

Date: March 22, 2020

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## **EVERY CHILD AND DHS LAUNCH MY NEIGHBOR**

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(Salem, Ore.) – Every Child, in direct partnership with the Department of Human Services, is launching a comprehensive statewide emergency response to the fast-growing needs of children and families in Oregon’s foster care system. The initiative—My NeighbOR—launches at 7:00pm on Sunday, March 22 and will be fully operational by Monday, March 23 at 9:00am. Oregonians across all 36 counties are being asked to step forward and meet the tangible needs of foster families and youth in foster care.

Foster families across Oregon have needs due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Systems and networks meant to care for those in foster care—and the foster families who serve them—are being challenged and taxed with growing needs. School closures, significant economic changes, and a limited pool of foster homes are adding additional strain to our state’s current capacity. We need the community to step up.

My NeighbOR is a 36-county decentralized community mobilization effort designed to match community goods and services with foster families and youth in foster care who need them. “Those staying at home in fraying situations are going to need help. We need each neighbor in Oregon to consider how they can step forward safely. My NeighbOR will bring us all together,” says Ben Sand, CEO for The Contingent, Every Child’s parent organization.

There are more Oregonians on the internet than any other moment in human history. Leveraging this, My NeighbOR will deploy using a two-pronged approach: 1. Staff will be receiving needs from families and leverage social media, online affinity groups, and targeted ads to invite Oregonians to respond. 2. When goods and services are offered, My NeighbOR will either use pre-screened drivers to deliver or invite community members to drop goods designated “Community Anchor Sites,” which are highly local, public locations where items can be dropped off and picked up.

“The welfare of children, youth, and families is the responsibility of our entire community. This My NeighbOR collaboration is the perfect demonstration that partnerships, shared resources, and collective efforts are needed to best support

children and families. This will be a shining example of how Oregonians support each other when in need,” says Rebecca Jones Gaston, DHS Child Welfare Director.

If you are an Oregon foster family or a youth in foster care, share your need at <https://everychildoregon.org/need/>

If you want to meet a need for foster families, visit <https://everychildoregon.org/myneighbor/>

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