

Foster VC Kids: urgent need for homes for children and teens, in the cities of Oxnard and Ventura

In Ventura County there are nearly 800 children and teens in foster care, many of whom are in immediate need of a stable and loving home environment.



VENTURA, Calif. - Foster VC Kids, a program of Ventura County's Children and Family Services, has launched a new initiative – What does home mean to you? – to raise awareness and educate the public about the increased and immediate need for homes to support youth in care.

"We're all better off when children in our community thrive," said Ventura County Supervisor Steve Bennett. Bennett and other community leaders are participating in the outreach efforts to encourage families to make either a short-term or long-term commitment to provide guidance, hope and a home for local youth in care. Those interested in fostering, adopting or mentoring can learn more: view the 26-minute online information session at www.fostervckids.org, call 805-654-3220 or attend the Town Hall informational meeting on Saturday, April 21, 10am – 11:30am, 855 Partridge Drive in Ventura.

"Nationwide, there is a growing number of children entering foster care and here in Ventura County we are experiencing an increase as well", said Angelina McCormick-Soll, Program Coordinator for Foster VC Kids. "Locally, we've had a rise in the number of children over 16 years of age who are in care, from 17% last January to 21% this year. These teens are in jeopardy of aging out without ever having had a permanent home life. Children who age out of foster care are at much higher risk for homelessness, teen pregnancy, and incarceration. And, a heartbreaking 47% of our youth have been separated from some or all their siblings." Youth over the age of 10 are often the most impacted by a lack of available homes, and experience the most instability in foster care.

A family crisis can occur any time; children come into the system through neglect, domestic violence, parental illness such as mental health or drug and alcohol abuse that impacts a child's safety, and domestic violence. Through no fault of their own, children and youth are then separated from their birth families, including siblings, and brought into foster care.

Foster VC Kids works to protect these children by ensuring they are placed with fostering and kinship families who have the support and resources to provide safety, permanency and quality care. Extensive training and support services (including medical and dental care) are available to ensure caregivers have the resources to nurture, protect and care for local youth in need.

About Foster VC Kids, a program of Ventura County's Children and Family Services

Recognized as a best practices leader statewide in the family recruitment and support component of child welfare, Foster VC Kids provides resource families with ongoing support services, trauma-informed training, and mentorship to enhance the safety, permanency and well-being of Ventura County's youth and families. Learn how Foster VC Kids is making a difference throughout Ventura County, www.fostervckids.org.

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