

News Release

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Every Child and Department of Human Services expand My NeighbOR initiative to meet needs for Oregon families -- today

Salem, Ore. -- Every Child's My NeighbOR, a statewide initiative that launched in March to help meet the pressing needs of foster families and youth in foster care, is expanding to help more Oregon families. My NeighbOR will now invite community members to also meet urgent needs for families caring for children before they enter foster care and once children have returned home. Every Child works in partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services.

"While the work continues to recruit more loving foster families in Oregon and to support and appreciate foster parents to improve retention, we know that outcomes for children are improved when children can remain safely at home. This effort aligns with the work of Child Welfare to expand community collaboration and find upstream solutions as we build a strong child safety system in Oregon," Child Welfare program director Rebecca Jones Gaston said.

To safely slow the tide of children into foster care and to stabilize families' post-reunification, Every Child is growing My NeighbOR to mobilize the community to meet the emergency and tangible needs of families of origin involved with Child Welfare, beginning today. Families of origin include those who have an open Child Welfare case and those who have been reunified with their child.

"When COVID-19 hit, Every Child launched My NeighbOR to meet emergency needs for Oregon's vulnerable children and foster families. It worked. You stepped up. Launching today, we are expanding to serve more than 13,000 children who are at risk of entering foster care or who are currently in care," Ben Sand, CEO for The Contingent, Every Child's parent organization, said.

Close to 2,000 Oregonians have already stepped forward through My NeighbOR to help foster youth and their families with necessities such as groceries, diapers,

cleaning supplies, baby equipment, beds, furniture and children's clothing. Other helpful items have included strollers, sporting and outdoor equipment, and educational resources.

When foster families, youth or families involved with Child Welfare need assistance they can connect with My NeighbOR through their caseworker or, in many counties, may directly make requests online. And, people who want to help meet these needs can connect with Every Child's My NeighbOR online.

Every Child's My NeighbOR originally launched March 23 to help meet urgent needs of foster families and youth in foster care. Community networks meant to care for those in foster care, foster families and now families of origin have been challenged and taxed with growing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you want to meet a need for these Oregon families and children, please visit <https://everychildoregon.org/myneighbor/>.

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