

## **Serving the foster care community during COVID-19**

Children in foster care are one of the at-risk communities feeling extraordinary pressure during this crisis. Your family and church can help meet needs and change lives for these families on mission. Start with foster and adoptive families in your neighborhood. You can also reach out to private foster agencies or your local child welfare agency to find out what they need. Here are some great places to start.

### **Pray...**

- Against fear and the spread of sickness.
- For child welfare workers who are stretched thin.
- For children from hard places who may have resurfaced trauma.
- For at-risk children who are now not around people who will report mistreatment.
- For foster and adoptive parents who are trying to manage all the needs of children in their homes.
- For biological parents who are faithfully working for the return of their children and may have experienced setbacks through job or housing loss.
- For children and biological families to find creative ways to connect through digital visits instead of in-person visits.

### **Mentor children by...**

- Using technology to read to a child or listen to a child read to you.
- Virtually helping with homework or playing a game.
- Asking children how they are doing and how you can pray for them and their families.

### **Support foster and adoptive families by...**

- Sending an encouraging text or card in the mail.
- Offering to pick up medications or groceries.
- Ordering a meal to be delivered to their home.
- Ensuring they have the technology and other resources needed for online learning.

### **Help former foster youth by...**

- Ensuring those who had to leave college campuses have housing and technology for online learning.
- Providing necessities and financial assistance to those who have reduced or lost income through the pandemic.
- Offering childcare assistance to those who are essential workers and no longer have daycare or school for their children.

### **Advocate for everyone involved in the foster care community.**

Take this time to read or research about the needs in the foster community. Keep your eyes open to the children around you. Ask them if everything is okay, and if something seems off, report it to your local child abuse hotline. You may be the only adult who has eyes on them.