

DEVELOPING A CLOTHING CLOSET MINISTRY



Project **1.27**

Fostering and Adopting in Faith

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Children that are placed in foster care frequently come into care with only the clothes they are wearing, whether it be too big, too small or not weather appropriate. Even though foster parents may receive a small clothing allowance for the children placed in their care, this is not something that is immediately available. A clothing closet for foster parents is a good option for churches to support the foster families within their congregation or their community. A place where families can go or someone to call when they receive the phone call that the worker is on their way with two little people who only have what they are wearing. Many foster care support groups have clothing closets and clothing resources you can reach out to for additional support and ideas.

Here are some ideas to develop a clothing closet:

- Location: There may be a family within your congregation that has available space in their home or garage to house items. Depending on how large you are wanting your closet to be, it could be anywhere from several wire shelving units to a wall of shelves in a garage or basement
- Request donations of new or gently-used clothing. Be specific about requirements and needs (there may be a need for more toddler items versus infant items); drop-off location and times
- Organize volunteers to sort, clean and shelve donations
- Separate clothing into sizes, infants, toddlers, girls and boys
- Market the clothes closet in your church and other churches within your community, in foster and adoption support groups, to local human services and through social media
- If you are needing financial assistance, ask your church staff liaison for an opportunity to reach out to church members for donations

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