

## HERE'S HOW TO PUT YOUR BOX TOGETHER

### 1. Buy a photo storage/memory box/plastic container

Photo storage boxes are very sturdy and often come with fun designs. You can buy one at craft stores like Jo-Ann Fabrics and Michaels or order on Amazon. Dimensions of the box should be 4"x8"x12.25". If memory boxes are not sold in your area, you can also buy plastic shoe storage containers. These can be found at Walmart or Fred Meyer.

### 2. Decide who the Welcome Box will be for:

Boy or Girl, Age 2-4      Boy or Girl, Age 10-12  
Boy or Girl, Age 5-9      Boy or Girl, Age 13-17

Be sure to mark the label accordingly, and plan to purchase items that meet the needs/interests for that specific child.

### 3. Fill it

Fill the box with all the items on the Essential list, and at least 7 items on the Extra list to fill box to the brim.

### 4. Write a note

Tape a handwritten note inside the box's lid with an encouraging message such as:

"You are special"      "You are important"  
"You are cared about"      "Made for you with love"  
"You matter"

Your message should be easily visible and should not include religious language.

### 5. Label it

Cut out the welcome box label, circle the gender and age group for your box, and tape on the narrow side of the box.

### 6. Seal it

Place a rubber band around your box so it stays together.

### 7. Drop it off

Fill out the CONNECT form at [www.everychildoregon.org](http://www.everychildoregon.org) to get connected with your local Welcome Box drop-off location.

**Please do not drop your box off at DHS.**

## HERE'S THE SCOOP:

The majority of children coming into foster care must wait in a Child Welfare office for at least two hours while a social worker tries to find them a suitable living placement. As you can imagine, this is a time of high anxiety for children. Recently removed from their home, a child's future is now unknown.

The notion of a Welcome Box is simple: while the child waits in the office, a social worker gives them a box of items that are age-appropriate to occupy their time. They will take this box with them into their new foster home. Since many children enter foster care with only just a few personal belongings, the psychological importance of these Welcome Boxes cannot be underestimated.

Making a Welcome Box is a simple way to comfort a child entering foster care. And, it is a great way to involve your whole family in caring for the children of our community.

*Thank you for loving children entering foster care through your Welcome Box!*



**Gift boxes for children entering foster care, to occupy them while waiting at a Child Welfare office**

## WHAT GOES INSIDE:

Here is a simple guide for filling a Welcome Box with creative, age-appropriate items. Please include everything listed under ESSENTIAL and enough EXTRAS to fill the box.

### Tag Directions:

1. Circle a gender
2. Circle an age group
3. Cut out & apply to box



**BOY**

**GIRL**

AGE 2-4 5-9 10-12 13-17



**BOY**

**GIRL**

AGE 2-4 5-9 10-12 13-17

## ESSENTIALS

- Something to color/write on: coloring book, journal, notebook, activity book, construction paper
- Something to color/write with: crayons, pens, pencils, colored pencils, markers
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Flashlight (with batteries)
- Nightlight
- Encouraging note

## EXTRAS

Fill up the rest of the box to the brim with age and gender appropriate items, such as:

- Toys
- Games
- Puzzles
- Books
- Water bottles
- Socks
- Health/beauty products
- Stuffed animals
- Legos
- Dolls
- Cars
- Stickers
- Crafts
- Healthy snacks
- Etc.



Please do **NOT** include any of the following items:

- Used items
- Sharp/dangerous objects
- Holiday/seasonal items
- Hygiene items containing alcohol (mouthwash/hand sanitizer)
- Religious items
- Vitamins
- Violent action figures or toys
- Snacks containing nuts



Please ensure that all the items are appropriate for the gender and age of the child who will be getting this box!

*Did you remember a flashlight, nightlight, and a note?*

**Every  
Child**