Dear Parent,

We appreciate you allowing Safe Families for Children (SFFC) to help you through this difficult time. Safe Families are people who willingly and without pay open their homes to a child of a parent who is experiencing a crisis or needing help. Our families live throughout Troup County and they have been trained, screened, and approved similar to how foster care parents are approved. These families take in children as young as a day old, all the way through parenting teenagers. Children stay with a Safe Family as short as 2-3 days and as long as 2 months or more. Our average stay, nationally, is 45 days. Our families are only interested in helping you succeed as quickly as possible so that your family can be reunited as quickly as possible. Parents who have placed their children have had similar problems to what you are struggling with (homelessness, being overwhelmed, depression, health problems, drug/alcohol addiction, etc.) All children are returned to their parents, unless other arrangements are made.

It is important to know that this is not foster care, and if you place your children with us, you are not placing them with the State (DFCS.) We are similar to having an aunt or uncle (extended family support) and you are asking Safe Families to take care of your children temporarily while you get back on your feet. You retain full custody of your child, can request the return of your child at any time, and are part of every decision that is made.

In order to get started, we would like to meet with you to fully explain our SFFC program. At this meeting, you will be given an Intake Packet and our staff will work diligently to match your family with the right Host Family to care for your child. The information packet includes our Temporary Placement Agreement and POA for Healthcare Only, both of which gives the Host Family the right to have your child in their home (permission to care) and the right to make emergency medical decisions if you cannot be reached. These forms also give us information about your children that may be very important for them to know; information that will make the transition a little easier and more comfortable for your child. Once a Host Family is found, our staff will help make arrangements to meet the Host Family and assist with any transportation or logistical needs.

**Other things you should know:**

 1. You can change your mind at any time and have your children returned to you. If you have a DFCS worker,

 they will be notified of that decision.

 2. **Visits** – We strongly encourage you to visit your children as often as possible. Our volunteers can help with

 visits when needed and will choose a time and place convenient with you and the Safe Family.

 3. **Phone Calls** – If your child is old enough, we encourage phone calls. These can occur daily, if you like; as

 long as the time of day/evening isn’t too disruptive to you, the child, or the Safe Family.

 4. **Contacting us** – You can contact us anytime you want. You can reach us at our office at 706-298-0050 ext.

 1073, by cell # is 706-616-8028, or email cgibson@twincedars.org

Thank you for choosing Safe Families for your children.

Sincerely,

Candi Gibson

Safe Families Coordinator

706-298-0050 Ext. 1073 (office)

706-616-8028 (cell)

cgibson@twincedars.org

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