



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Unaccompanied Minor Program provides

services for foreign-born children who have arrived in the U.S.A. without a parent or legal guardian. Whether the child is a refugee with legal immigration status or an undocumented immigrant, the child is placed with a loving, compassionate foster family for safe, nurturing care. These children are among the most vulnerable children who are in need of foster care because they are alone and often have no one in this country to turn to for help and support. They are in a totally unfamiliar environment, often have limited knowledge of the English language and are experiencing the loss and pain of being separated from their families. Although all of the children arrive alone, some come as refugees with legal immigration status; others are undocumented. The goal of our program is to meet the children's basic needs in a safe and nurturing family environment.

- **Refugee Minors** – These children have fled their homeland to escape political and/or religious persecution. They usually flee because they fear for their life and seek safety in a refugee camp in a neighboring country. If they meet the criteria for refugee status, they become eligible for resettlement in this country. Since they are minors and have no care giver, they also become eligible for foster care. Although our goal is always to reunite children with their biological families, refugee children generally need long term foster care since reunification with family members is not often possible due to their particular situations.
- **Minors with non-Refugee Status** – These children have been apprehended by the Border Patrol entering the United States without documentation and without their parent(s) or other adult care giver. These youth have been identified to adjust their immigration status while they are in care with Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities – Phoenix Region is a licensed child welfare agency that has provided foster care for foreign-born children since 1984. Since that time we have served over 700 children from 30 different countries.

We have an urgent need for families who are able and willing to share their home with these children for long-term care. Foster families are provided with training to become licensed in the state of Arizona. There is no expense to the foster family. The children have insurance to cover medical needs and foster parents are provided with a foster care payment to cover the expenses of adding a new member to the family.