

## 20 WAYS TO WELCOME NEW AFGHAN FAMILIES

Families arrive from Afghanistan with very few possessions. They need to acquire basic necessities for the entire family, while simultaneously looking for employment. Their dream is to work hard and provide a safe and secure future for their family. Again and again, these families express their gratitude for friendship and support as they build a foundation for their new life in the United States. In our years of working with newly arrived families, we have found a consistent set of urgent needs.



**Please reach out to us first so we can coordinate how you can best contribute. Thank you for welcoming our newest neighbors!**

**Contact: [WholeHeartRA@essentialsfirst.org](mailto:WholeHeartRA@essentialsfirst.org)**

1. **Contribute to a safe transportation fund.** *Reliable transportation is crucial for accessing jobs, doctors, and grocery stores. Since refugee families have extremely limited incomes, their first cars are often cheap, old, or unreliable. This fund helps with repairs, tires, and car seats for children.*
2. **Supply diapers once a month to a family with young children.** *Disposable diapers are a significant monthly cost for newly arrived and low-income families. Diapers are not covered by "food stamps" (SNAP). A consistent supply alleviates this worry so income can go toward paying rent.*
3. **Donate a laptop computer, tablet, or phone.** *Many families are without a computer or even a cell phone. An internet-connected device is vital to search for jobs, take online classes, or assist children with schoolwork.*
4. **Donate a functioning car to a family that needs one.** *Since these families arrive with little or no savings, buying their first car is extremely challenging.*
5. **Provide sturdy bunkbeds with a guardrail and mattresses.** *Afghan families usually have several children and live in 1- or 2-bedroom apartments. Twin or a twin over full bunkbed are useful for fitting families into a bedroom comfortably.*
6. **Host a virtual baby shower, or supply items for a newborn.** *Young families are often expecting babies and have no supplies. A stroller (or a double for an older sibling), layette, bedding, bassinet, car seat, crib, etc. will be used immediately.*
7. **Volunteer to transport furniture if you have a large van or truck.** *Often families find free furniture on websites or "Facebook" groups such as "Buy Nothing" or "Offer Up". However, they either don't have a car, or it is too small to transport the item. Also, our Alliance often needs a way to deliver large items we procure.*

8. **Provide a laundry basket with household cleaning and personal hygiene supplies.** *Anti-bacterial home cleaning products, paper towels, toilet paper, broom, mop, sponges, hand sanitizer, plus hygiene kit supply list from Essentials First [here](#).*
9. **Donate shoes with a gift cards (Walmart/Target).** *Shoes are always needed; families can try on and purchase shoes for their children.*
10. **Provide a new vacuum cleaner, space heater, blender, food processor, small citrus juicer, instant cooker, or standing mixer.**
11. **Donate high quality basic kitchen items.** *Pots and pans, cooking utensils, thermal carafes, electric kettles, plates, bowls, cutlery, and storage containers.*
12. **Sewing machines and sewing kit.** *Machines, fabric scissors, needle, thread, etc.*
13. **Put together a home repair toolbox.** *Screwdrivers, wrench, measuring tape, hammer, drill, nails, etc. so families can put furniture together and do basic repairs.*
14. **Provide a basket of children's books and educational puzzles.** *Children and adults will use good-quality picture books (fiction, nonfiction, [children's dictionaries](#)) to practice English. This [LeapFrog](#) book, [Clock](#) toy, or quality puzzles are toys that teach. Please be culturally sensitive and not overly commercial.*
15. **Donate a bin of Legos.** *Legos and Duplos (new or used) are a versatile, creative, gender-neutral educational toy the whole family can enjoy.*
16. **Put together an art kit for children.** *Drawing paper, colored pencils, crayons, [coloring books](#), [maze](#) books, and playdough, etc. High-quality supplies delivered as a kit in a storage bin can fit in limited closet space.*
17. **Support families who need help navigating information in English.** *Help read and explain directions, applications, or forms. This can be done remotely.*
18. **Be a career mentor.** *Help improve someone's CV/resume for the US job market.*
19. **Be a language mentor.** *Women especially need a regular FaceTime or phone call visit to practice their language skills and make a new friend.*
20. **Support our most current tangible needs on our [wish list](#).**