



Dear <First Name>,

Last month, we shared that Christian Family Care is so much more than foster care and adoption and introduced the pillar of prevention. Today, we want to share with you the **pillar of preparedness** and how preparedness fits into the puzzle of Christian Family Care's mission of strengthening families and serving at-risk kids in the name of Jesus Christ.



Preparedness.

The term '**preparedness**' refers to a state of readiness a parent or caregiver must have to help a child that has experienced trauma, abuse, and neglect flourish. It is also the ability of parents, caregivers, educators, church leaders, government, professional and charitable organizations working with children and families to anticipate and respond effectively to the impact of trauma, social policies, events, or conditions on the wellbeing of children.

At Christian Family Care, our vision is *every child loved*. The reality is that sin rules in our world, and as a result, kids suffer adverse childhood experiences causing them to fail to thrive as children and adults. These adverse life experiences create perpetual generations of unhealthy individuals and families. The pillar of preparedness is focused on reversing this trend by providing knowledge and training to address the root of the problems, not just the symptom, to activate the restorative healing that helps them thrive.



Nadine Burke Harris, M.D., in her book *The Deepest Well, Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity*, shares that:

"Twenty years of medical research has shown that childhood adversity literally gets under our skin, changing people in ways that can endure in their bodies for decades. It can tip a child's developmental trajectory and affect physiology. It can trigger chronic inflammation and hormonal changes that can last a lifetime. It can alter the way DNA is read and how cells replicate, and it can dramatically increase the risk for heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes – even Alzheimer's."

Prenatal and early childhood (ages 0-6) is a person's most critical and sensitive period of development. The ability of a person to thrive in life starts here. Dr. Harris says, *"young children are the most vulnerable to adversity, but they also have the greatest capacity for healing when the interventions are begun early."*

Understanding the effects of trauma on children and the day-to-day stressors that lead to behaviors that cause children to fail to thrive is the focus of preparedness.

What are we doing?

• Prenatal and Early Childhood (0-6)

- o Pregnancy Counseling – Our team attends medical appointments, helps them put together a parenting plan, and provides life skills training to pregnant mothers.
- o Family Care KIDS – An early childhood learning center that serves children from six weeks old to pre-kindergarten. Every teacher is trained in the principles of TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention), an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children.
- o Arizona Family Counseling – We provide licensed specialists in childhood trauma and attachment therapy.

- ***Complex Trauma Resources***

- o Chuck Geddes, Ph.D. who founded Complex Trauma Resources in 2021, joined the Christian Family Care team in April. Complex Trauma Resources provides education and support to parents, caregivers, foster and adoptive parents, care teams, educators, clinicians, and professional agencies who care for traumatized children. This model has proven to have lasting results with anyone working with maltreated children and youth.

- ***Family Care Learning***

- o Christian Family Care provides a growing library of courses, counseling, and coaching needed to help ensure foster and adoptive families enjoy stable placements and connections with the children in their care. Family Care Learning strengthens families and equips parents, guardians, and community members to interact authentically and effectively with at-risk children in their care.

- ***Arizona Family Counseling***

- o As specialists in trauma and attachment therapy, our counselors offer different methods to best help children heal from adverse childhood trauma. Counselors help with assessment, behavior management, emotional healing, and parenting strategies.

What we hope to accomplish?

We aim to create a healthy environment for every child to thrive. Every foster or adopted child has experienced trauma. Understanding this and the uniqueness of the trauma experienced, a parent can be more successful in creating an environment where a child can flourish. We hope to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone, where both parents and children can thrive, and where we keep children stabilized until they can either be reunited with their parents or permanency through adoption. No child should be displaced or disrupt from a home because of behaviors that can be addressed through proper education and care, understanding the uniqueness of every child.

We also want to help teachers in our schools and churches help kids struggling with learning and behavioral issues due to experiencing adverse childhood experiences. Equipping them with tools and resources to prevent these children from failing to thrive because of disruptions.

How you can help engage with us:

- Learn more about parenting and childhood trauma by participating in classes offered on the Family Care Learning and Complex Trauma Resources platforms.
- Share with teachers you know the support and resources available at Christian Family Care.
- Refer families to Family Care KIDS for early childhood education.
- Refer a pregnant mother seeking help in making a life decision for their child for pregnancy counseling.

Christian Family Care is doing so much more! A foster or adoptive parent gets much more when they choose to partner with us. Our goal is to help every parent and every child thrive, which requires a commitment to do more to help prepare everyone – parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, schoolteacher, church leader, and caregivers navigate the effects of trauma children experience so permanency can be achieved, and an environment created where all can flourish into adulthood.

You now know about our pillar of prevention and preparedness. Next month we plan to share with you another pillar of Christian Family Care, the pillar of **Restoration**.

Our prayer is as you learn how the stewardship of your resources is being invested in these four pillars, you will be encouraged that your gifts are being stewarded wisely and making a difference. And I also pray that God is moving in your heart to grow your commitment to engage with us as a champion for families and children, leading transformation to a thriving Arizona.

Best regards,



Mark Upton
President/CEO



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