



28 Ways to Help a Child

Faith-Based Resources to Strengthen Families and Prevent Child Abuse

[Texas Adoption Resource Exchange](#)

1. *Encourage Foster Care and Adoption* - Church members can become verified foster or approved adoptive families for children involved with Child Protective Services.
2. *Adopt-a-case worker*- Churches can "adopt" a Child Protective Services caseworker to provide moral support or purchase items the caseworker's clients need.
3. *Blue Sunday (National Day of Prayer)*- On the designated Sunday (usually the last Sunday of April) join with participating churches and take five minutes out of the Sunday schedule to pray for abused and neglected children and their abusers. Visit the [Blue Sunday](#) website for more information.
4. *Child Abuse Awareness training*- Participate in learning about the needs of children involved with Child Protective Services and how your church can develop an Orphan Care Ministry in any area from prevention to permanency.
5. Donate to the local **Rainbow Room**- Donate new clothing and other needed items (including but not limited to diapers, bottles, formula, hygiene supplies) to the Rainbow Room, volunteer to find donations, work sorting the donations, or donate space for a Rainbow room. Churches may also choose to do a shoe drive to gather new shoes to be donated to children in care.
6. *CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)*- Become a volunteer and advocate for a child's best interest in the court system. Call 1-877-TX4-CASA or visit the [Texas CASA](#) website for information.
7. *Family Counseling*- Provide counseling services for families involved with Child Protective Services or donate counseling fees.
8. *Tutoring Program*- Have a tutoring program within your church open to the community.
9. *Personal grooming* - Find hairdressers within your congregation who are willing to donate their services to make a youth involved with Child Protective Services feel special especially at special events such as Prom, pay for haircuts, hold a Cut-a-Thon to raise money for this program. Congregations could co-sponsor PROM prep night with stylist on staff to do hair, nails and give tips on general etiquette. This could also include ideas such as tattoo removal.
10. *Foster/Adoptive parent support* - Provide meeting space, refreshments, or leadership if needed to allow Foster and Adoptive parents in your area to gather for a support group. This could also involve supporting out of town/state adoptive families who are coming into town to meet their adoptive child through offering help with transportation, lodging, and tickets to local attractions, tokens to local family fun restaurants such as Chuck E. Cheese.
11. *Food Pantry*- Create a food pantry within the congregation or find church members who will volunteer with existing Food Pantry programs. Congregations may also decide to develop a backpack programs designed to send non-perishable items home with students over the weekend so they will not go hungry.
12. *Child Care*- Provide day care and/or after school child care for children and families involved with Child Protective Services.
13. *Special occasion celebrations/toy drives/ school supply drives*- Throw parties, toy or supply drives, or donate to existing drives that will help children, youth in transition, and/or families involved with Child Protective Services

celebrate special occasions such as birthdays, adoption consummations, and graduations or holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving.

14. *Ministries to Youth in Transition*- Donate supplies for youth aging out of the foster care system. Items could include towels, pots and pans sets, sheets, and other household necessities. The congregation may decide to offer financial support to cover the cost of things such as driver's education classes. Churches may also decide to offer apprenticeships with a congregation member in a number of skilled labor areas such as electrical repair and plumbing.
15. *Teen Pregnancy Prevention & Teen Parent Support Services*- Provide after school or weekend programs designed to keep youth engaged in various fun and educational activities.
16. *Teen and Youth Mentoring*- Provide mentors from your congregation for youth and teens involved with Child Protective Services.
17. *Respite Providers or Events*- Church members can become trained to provide temporary, short term care for children in foster care as a wraparound support to the foster parents. The Church could also provide an event such as a Parents Night Out to offer families respite.
18. *Family Group Decision Making Conferences*- Offer space at your church and/or refreshments to support biological families and children involved with Child Protective Services for Family Group Decision Making Conferences or other special events.
19. *Child & Youth Summer Camps*- Sponsor children in foster care to attend camps, which may involve camp fees, camp supplies, or transportation.
20. *Transportation Resources*- Provide financial support or physical rides for families whose children are involved with Child Protective Services so they are able to attend appointments, work, visits, and other meetings. To find out more about volunteering with Child Protective Services, please visit [Volunteer with DFPS](#).
21. *Community Resources Liaison*- Provide a member of your congregation who can connect children and families involved with Child Protective Services with needed resources in your church and community.
22. *Budget and Financial Planning*- Offer classes or mentors for families and/or youth to train, educate, and assist them in managing finances.
23. *Fatherhood Initiative*- Provide meeting space, refreshments, and other services needed to support the [Texas Fatherhood Initiative](#).
24. *Prison Ministries*- Offer a ministry to parents who are incarcerated or to the children involved with Child Protective Services whose parents are incarcerated such as a support group or mentor.
25. *Addiction Recovery*- Offer access to the Church's addiction recovery ministry such as Celebrate Recovery to parents who are involved with Child Protective Services and/or to youth involved with Child Protective Services.
26. *Gift Card Drives*- Congregations can gather donated gift cards to give to foster/adoptive families or youth involved with Child Protective Services.
27. *Calling Out Ceremonies*- Churches can organize and host a calling out ceremony to bring attention to children who are waiting for a forever family and pray for them.
28. *Hospital Ministry*- Congregations can volunteer to support children of any age who are in the hospital through visitation, gifts, rocking infants in the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit, or volunteering as a sitter who can be called on to stay with children in rotating shifts in a 24 hour period.