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H.O.P.E. Drug Court Participant Partners with ODHS for Family Reunification

ROSEBURG, OR – A H.O.P.E. Drug Court participant has partnered with ODHS (Oregon Department of Human Services) to collect needed items for families going through the reunification process through a community project called "Families United in Hope" emphasizing the importance of having items to assist with the bonding process.

Ashley Alexander, HOPE Drug Court participant, chose to help the Child Welfare Division through ODHS. "*I am doing this project as I was once in the shoes of those parents feeling worthless like there was no way possible to get through the beginning stages of recovery, but as long as we stay willing and accept the help and support we are given, it is possible. I am here to help the parents believe in themselves and rebuild their relationships with their children*," stated Alexander.

About the Project: Supporting Family Visits
The mission of the Child Welfare Division is to ensure every child and family is empowered to live a safe, stable, and healthy life. One key part of that mission is supporting meaningful connections during family visits, especially when parents are visiting their child(ren) in an office setting.

"*The ODHS, Child Welfare Program is honored to assist H.O.P.E. Drug Court Participant, Ms. Alexander in meeting her goal of supporting quality family time between parents and children in foster care. Maintaining the critical bond and relationship between parents and children as they experience the trauma of family separation is of paramount concern, and her investment in supporting and encouraging parents while they are on this difficult journey could not be more supported and welcomed by us,"* stated Jessia Hunter, ODHS Child Welfare Program Manager.

This project aims to provide support for parents who may not have anything to bring with them during these visits. Each participating family will receive a bag of items designed to assist with the bonding process, making the visit more engaging and comforting. Additionally, a photo of the child(ren) and parent(s) will be taken during the visit and given to both parties to keep, helping maintain connection while they are apart. Mary Guthrie, Recovery Support Team Coordinator, ODHS Child Welfare – Douglas County, added, "*Ms. Alexander is giving back to other parents for them to understand how important they are and know "They Matter". Change is possible with honesty, open-mindedness and willingness*."

For more information about the Child Welfare Division, please visit the Oregon Department of Human Services: https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/pages/index.aspx.

Ms. Alexander is hosting a **car wash event on Saturday, July 12, from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m.** in **Sherm's Thunderbird parking lot** to raise funds for her upcoming project during the Graffiti Cruise weekend. All proceeds will go toward purchasing the remaining items needed to complete the project.

If you'd prefer to donate items instead of funds, three community drop box locations are available:

- **Douglas County Juvenile Department Lobby**
  First Floor of the Courthouse
  1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Room CH 105A
- **Adapt Integrated Healthcare**
  548 SE Jackson Street
- **Clint Newell Motors**
  662 NE Garden Valley Boulevard

Items Needed to Support Family Reunification Visits
Ms. Alexander is collecting new items to help strengthen the parent-child bond during family visits. These items will be included in take-home bags for families and used during visits to create positive shared experiences.

She hopes to receive donations of the following:

□ Children's Books
□ Baby Activity Items
□ Puzzles
□ Card Games / Small Board Games
□ Matchbox Cars
□ Coloring Books and Crayons
□ Activity Books
□ Fruit Snacks / Bottled Water
□ Play-Doh / Bubbles
□ Small Toys / Action Figures
□ Stuffed Animals / Small Dolls
□ Building Blocks
□ Sensory Toys

Your generosity makes a lasting difference in the lives of children and families during a challenging time.

The Douglas County H.O.P.E. Drug Court program is preparing for their 110th graduation on August 26, 2025 at 5:15 p.m. at the Douglas County Fairgrounds in the Cascade Hall building. Douglas County H.O.P.E. Drug Court, with Honorable Judge Robert B. Johnson, operates under the jurisdiction of Douglas County Circuit Court. The structure is designed to reduce recidivism, address substance use disorders and encourage participants to reflect on their lives beyond their criminal actions. It emphasizes personal transformation and future potential. Graduate Community Projects, which take place during the final phase of the program, offer participants a chance to demonstrate their personal growth, social development, and the internal shift that motivates them to reach a higher level of achievement.

Graduate flyers are placed on the Douglas County website through the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) under H.O.P.E. Drug Court, go to https://douglascountyor.gov/851/HOPE-Drug-Court.