

The Foster Care Prayer Guide

24 groups of people to pray
for in your community



a tool created by **CAFO** members working together

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If your community is like most, the foster care system where you live is overwhelmed with need:

- There are more children in foster care than there are foster families.
- There are more children awaiting adoption than there are adoptive families.
- There are more families in the system breaking apart than there are resources to help keep them together.

We often approach overwhelming need with a commitment to try harder and do more. But what happens when we realize that our doubled-down efforts are not making half the impact that the kids in the community need us to make? It's at those times we realize we need something – or rather someone – who is much more powerful than we are to intervene. That is what this guide is all about. It's about people humbly coming to the God of the Universe and asking Him to guide and strengthen every person involved in the life of a child in foster care.

This guide will walk you through 24 different groups of people all associated with the foster care system that need each of our prayers. We do so believing that God will hear those prayers and provide more than enough for the children and families in our communities.

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3 suggested ways to use the foster care prayer guide:

1. Daily

Pray every weekday for a different group of people. You will be able to pray through this guide approximately once per month.

2. Weekly

Pray for one group of people per week. You'll get through the guide approximately twice per year.

3. As a Prayer Vigil

Gather with others in your church and community for an evening to pray for foster care in your community. Each May, Focus on the Family sponsors the National Foster Care Prayer Vigil. For more information about hosting a foster care prayer vigil in your community, visit FosterCarePrayerVigil.org.

Also, if you'd like to learn more about joining a group of others by phone for 15 minutes each week to pray for the foster care system in your state, visit CAFO.org/NFCI/Foster-Care-15



1

Children in Foster Care

Pray that children in your community would know they are loved by God and understand that He desires to be in relationship with them.

Pray that children in foster care would experience a feeling of belonging in a foster family, a church community, or a group of friends within your community.

Pray that God would lead them as they work through hurt they have experienced in their past and in their present.



“As a kid, I mastered the art of getting kicked out of foster homes. I was scared. I was confused. I was hurt by the things happening to me and around me as a kid, so I acted out...For me, I felt I had no one to talk to about the scary, terrifying, heartbreaking things going on in my life, so I acted out.”

- Josh Shipp, Former Foster Youth



2

Biological Families

Pray that biological parents in your state would have the strength they need to face their circumstances and that they always keep the best interests of their children in mind.

Pray for the relationships between biological parents, foster parents, and the foster care system; that biological parents feel heard and that others are able to extend compassion.

Pray that churches in your community learn how to support biological families and how to equip them to prepare for reunification with their children.

“

“We started hearing their stories and we realized that none of these biological family members, none of these biological relatives set out to abuse their kids, but a lot of times these were people who had very difficult up-bringsings themselves. We discovered that they were broken people made in the image of God and therefore were worthy of love and dignity.”

-Johnston Moore, Foster and Adoptive Parent



3

Churches

Pray that your church will choose a specific way to care for children in foster care based on the strengths of those within your congregation.

Pray that other churches in your community will seek out Biblical wisdom about children who need families and how to best care for them.

Pray that churches in your area will come together to care for children in foster care in order to create movement within your community.



“It is in light of [the] gospel that the Church has both the duty and privilege to speak on behalf of and stand for the sake of those who cannot speak and stand for themselves – because that is exactly what God has done for us through Jesus...The Church is uniquely equipped with a variety of giftings, callings and passions to effectively eliminate the foster care crisis in our country.”

-Jason Johnson, Director of CAFO National Church Ministry Initiative



4

Foster Parents

Pray for endurance and for strength for foster parents in your community as they invite children into their families.

Pray that your community would rise up and stand by these parents while encouraging and supporting their needs.

Pray for peace and understanding in every relationship – with the foster children, with their biological children, with the biological families of the foster children, with social workers, and with their community.

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“I mean look at us, we are not special. We are sinners, and we yell at the kids, and we fumble and we make mistakes, but you know what, God is a gracious God and forgives us and takes our hand and He says, ‘It’s okay. Tomorrow’s a new day.’”

