**Everyone can play a role in preventing child abuse**

What would Arizona be like, if instead of the Department of Child Safety, which annually removes about 20,000 children from their homes, we had the Department of Child and Family Relationships, which gives families the tools and resources that they need to succeed?

At Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, we know this dream if far from reality. Child abuse is a big problem in Arizona. **But there is something that you can do about it.** Research shows that parents with a strong network of emotionally supportive friends can better care for themselves and their children, preventing abuse and neglect. Ways you can help:

**Be a good neighbor.** Reach out to parents that might need a little extra support – those that are new to the community, first-time or recently divorced parents, those facing a family crisis. Be an extra support, help foster resiliency, and link them to resources.

**Create a supportive community.** Organize events or classes to help parents build social support. Teach or host classes about preventing stress, parenting, or childhood development. Organize a baby-sitting co-op or clothing swap. Make craft kits for families to take home.

**Support foster children and families.** Consider becoming a foster parent, respite caregiver, or host an informational session in your community to help recruit foster parents.

**Everyone needs a little help sometimes.** Learn how to support your family. Visit lss-sw.org to find parenting classes, resource centers, and guided playgroups. Make time for small acts of kindness with your children every day. Dial 2-1-1 to connect with community resources.

Brené Brown has said “Here’s what I think integrity is: it’s choosing courage over comfort. Choosing what’s right over what’s fun, fast, or easy. And its practicing your values.”

On behalf of LSS-SW, and the thousands of children across Arizona that need your help, thank you. Visit lss-sw.org if you’d like to get more involved.