



AVIVA FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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President & CEO  
Regina Bette, LMFT

August 10, 2018

re: Hope in a Suitcase

To whom it may concern,

I write on behalf of Hope in a Suitcase and all they have offered my program. I am the Director of the Relative Support Services program, which assists relative caregivers who have chosen to care for their youth kin, children would otherwise be placed in a traditional foster care setting. These children often come with only the cloths on their backs and not much else. The caregivers are normally not told ahead of time that the children will be joining their family and, therefore, are both financially and emotionally not prepared for this new responsibility.

This is where Hope in a Suitcase steps in every single week! Each Monday Hope in a Suitcase hand delivers suitcases filled with necessities for the children we serve. The contents include hygiene items, blankets, cloths, pajamas and other goodies. The children's faces light up when they are presented with their "gift". Also, the caregivers are extremely thankful for the immediate help.

On top of this service, Hope in a Suitcase offers a "Shopping Event" held several times per year (free of charge). This is a great opportunity for the older children to actually "shop" for their clothing and pick out things that they like. This is especially beneficial for this age group because they tend to have a certain style they prefer and it helps to foster autonomy. We have had several clients report that their experience at the Shopping Event was extraordinary and that the children really appreciated getting to choose their own items. Again, caregivers are extraordinarily grateful.

I am absolutely amazed by the work that Hope in a Suitcase does, especially knowing that it runs on mostly volunteers. I am also very thankful to be chosen as one of the few agencies that they offer their services to. As the Director of a program who works with families in crisis I can tell you that, aside from clothing, what Hope in a Suitcase has offered our clients is acceptance, faith and a sense of encouragement.

Sincerely,

Laura De La Cruz  
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