-Irene Garcia, Foster Parent



5

Adoptive Parents

Pray that potential adoptive parents in your community listen to the Lord's direction as they pursue adoption of a particular child.

Pray that adoptive parents would seek Biblical wisdom and the advice of other adoptive parents as they walk with their children through healing.

Pray that communities and churches in your area would come around adoptive parents in support and encouragement.



“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families...”

Psalm 68:5-6a



6

Child Welfare Professionals

Pray for the safety and emotional well being of social workers in your community as they come face to face with difficult situations.

Pray that churches in your community would commit to care for and to support child welfare professionals.

Pray that social workers and administrators would fight discouragement and burnout by continuously seeking and finding joy, hope, and peace in Christ.



“Please let my footprint be light in the lives of those who I tread upon.”

- Scott, County Director of Child Welfare Office

7

Organizational and Church Ministry Leaders

Pray that the fruit of their hard work would serve as an inspiration to others in your community.

Pray that they are able to balance ministry life and family life by making the time for their family.

Pray that they would lead groups within your community to care for children in foster care with humility.



“Pray that God would protect me against feeling satisfied with our efforts as long as there are children still without parents and people who don’t know about the hope we have in Jesus.”

- Michelle, Ministry Leader



8

Counselors and Therapists

Pray that counselors and therapists in your community would work hard to discover what is best to help children in foster care, foster parents, social workers, birth families, and other individuals involved in foster care.

Pray that counselors and therapists would make time to care for their own physical and emotional well-being.

Pray that therapists would listen to God's Word and His promises as they help others walk through hardship.

“

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:2



9

Teachers

Pray that teachers in local schools in your community would be aware of the unique needs children in foster care may have and that teachers would have the tools and knowledge needed to respond to these needs.

Pray that teachers at your local schools are able to experience rest and renewal outside of the classroom so that they have the capacity to fully engage with students.

Pray that teachers, and foster, adoptive, or birth parents would all make the effort to work together so that children can excel in school.

“

“They need that loving foster mom, that social worker, that counselor, that teacher, that Sunday school leader to be there to nurture and protect. To reassure them that they’re safe.”

-Rod Marshall, Alabama Baptist Children’s Homes



10

Lawyers and Judges

Pray that they would have the eyes to see the specific needs of children in foster care in your community.

Pray that they would take an active role in initiating repair of what is broken in families and in the foster care system.

Pray that they would seek out Biblical wisdom when defending children.

“

“Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.”

Psalm 82:3



11

Law Enforcement Officers

Pray that the law enforcement officers in your community would be well equipped to engage in their roles as protectors of the weak, including children who experience abuse or neglect.

Pray that officers in your community would have wisdom and empathy as they interact with children who come from hard places.

Pray for the safety and emotional well being of law enforcement officers as they come face to face with difficult decisions and experiences on a weekly basis in your community.

“

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority . . .”

- Timothy 2:1-2a



12

Kinship Caregivers

Pray that your church and your state would support kinship caregivers in your community well, whether they are informal, formal, or voluntary caregivers.

Pray that these extended family members would have the emotional, spiritual, financial, and other resources to provide a safe home for children from their family.

Pray that their relationships with the children they take in will flourish and bring security and hope into the children's lives.

“

They don't get resources, they're not being vocal, they don't have a lot of support. They're just doing it because that's their family.”

-Kim Phagan-Hansel, Author of The Kinship Parenting Toolbox



13

Researchers and Policy Analysts

Pray for researchers and policy analysts to understand how the data they are finding connects to policies and practices that can lead to transformation.

Pray for accuracy, patience, and pursuit of the truth in their research, writing, publications, presentations, and advice.

Pray that their research and their policies would bring positive changes to the foster care system in your community and fulfill God's plans for children and families to flourish.

