mrs. Janet Story who were representing the Maricopa County National Adoption Day (Foundation) Celebration Committee. This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 23, 2019, meaning all adopted children can have a permanent home for the Thanksgiving holiday. Currently, there are more than 125,000 children in foster care who are waiting to be adopted. The first National Adoption Day in Maricopa County was held on Nov. 18, 2000 in Phoenix. That day, 59 children were adopted. Since then, more than 4,000 children have been adopted during the celebration. This year, organizers are anticipating 145 adoptions. The event is open to the public and everyone is encouraged to take part.

- **Ms. Colleen McNally** stated that the event is an amazing experience and provides an opportunity watch the proceedings, spend time in the hallways to see the love of the families. She commended Mrs. Pidgeon and Mrs. Story for their work and bringing so many people together for this event.
- **Ms. Mollie Dunn** said that she has attended the event in Los Angeles and it is a reminder of what children's advocates do and why the work is so important.

**Director Fuentes** thanked Mrs. Pidgeon and Mrs. Story for their hard work and dedication that has been shown by previous events and wished them well for this year's event.

**6. #LoveUp Foundation**

**Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon** introduced Ms. Kristin Hower and Mrs. Blake Van Es of the #LoveUp Foundation. Mrs. Van Es explained that the foundation originated from her husband's syndicated radio show Johnjay and Rich. She explained that every year, they grant Christmas Wishes. One day, the couple attended a church session that talked about the challenge of having every church care for one foster child. This motivated them to find a way to do good and give back all year long. They started the #LoveUp Foundation to do just that. One program is the Heart Gallery, a way for children in foster care to have professional photographs taken and also give them clothing, shoes, a new haircut and a chance to meet a family. The Governor and Mrs. Ducey recently took part in an event held at the Odysea Aquarium for the children. Recently, the group gave 100 new laptops to foster children in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Also this year, they are hosting a Christmas celebration (tree lighting) at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Resort for foster families and children.

- **Director Michael Faust** said that the partnership with #LoveUp has been a great experience for the Department of Child Safety and, most importantly, the children in foster care. He said that there are currently 250 children finding permanency each year through adoptions.
- **Ms. Vicki Mayo** asked how families can connect. She said that she has friends who have been waiting a long time to adopt a child. Ms. Hower said that they could definitely connect with the Foundation.

#### 7. **Update on Recent and Upcoming Events**

**Mrs. Kathryn Pidgeon** introduced **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes** of the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family. **Director Maria Cristina Fuentes** spoke of the upcoming Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Summit on Dec. 6. Unlike last year's event, marking the 5-year anniversary of the ACEs Consortium, this year's event will be smaller, yet still impactful. She added that more roundtables will be held in early 2020 to bring the faith leaders together to share best practices

#### 8. **Update on Department of Child Safety**

**Director Michael Faust** gave an update on work being done within the Department of Child Safety. He said that 900 youth in foster care will be turning 18 years old this year. He said this is a crucial time for them as they are "aging out" of the program. He said they are working to connect those youth with the services and support that they need to make that transition. He said that calls to the hotline continue to rise. They have about 14,500 calls each month with 7,500 being allegations of abuse or neglect. About 4,200 are reports taken but not responded to due to a lack of information to require a follow-up.

#### 9. **Subcommittee Reports**

##### **Prevention Subcommittee**

**Ms. Vicki Mayo** spoke about work being done to educate child care providers about alternatives to expulsion. She said that in some cases, for example biting, it could just be an act that is developmentally appropriate for a child of that age. She added that she had a great meeting with Dr. Christ and discussed the three-prong approach to early childhood education. She talked about the need for quality child care and there are not enough facilities to handle the need, especially among faith-based providers. She mentioned that the costs to become licensed is an obstacle for many.

##### **Outreach Subcommittee**

**Ms. Katie O'Dell**, Subcommittee Chair, reported that the subcommittee is working to determine a location for an upcoming community forum for birth and kinship families. **Ms. Katie O'Dell** also stated that the subcommittee hopes that this work will dispel fear of DCS and reeducate families on parenting techniques. The forum is going to be held in Glendale and the committee is currently searching for a venue. The event will be held in February or March of 2020.

##### **African American Children and Families Subcommittee**

**No Report**

##### **Support Subcommittee**

**Ms. Berisha Black**, Subcommittee Chair, reported out that the subcommittee was continuing work with the ACEs support group for caregivers with ACEs and trauma. She said that the research has concluded and the final version of the report will be ready in January.

#### 10. **Future Meeting Dates and Adjournment**

**Mrs. Kathryn Pidgeon** noted the following upcoming meeting dates:

- January 9, 2020
- March 12, 2020

- May 14, 2020
- September 10, 2020
- November 12, 2020

**Mrs. Kathryn Pidgeon** requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Mr. Paul Mulligan** motioned to adjourn. **Ms. Mollie Dunn** seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM.

DRAFT