



**Governor’s Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment**  
**November 10, 2020, 10:00 AM**  
**Virtual Meeting**

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on November 10, 2020 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (18)	Members Absent (8)
Mrs. Angela Ducey, Co-Chair	Warren H. Stewart
Kathryn A. Pidgeon, Co-Chair	James D. Molina
Andrea Stuart	Janet L. Garcia
Brad Snyder	Jay A. Cory
Colleen A. McNally	Senator Brophy McGee
Darlene G. Newsom	Lorrie G. Henderson
Jeffrey James Taylor	Terry M. Crist
Katie J. O'Dell	Vicki Mayo
Leslie Y. Reprogle	
Mark Upton	
Michael Faust	
Obed Escobar	
Paul S. Mulligan	
Rachel Mitchell	
Richard D. Yarbough	
Torrie Taj	
Zora Manjencich	
Berisha Black	
<b>Staff and Guests Present (4)</b>	
Maria Cristina Fuentes	
Kim Brooks	
Vianney Careaga	
Judge Joseph Kreamer	

### Call to Order

- **Ms. Kathryn Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, called the Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with 18 members and 4 staff and guests present. **Ms. Pidgeon** reviewed the procedures of how the remote meeting would be facilitated and welcomed all those present.

### Roll Call

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, conducted roll call of the Council and took note of Councilmember proxies.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, requested a review of the **September 10, 2020** meeting minutes.
  - **Mark Upton** moved to accept the **September 10, 2020** minutes.
  - **Colleen McNally** seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 10:05 a.m.

### National Adoption Month

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Maria Cristina Fuentes**, Director of the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, and **Katie O'Dell**, of AZ 1.27 to present on National Adoption Month. **Director Fuentes** described the efforts GOYFF has taken in coordination with the Council, the LoveUp Foundation, Arizona Department of Child Safety, and other partners in the faith community to raise the profile of National Adoption Month during the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Director Fuentes** shared that later in the day, a few members of the Council would be joining Director Fuentes in recording a webinar aimed at increasing the level of participation from the faith community in support of AZ 1.27.
- **Katie** provided a brief history of AZ 1.27 and stressed that it is not a licensing agency. AZ 1.27 is a collaboration of faith community members that strives to mobilize church communities by helping create ministries within churches and provide pastors/church leaders with the resources they need to succeed. AZ 1.27's approach to mobilization is three-pronged: recruit members while equipping them with resources, offer trauma informed classes and training, and focus on biological family restoration. **Katie** emphasized that everybody can do something to care for the vulnerable children in the state.
- **Director Fuentes** added that AZ 1.27 does an excellent job at meeting churches where they are with their ministries, provides a welcoming environment to bring in more church partners, and helps build families and a sense of permanency for foster children.
- **Paul Mulligan** inquired how AZ 1.27's operations have changed or adjusted because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Katie** provided information on the services that AZ 1.27 had to move onto an online platform, but also ensured Councilmembers of their willingness to work with churches despite the circumstances presented by the pandemic. Their online trauma training has received a great response since transitioning online.
- **Rachel Mitchell** asked if information on AZ 1.27's COVID-19 operations could be sent to her. **Katie** responded that she would provide her with that information.

### National Adoption Day

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, presented on National Adoption Day. **Ms. Pidgeon** shared the history of National Adoption Day and how Maricopa County has participated in this national effort. National Adoption Day is a collective effort to raise awareness of the more than 125,000 children waiting to be adopted from foster care in the United States. A coalition of national partners including the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, Alliance for Children's Rights and Children's Action Network-founded National Adoption Day twenty years ago.
- On November 18, 2000, the coalition and the Freddie Mac Foundation encouraged seven cities to open their courts on or around the Saturday before Thanksgiving to finalize and celebrate adoptions with special

emphasis on adoptions from foster care. Maricopa County was one of those jurisdictions that accepted that challenge and held their very first National Adoption Day on November 18, 2000. To date, the dreams of over 100,000 children in foster care have come true as part of National Adoption Day events across the country.

- In the first year, Maricopa County finalized the adoptions of 59 children. The county has continued to hold its event every year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. The founders of this collaboration wanted this day to fall on the Saturday before Thanksgiving so that the children adopted could begin the holidays as a forever family. Last year, Maricopa County finalized 145 adoptions during this event. To date, over 4,250 children in Maricopa County have realized their dream to be a part of a forever home on National Adoption Day. The event is organized and funded by a 501c3 named the Maricopa County National Adoption Day Foundation. The foundation focuses on raising funds to support the continuing growth of this event. In 2020, the event has pivoted to a virtual platform for many hearings because of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Ms. Pidgeon** thanked partners that have helped over the years to make the event a success, including the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and Governor Doug Ducey for issuing the National Adoption Month proclamation. The full presentation can be found here: <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2020/11/10>.
- **Leslie Reprogle** inquired if she could be sent the statistics for the adoptions occurring this year. **Ms. Pidgeon** responded that she would provide her with those numbers.