“

“Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding”

Proverbs 3:13

A close-up photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The person is wearing a light-colored sweater and a watch with a brown leather strap. A black cup with a tea bag is visible on the desk to the left. The background is a blurred brick wall.

14

Journalists

Pray that local journalists would report in such a way that those in foster care and their foster parents and biological parents will not feel that their stories have been violated but that truth and justice have prevailed.

Pray that journalists will uncover lies and secrets and instead reveal the truth.

Pray that journalists in your community would use their platform to bring justice within the foster system and help find families for kids.

“

“I am a journalist by trade, and while I have adoption stories and foster care stories and little connections here and there, nothing personally. It’s become a real personal conviction for me to help these kids and help these families, and provide them the information that helps them on their journey.”

- Kim Phagan-Hansel, Editor of Adoption Today Magazine
and Fostering Families Today Magazine



15

Classmates

Pray for the kids in foster care in your local schools that they would find friends and encounter compassionate teachers who help them through tough transitions.

Pray that your local teachers would gain the wisdom and knowledge necessary to help students respond well to children in foster care.

Pray that classmates will have the courage to report evidence of abuse.



“Whether it’s a child that’s going to be in your own child’s classroom or a young person that you stop at a crosswalk for, we are all here to play vital roles in each other’s lives.”

-T. Ortiz Walker Pettigrew, Former Foster Youth and Human Trafficking Advocate



16

Adults Who Have Abused or Neglected Children

Pray that they will confess, repent and seek healing, reconciliation, and forgiveness while coming to terms with the consequences of their actions.

Pray that they will be broken-hearted for those they have hurt, and seek reconciliation, in ways that are appropriate, with those they have hurt.

Pray that cycles of abuse will be broken when abusers reach out for help to the churches in your community to find healing, especially if there has been abuse in their own pasts.

“

“We understand the concept of redemption, we understand mercy. We’ve received it in so many ways. We should have an abundance to give back.”

-Shelly Radic, Project 1.27



17

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)

Pray that God would raise up groups of people within your community to become CASA volunteers so that every child has someone to speak up for them in court.

Pray that CASA volunteers would be well equipped to support children in foster care and have the knowledge needed to speak up for the children.

Pray that CASA volunteers would build meaningful and lasting relationships that would communicate love and worth to children in foster care.

“

“Court appointed special advocate – they are appointed by the judge. Lay persons [who] don’t have to have any particular degrees. They have to have a loving, caring, heart. They are the eyes and ears of the court. They speak for the child.”

-Judge Joyce Warren



18

Elected Officials

Pray that the President, legislators, governors, mayors and other elected officials in your community will use their power and influence to protect the weak and vulnerable.

Pray that elected leaders would be open to partnership with your local churches to significantly impact kids in foster care.

Pray that local elected leaders would actively fight corruption, human trafficking, abuse, neglect, homelessness, poverty, hunger, oppression, and discrimination.

“

“Having governors involved is huge. They can make sweeping changes very quickly that it would take years for the rest of us to make.”

-Janet Kelly, Former Secretary of the Commonwealth of Virginia



19

Respite Care Providers

Pray that just as they provide rest and relief to foster and adoptive families; that they will also experience rest and relief in their own lives.

Pray that a large number of individuals and churches would actively seek to provide respite care for foster and adoptive families in your community.

Pray that their example of sacrifice and service would serve as an example to others that anyone can be involved in foster care in some capacity.

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“They’re the ones who are overseeing the whole care community, and they are watching the foster family and encouraging the foster family to keep having date nights and keep tracking with your own birth children, your biological children, and doing the things that you did before foster care came into your world.”

- Sandra Stanley, North Point Church



20

Foster Care Advocates

Pray that God would raise up a team of advocates in every church in your community who are passionate about speaking up for children in foster care.

Pray that individuals who currently advocate in your community would feel connected to the children for whom they are advocating and encouraged to do all they can to speak up for children.

Pray that advocates would build lasting relationships with churches and groups in your community in order to inspire others to advocate.

