

## **Afghan Family Update**

School is finished for a short while for the older children in our family as it is only a week until Summer School starts. That will then last for four weeks and continue to reinforce their English language skills. The children all enjoyed their first months of school here in the U.S. and it was great to see them make new friends and adjust to living in St. Louis. The older children are continuing with Soccer on Saturdays, which gives mother and father a little break in the day. The twins often take turns keeping them up at night and it's a long day when there are eight children in the house with nothing to do. So, our volunteer efforts this summer will also be focused on getting the kids out and giving them experiences in and around our area.

Mother feels that she just needs help once a week going forward as both parents will continue with tutoring two days each week and we are helping her to attend a weekly Afghan Mother's group held at the Welcome Neighbor STL site. This will, hopefully, give her a chance to interact with other Afghan women and lessen the isolation she is feeling at times.

Our own Sue Scott and the family's oldest daughter were interviewed on NPR last week. ([Click to listen or read on St. Louis on the Air](#)) The school bus situation has been a nightmare in the City of St. Louis and, on average, was not coming in the morning to pick up the children two to three times per week. Sue talked about the impact this has had on the Afghan families who, due to language barriers and lack of transportation, were disproportionately affected. And then, often the children wouldn't return home until nearly 4:00 as the busses would have to make multiple runs to get everyone home. Our family is fortunate that father has a car and works the second shift so he was available to drive them in the morning to school.

The situation with the lack of access to baby formula is still presenting a problem for our family. The partners have been working hard at finding sources for formula and we are praying that this situation is soon resolved. If you find any of the formula the twins need, please consider buying a can or two and taking it to the church. Many hours are being spent looking for formula by the partners.

We want to finish this update with a truly positive observation we have about our family. The father of our family is incredibly hard-working and takes on all the overtime at work that he is offered. We have talked with other family partners whose men do not exhibit the same kind of work ethic and we are thankful that our father does. While we are working hard on the family's behalf and are happy to do so, it would be frustrating if it felt like everyone wasn't pulling their weight. Father also is up during the night with babies, helps to cook and clean the house, and greatly loves his family. He is not shy about showing affection to his wife and children and he is always expressing his thanks to us for our efforts. It makes us want to work even harder on behalf of the family as we truly feel like partners with them.

In Partnership,

Sue Davis, Noreen Mayfield and Sue Scott