



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Shiara Davila-Morales
DCFS Office of Public Affairs
(213) 739-6448

****PRESS RELEASE****

DCFS BUSTS FOSTER CARE MYTHS WITH MONTH-LONG SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

In observance of National Foster Care Awareness Month, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has launched a social media public information campaign to debunk myths about foster care.

DCFS will counter foster care misperceptions with facts using the hashtags #FosterCareMonth and #NFCAM2020. Members of the public are encouraged to follow DCFS on Facebook (facebook.com/lacountydcfs) and Twitter (@lacountydcfs) to learn more about the department's work and goals, and to share content in support of foster youth whose challenges and needs may not be widely known.

"The purpose of this campaign is to correct misinformation and raise awareness about the great need in this county for loving homes where foster children can thrive," Bobby D. Cagle, DCFS director, said.

"Unless a person has had first-hand experience with the child welfare system or knows someone who has, foster care is not an everyday topic for most people," he added. "My goal is to engage a wider audience in this important conversation and to advance the idea that children in foster care need entire communities to invest in their wellbeing and success."

Recruitment of temporary and permanent resources families – also known as foster families – is among the greatest challenges faced by the department. Resource families are a source of support to families in crisis.

Among the most commonly cited concerns by those considering fostering a child are marital and immigration status, age and parenting experience. The department's Foster Care Awareness Month social media campaign aims to clarify these so-called limitations. For example:



- **Myth:** Only married couples may foster.

Fact: A resource family or parent may be single, married, divorced, or living with a partner and be of any race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status or culture.

- **Myth:** I don't have any children and to be a resource parent you need to have parenting experience.

Fact: Parenting experiencing is not required. If you are a responsible person willing to commit to providing a safe, stable and loving environment for a child in need, you are a perfect fit.

- **Myth:** I need to own a house in order to foster a child.

Fact: Resource parents may live in an apartment or house, and either rent or own their home.

National Foster Care Awareness Month is observed each May to acknowledge the variety of resource parents – family members, extended family, and other members of the community – who open their homes to children and youth; to remind the public that foster care is meant to be a temporary support for families during a challenging time; and to challenge the negative stereotypes of children and youth who experience foster care during their lifetime.

To learn more about becoming a foster parent, call (888) 811-1121 or visit dcfs.lacounty.gov.

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About the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

The Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) promotes child safety and well-being by partnering with communities to strengthen families, keeping children at home whenever possible, and connecting them with stable, loving homes in times of need. As the largest child protective services agency in the nation, DCFS is responsible for ensuring the safety of more than two million children across 88 diverse cities in Los Angeles County. Established in 1984 to keep children safe and support families in crisis, it is one of the 35 Los Angeles County Departments governed by the five-member Board of Supervisors with nearly 9,000 staff across 20 regional offices, specialized bureaus, and administration that cover a broad array of services and programs. The department is led by Director Bobby D. Cagle - a former foster child and longtime social worker. For more information, visit <http://dcfs.lacounty.gov>.