

WELCOME BOXES



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Why Welcome Boxes

The notion of a Welcome Box is a simple one. Since many children enter their new foster homes with very few belongings, the psychological importance of owning nice possessions cannot be underestimated. Making a Welcome Box is a simple way to comfort a foster child. It's also a great way to involve your own family in caring for less fortunate kids in our area.

How to put your box together

1. Buy a photo storage box (no shoeboxes)

Photo storage boxes are very sturdy, work great and often come with fun designs. They can be found at craft stores like Jo-ann Fabrics and Michaels.

2. Fill the box with the ESSENTIAL items from the list below and at least 7 items from the EXTRAS list.

3. Tape a handwritten note to the inside lid of the box that includes an encouraging message such as:

“You are special”

“You are cared about”

“You matter”

“You are important”

“Made for you with love”

Please, no sealed messages or religious language.

4. Identify the gender and age bracket that your box corresponds with and tape it to the narrow side of the box.

5. Place a rubber-band around your box & contact Our Children's Keeper to coordinate delivery.

Thank you for loving foster children through your welcome box.

What Goes in the Box?

Please include age appropriate items from each of the 8 categories listed under “**Essentials**”. In addition, please include any **7** of the items listed under “**Extras**” items (toys, arts and crafts, hygiene, etc).

Please do not include: breakable items, aerosol cans, mouthwash that has alcohol, razors, Swiss army knives, vitamins, violent toys or action figures (such as toy guns or knives).

Essentials

- 1) coloring book, blank journal, or drawing pad
- 2) crayons, markers, or colored pencils,
- 3) toothbrush
- 4) toothpaste (non-flouride for kids 4 & under),
- 5) two or three non-perishable snacks (i.e. applesauce, pretzels, fruit snacks, crackers, etc),
- 6) flashlight (please include batteries),
- 7) nightlight
- 8) socks

AGE 2-4

EXTRAS (Choose any 7):

TOYS -- small stuffed animal, cars, small doll, bouncy balls (nothing chokable), plastic toys, toy harmonica or kazoo, slinky, small etch-a-sketch, etc. **ARTS & CRAFTS** -- stickers, playdough, bubbles. **HYGIENE** -- brush, comb, fun band-aids. **OTHER** -- Taggie blanket, sippy cup, water bottle, hair accessories, sunglasses, small board books.

AGE 5-9

EXTRAS (Choose any 7):

TOYS -- small stuffed animal, small cars, small doll, plastic dinosaurs, toy harmonica or kazoo, yo-yo, slinky, Go Fish or Memory playing card game, magnifying glass, small Lego set, paddle ball or inflatable punching ball. **ARTS & CRAFTS** -- pen, pencils, pencil sharpener, stamps and ink pad, stickers, bead sets, playdough, bubbles. **HYGIENE** -- brush, comb, chapstick, fun band-aids. **OTHER** -- small photo album, books, water bottle, watch, hair accessories, sunglasses, foldable nylon bag for carrying possessions.

AGE 10-12

EXTRAS (Choose any 7):

TOYS -- deck of playing cards, Memory or Go Fish card games, yo-yo, magnifying glass, paper airplane kit, small Lego set, paddle ball or inflatable punching ball. **ARTS & CRAFTS** -- mad libs, word search, bead sets, silly putty. **HYGIENE** -- brush, comb, chapstick, compact mirror, fun band-aids, cardboard nail file, nail polish, bath gel, travel size toiletries. **OTHER** -- small photo album, books, water bottle, watch, hair accessories, sunglasses, gum, mints, lollipops, foldable nylon bag for carrying possessions.

AGE 13-17

EXTRAS (Choose any 7):

TOYS -- deck of playing cards, ear phones, books. **ARTS & CRAFTS** -- mad libs, word search, pencil sharpener, pens, pencils. **HYGIENE** -- brush, comb, chapstick, compact mirror, deodorant, cardboard nail file, nail polish, bath gel, lotion, travel size toiletries, feminine products in a discreet case. **OTHER** -- gift cards (McDonald’s, Subway, Wal Mart, Target, Payless Shoes, movie theater, Starbucks, etc.), flip flops, hoodie sweatshirts, sunglasses, foldable nylon bag for carrying possessions in, hair bands, gum, mints.