



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY  
*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

# News Release

Clarence H. Carter, Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DES recognizes May as Foster Care Awareness Month; Calls on community to help fill growing need for more foster homes**

PHOENIX – The Department of Economic Security (DES) recognizes the month of May as Foster Care Awareness Month and is asking the Arizona community to help fill the urgent need for more foster homes across the state.

A recent DES report shows that as of September 30, 2011, 11,535 children were living in foster homes across the state. That's an increase of 6.6 percent from March of 2011. At the same time, the number of licensed foster homes has fallen, mostly due to the adoption of children in the home.

"Never before has the need for foster families been greater in Arizona," said Director Clarence Carter. "Filling the need to provide supportive and nurturing homes for children takes a community-wide effort. We ask you to help spread the message to your friends, families, co-workers and faith-based communities on behalf of Arizona's children."

To honor the children in foster care, DES staff members will hang thousands of ribbons in the trees outside their offices on Tuesday, May 1. Each ribbon will represent one child living in foster care in Arizona. The Department will also host an event beginning at 10:00 a.m. at 1789 West Jefferson Street in Phoenix to raise awareness of the need for more foster homes and to celebrate those who are current foster parents.

"All children deserve a safe, happy and loving home," said Director Carter. "The young people in foster care come into the state system as a result of a crisis in their own homes. They need positive role models and an environment in which they can thrive. "

In celebration of foster parents across Arizona, Governor Brewer has issued a proclamation declaring May 2012 Foster Care Awareness Month. Also, events will be held across the state and attended by DES foster care and adoption staff. For more information, please email [NicoleMoon@azdes.gov](mailto:NicoleMoon@azdes.gov).

Anyone interested in learning more about becoming a foster parent is encouraged to attend a [Foster Care and Adoption Orientation meeting](#). A full schedule of upcoming orientation dates is available on the [DES website](#).

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