



FosterCare
Initiatives

January 2017

Happy New Year & Thank You for a great 2016

Foster Care Initiatives started almost 4 years ago, as a small, start-up non-profit. Our efforts are only possible because many have shared our burden and joined our work to see children and youth in the foster care system be **known, loved, and surrounded by a community** full of God's love for them. FCI takes your partnership with us seriously and with grateful hearts we are encouraged to share how the Lord continues to multiply financial gifts to allow us to do great work.

Through our work with parents in crisis we:

- Teach Jesus-centered, trauma informed parenting classes
- Connect families to local churches so they can be embedded in community
- Advocate with government entities to ensure parents have access to support and resources to take the many steps necessary to heal and provide safe environments to parent their children

In this journey, we see brokenness as well as incredible beauty. We rejoice with some parents who are experiencing healing and growth and mourn with others who are far from being where they desire as mothers and fathers. We get to see Jesus show up everyday in lives like Marina, who had her parental rights severed this year despite diligent efforts and big life changes. After severance, we anticipated a lapse in sobriety or questioning her newfound faith but instead Marina has stayed clean, been promoted at work, is about to head back to school, and has made healthy community a priority. We are so proud of her continued hard work.

Others like Rachel and Dave have been reunited with their children after just over a year of DCS involvement and are working hard to keep the kids in contact with the foster family, despite the difficulty that presents for them. They say it's important for the kids to maintain this connection and so they will sacrifice their needs (something we discuss in parenting class) to make sure their kids need for maintained connection is met. They say their family has changed in both positive and negative ways, but they want to embrace the change instead of pretending like the last year of hardship didn't happen. Rachel is now finding ways to encourage other moms working toward reunification.

Year to date, we have served:

- **336** birth parents attended Parenting classes
- **58** birth parents through Case management
- **756** children were impacted by their parent's involvement in our program
- **126** new foster families have been trained to get licensed
- **105** foster families participated in support trainings

These are the numbers of families we have **directly served**. In addition, we have collaborated, consulted, and served many more families in crisis through some of our partnerships with **AZ127, Hope Women's Center, Redemption Church, CCV, Safe Families and Neighborhood Ministries**.

Because of the way we leverage our partnering organizations to multiply our efforts, our budget of about \$100,000 a year has allowed us to do incredible work. As we look to 2017, we are looking to increase our monthly support by another \$25,000 in order to focus on building our capacity by hiring a new team member in February. His passion for birth parents, experience and leadership will help us serve more families and shape our birth parent program.

We have been able to highlight our work a new video featured on our website.

Here is a link to view the video on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/179613789/5ac976401d>

Affordable Christmas 2016

We know that the holidays can be a hard time for families and we are thrilled to offer 4 Affordable Christmas events last year. This is an empowering shopping experience for low-income families to shop themselves for their children's Christmas presents. Consider hosting an Affordable Christmas event or toy drive next year.

4 Churches on 4 days
Over 300 Volunteers
3200 toys collected and distributed
1286 Kids shopped for & blessed
422 Families Impacted

Please consider becoming a monthly donor of \$25, \$50, or \$100 per month or making a one-time tax-deductible gift through our website at www.fostercareinitiatives.org. Your gift of any size will help us reach more families in 2017.

Thank you for your partnership with us,

Berisha Black

Executive Director, Foster Care Initiatives