### Maricopa County Juvenile Court

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Judge Joseph Kreamer**, Maricopa County Associate Presiding Judge and Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, for an update on how the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted the operations of the courts. **Judge Kreamer** began by complimenting **Ms. Pidgeon** on her efforts to ensure National Adoption Day can still happen this year in a virtual setting. In the Juvenile Court, all business of the court has shifted remotely to minimize unnecessary exposure to COVID-19. Unlike other juvenile courts around the country that have paused their operations, the Juvenile Court has not missed a beat according to **Judge Kreamer**. The Superior Court engaged in a partnership called CourtConnect with Microsoft Teams to better handle hearings and proceedings in a virtual setting. This has allowed attorneys and clients to breakout into virtual rooms to discuss matters privately. Prior the pandemic around 13,000 employees were going onsite to perform their work functions. That number is now down to around 1,000. **Judge Kreamer** also discussed the courts' intentions to have some proceedings conducted in-person and eventually phase-in a return to the courts.

### DCS Update

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Mike Faust**, Director of the Arizona Department of Child Services (AzDCS), for an update from the department. **Director Faust** echoed compliments to **Ms. Pidgeon** on the work she has done for National Adoption Day. AzDCS has taken a different approach to COVID-19 with respect to its other peers in the western part of the United States. There are jurisdictions around the country that have shut down or paused their operations until the pandemic has subsided. From March through October, AzDCS has continued to work to find permanency for children and families, even though it meant transitioning some operations virtually. During this time period, over 3,000 families have been reunified and around 1,800 children have been adopted. AzDCS conducts about 6,000 in-person visits a week throughout the State.
- **Director Faust** stressed that it takes a community to make a difference. Out of the nearly 13,000 children in the DCS system, only 198 children have tested positive for COVID-19. More information on the statistics provided by **Director Faust** can be found here: <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/cfse/2020/11/10>.

### Special Recognition

- **Mrs. Ducey, Co-Chair**, recognized **Katie O'Dell**, on behalf of the Governor's Council on Child Safety and Family Empowerment, for the work she has done to advance family permanency throughout Arizona. Katie serves as the Executive Director of Arizona 1.27 which acts as a bridge organization to help churches

engage in meaningful, holistic ways to impact the lives of children in foster care. Katie has served on Hillsong church staff for more than 15 years as the Director of Community and Global Initiatives. She also serves as the Executive Director of FosterCare Initiatives, an organization that recruits and trains individuals, churches and nonprofits to engage in the Foster and Adoption process. The Council is appreciative of her hard work and continued dedication.

- **Katie** thanked **Mrs. Ducey** and the Council for the recognition and support they have shown her.

### Workgroup Updates

- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Kim Brooks** who provided an update on behalf of **Vicki Mayo**, Chair of the Prevention Workgroup, who was unable to attend the meeting. The Workgroup continues to focus on childcare and integrating Trauma Informed/Trauma Aware practices. They are also looking into new areas of opportunity amidst the pandemic. One of the ideas collected so far is the link between evictions and homelessness with AzDCS involvement. There is also significant interest from Workgroup members in looking into the efforts around the 5% of missing children that were enrolled in school in May but did not come back to school at the beginning of the fall semester.
- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Katie O'Dell**, Chair of the Outreach Workgroup, for an update on the Workgroup. **Katie O'Dell** updated the Council that the Workgroup has not recently met and is in a transition phase with its membership. Councilmembers wishing to help reactivate the Workgroup should contact **Katie** and **Kim Brooks** about their interest or recommendations.
- **Ms. Pidgeon, Co-Chair**, introduced **Rachel Mitchell**, Chair of the CJ Taskforce, for an update on the Taskforce. **Rachel Mitchell** shared that the Taskforce has finalized its survey for the needs assessment they are conducting as part of the requirements of the Taskforce and are working on assembling a list of individuals and organizations to send out their questionnaire.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Mrs. Ducey, Co-Chair**, went over the list of meeting dates for 2021 and reminded Councilmembers to mark their calendars for their next meeting on January 14, 2021.

### Adjournment

- **Mrs. Ducey, Co-Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - **Rachel Mitchel** moved to adjourn.
  - **Paul Mulligan**, seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

Dated 10 of November 2020  
Governor's Council Child Safety and Family Empowerment  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Kim Brooks and Vianney M. Careaga  
GOYFF