



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 2nd 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 2nd Floor Conference Room, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

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

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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 8th 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.

EMPOWER