



## boxes FOR KIDS ENTERING FOSTER CARE

WHILE WAITING IN A DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL  
AND HEALTH SERVICES OFFICE

*this care box is for:*

<b>BOY</b> _____	<b>2 - 4 YEARS</b> _____
	<b>5 - 9 YEARS</b> _____
<b>GIRL</b> _____	<b>10 - 12 YEARS</b> _____
	<b>13 - 17 YEARS</b> _____

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# 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 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. Cut out Care Box label (on the back pages of this booklet), 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.

6. Contact Mandy Neill, [MaNeill@ugm.org](mailto:MaNeill@ugm.org), to determine a drop off time and location. Feel free to contact them if you have any questions. (Please do not drop off directly to DSHS).



# HERE'S THE SCOOP...

Many children coming into foster care must wait for hours in a Child Welfare office while a social worker calls to find them a suitable placement. This is usually a time of high anxiety for children as they've recently been removed from their home and are being moved to a new, unknown foster home.



The notion of a Care Box is a simple one. While the child is waiting, a social worker gives the child a box of age appropriate items to occupy their time while in the office. It will also be a box they can carry and take with them into their new foster home. Since many children enter their new foster homes with very few belongings, the psychological importance of owning nice possessions cannot be underestimated.

Making a Care 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 your area.

# What Goes in the box?

Below you will find a simple guide for filling your Care Box with fun, creative, age-appropriate items. Please include everything listed under “essential” and 7 of the “extra” items (toys, arts and crafts, hygiene, etc).

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

## AGE 2-4

### ESSENTIALS:

Coloring book, crayons or colored pencils, toddler-sized toothbrush, non-flouride toothpaste, flashlight (please include batteries), nightlight.

### EXTRAS:

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

## AGE 5-9

### ESSENTIALS:

Coloring book or a pad of drawing paper; washable markers, colored pencils or crayons; toothbrush and toothpaste (can be travel size); flashlight (please include batteries) and nightlight.

### EXTRAS:

TOYS -- small stuffed animal, small cars, small doll, plastic dinosaurs, yo-yo, slinky, Go Fish or Memory playing card game, small Lego set. ARTS & CRAFTS -- markers, crayons, stamps and ink pad, stickers, playdough, bubbles. HYGIENE -- brush, comb, chapstick, fun band-aids. OTHER -- books, water bottle, watch, hair accessories, sunglasses, foldable nylon bag for carrying possessions.

## AGE 10-12

### ESSENTIALS:

Blank journal or drawing pad; markers or colored pencils; toothbrush and toothpaste (can be travel size); flashlight (please include batteries) and nightlight.

### EXTRAS:

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

## AGE 13-17

### ESSENTIALS:

Deodorant, brush/comb, travel-size toiletries (for girls: discreet case full of feminine products), blank journal and/or drawing pad; colored pencils; toothbrush and toothpaste; flashlight (please include batteries).

### EXTRAS:

TOYS -- deck of playing cards, ear phones, books. ARTS & CRAFTS -- mad libs, word search, pens, pencils. HYGIENE -- chapstick, compact mirror, deodorant, cardboard nail file, nail polish, OTHER -- gift cards (to Burgerville, McDonald's, Subway, Target, Fred Meyer, movie theater, Starbucks, etc.), sunglasses, foldable nylon bag for carrying possessions in, hair bands, gum, mints, graphic novels or comics.