

## HERE'S HOW TO PUT YOUR BOX TOGETHER

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

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. Dimensions of the box should be 4"x8"x12.25".

### 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



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**