

Statewide, children need Christian foster families

June 15, 2016

AUSTIN—Texas is in dire need of foster families after a spike in the number of children removed from their families in 2016 has left dozens of children sleeping in state offices.

[The Associated Press reported](#) more than 24 young people spent at least two April nights in state offices. That follows 42 children who spent at least two nights in social workers' offices during March, when no foster homes were available for them.

Buckner Children and Family Services—which provides foster care in nine regions across the state, including North Texas, Lubbock, Amarillo, Longview, Lufkin, Beaumont and the Rio Grande Valley—is asking parents to pray about opening their homes to children at this crucial time.

“Each day, more children enter the foster care system,” reported Samela Macon, Buckner International’s senior director for domestic foster care. “They are hurting and alone. We are asking people to help care for them in their time of need.”

CPS has removed an average of 1,599 children from their homes every month this year, according to the Department of Family and Protective Services. In 2015, more than 30,000 children were in state care.

The compounding nature of the system in distress often puts pressure on the very people it is intended to serve.

“It’s such a traumatic experience for a child to be separated from their siblings,” Macon said. “Many of our children are caregivers for their

siblings. When those kids are separated, they are left not knowing if their sibling will be taken care of or if they'll even ever see them again. The experience re-traumatizes them.”

On average, children in the foster care system will experience more than six placements while in care, state statistics show. Although the average length of service from the point of removal to relinquishment of Department of Family and Protective Services responsibility is 54.3 months, 6 percent of the children who exited foster care last year will return within the next 12 months.

“We have a tremendous need for foster families,” Macon said. “There’s a shortage of families and a shortage of families who can take in sibling groups. Beyond providing places of safety, foster families provide love and stability for children at their most vulnerable. Texas needs families to step forward to care for these children in need.”

Buckner staff members are working hard to recruit more foster families, she said.

To find out more about becoming a foster parent, request more information [by clicking here](#) or by calling (855) 264-8783.

Buckner offers training, education and encouragement along the journey of becoming a foster parent.