

Safe Families for Children Needs Host Families

One of our local ministry partners is Safe Families for Children. Safe Families for Children creates extended family-like supports for families in need of temporary care and supervision of their children through a community of devoted volunteers who are motivated by faith to keep children safe and keep families intact.

In situations such as temporary homelessness or unemployment, hospitalization of a parent, domestic violence, incarceration, or substance abuse treatment, parents or guardians may be incapable of providing a safe and caring environment for their children, putting them at risk of abuse and neglect. In the past, extended family or neighbors stepped in to help families in crisis by caring for their children for short periods of time. Today, however, many families are socially isolated, and their extended family is nonexistent, or unavailable or unable to help. Adding to the problem is the fact that most state child welfare agencies are required under law to rescue only those children who suffer blatant abuse or neglect, leaving thousands of children at risk.

Safe Families for Children provides much needed support for families in crisis and families in need by allowing them to temporarily place their children with Host Families. This gives parents in need time to get back on their feet while their children are cared for in a safe and loving environment, with families who have been screened, trained, and pre-approved by Safe Families. Parents in need can reunite with their children at any time.

Both the Family in need and the Host Family participate voluntarily, with no compensation or expectation of adoption. The average stay for children with Host Families is 6 weeks. Some children stay longer and some stay shorter, depending on the specific needs of the parents.

To be a Host Family, you must be at least 25 years old, emotionally and financially stable, mature, law abiding, healthy, and active. You also must be willing to engage in an ongoing relationship with a family in need, agree to not use drugs, and refrain from using profanity or engaging in other negative behavior that may impact a child. Host families receive training, either online or in person.

Safe families is providing a Host Training Day on Saturday, March 10, at Brandywine Community Church in Greenfield.

For more info, contact Ron or Lynette Hulet at hulets@southeastsspeech.com or you can check out Safe Families' website, <http://safe-families.org>