“

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves ...”

Proverbs 31:8a



21

Siblings

Pray that siblings are able to remain together while in foster care in safe and encouraging environments within your community.

Pray that more families in your state will feel lead and prepared to adopt sibling groups.

Pray for the children of foster parents in your community that they would respond to the needs to the kids that come in and out of their home with compassion and understanding.



“My brothers came to us from foster care and then not long after, we also brought their sister, their biological sister into our family...For me as a child, this was very normal. This is just how our family was built. I never thought anything of it and I never thought I would make a profession of it... But then when I moved to Washington, DC and was working at an advocacy organization, God really started to steer my heart for kids in foster care, so I started to volunteer through our church.”

-Chelsea Geyer, DC127

Health Care Professionals

Pray that health care professionals at local hospitals would have the time and resources needed to holistically care for children in foster care.

Pray that God will reveal to doctors and nurses the specific needs of children in foster care and that they will make wise decisions as they plan out care.

Pray that God would raise up more doctors and nurses in your area who are passionate about using their gifts and profession to bring healing and hope to children in foster care.



“As a Mother-Baby nurse, my job is usually full of joy as parents experience new life with their infants. But, sometimes I care for infants who will enter foster care as soon as they leave the hospital. When I see those bundled babies alone in our nursery, my heart breaks because I know that their first few months of life will not be easy. So I hold them a little tighter, rock them to sleep, whisper words of love into their little ears, and then cry out to our God that He might protect them and bless them.”

-Sarah Rooker, RN



23

Mentors and Mentees

Pray that God would provide a mentor for every child in foster care in your county.

Pray that uncertainty, barriers, inexperience, and differences between mentors and mentees will not impede meaningful conversation and fruitful relationships.

Pray that mentors will be confident in their ability to communicate worth and love to their mentees because of confidence we have in Christ.



“[Mentoring] just gives [children in foster care] a spark. But it’s more than that. It’s more than just an event. It’s being there consistently...it’s a whole other thing to pour into their lives and helping them, equipping them to be what they can be as an adult and a member of society that is all that God’s created them to be.”

-Christie Erwin, Project Zero



24

Youth Aging out of Foster Care

Pray that every youth who ages out of the foster care system in your community would have the resources necessary to survive and to thrive as an adult living on their own.

Pray that youth would have a support system of adults in your community who will guide them through the process of aging out.

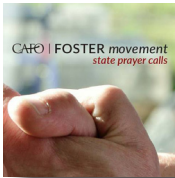
Pray that God would reveal ways for the people and churches in your community to tangibly support children who must age out of the foster care system.

“

“As children age out of the US Foster System, the statistics are quite alarming ... We serve a God that is bigger than all those statistics. We serve a God that can turn all of those statistics around, but it requires the church to step in the gap on their behalf.”

- Scott Brown, CAFO Aging Out Initiative Coordinator

You can play a vital role in providing MORE THAN ENOUGH for kids and families in foster care in the county where you live. Here are just a few of the things we've created to help you get there:



CAFO Foster Movement State Prayer Calls

Pray for 15 minutes a week by conference call with others from your state for the kids and families in foster care where you live. To find out if your state currently has an ongoing weekly prayer call, visit the website below.



Finding Your Fit in Foster Care

You want to make a difference in the lives of kids and families in foster care, but aren't exactly sure where you can make the most impact. This handy guide will help you clarify how your gifts, personality and experiences can make the biggest difference in foster care where you live.



The Foster Movement Podcast

The Foster Movement Podcast, featuring the stories of former foster youth and national leaders in foster care advocacy, provides powerful insights and practical tools to help you work with others to provide More Than Enough for kids and families in foster care where you live.

These resources and more can be found at:
cafo.org/fostermovement

CAFO | FOSTER *movement*

You can play a vital part in providing **more than enough** for kids and families in foster care in the county where you live. We can help you get there.

To learn more, visit:

cafo.org/fostermovement