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OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE
OKLAHOMA INDIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

Dear Friends of Children,

My heart breaks as I consider the plight of children in foster care who find themselves separated from their siblings. It is hard for me to imagine the challenges a child must face when all alone. Today, almost 10,000 children find themselves in the state foster care system. We have a tremendous need to keep siblings together within the foster care system.

The Circle of Care is developing a response to address the needs of siblings who are within the foster care system. It is a creative vision that will keep children in the system together in safe and healthy settings.

When this vision is fulfilled, children within the system will no longer be torn apart from their siblings, because of the severe shortage of homes capable of accepting multiple placements. This vision will allow children to stay together as siblings, which will reduce or eliminate the lack of contact these children face when separated from one other. We expect the long-term benefits of the vision to result in healthier children, stronger sibling connections, and improved relational and academic skills.

The Circle of Care vision is a bold initiative. The plan is to build eight homes across Oklahoma in the areas and counties with the greatest number of brothers and sisters who currently are separated from each other. These homes are designed for ease of supervision with an emphasis on the safety and privacy of the children. Each facility will provide a special area for recreational or educational activities.

The homes will be built in strategic locations in which strong partnerships will be built between the home, the children, the church, and the school. Parents for the homes will be recruited and trained specifically for this initiative. The Circle of Care will seek potential foster parents with a passion for children, will train and place them in homes, and will strengthen connections to the church and community to provide the best possible setting in which to nurture these children.

United Methodists in Oklahoma are stepping forward to make the vision a reality even as I am writing this letter. I am proud of the Circle of Care ministry and support the efforts to meet this pressing need. I can think of no greater need than to minister to siblings in the foster care system in Oklahoma.

I invite you to pray for the children in foster care and to financially support this vision and initiative.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Nunn