

## How Safe Families Differs from Foster Care?

Safe Families for Children (SFFC) and the foster care system both work with a population of vulnerable children and families. The primary difference is that Safe Families seeks to walk with parents before and/or during moments of crisis to prevent child abuse and neglect. Through prevention efforts, Safe Families hopes to deflect more children from having to enter the foster care system unnecessarily. Our goal is to support, stabilize, strengthen parents through ongoing supportive relationships and resources so children can stay safe and families together.

SAFE FAMILIES	FOSTER CARE
Keeps kids safe during a time of crisis before child abuse and/or neglect occurs	Removes children from their families after the abuse has occurred
Parents voluntarily request a hosting or family friending so they can have time and support to get back on their feet	Parents have no choice in the removal of their children
Parents maintain custody of their children	Parents lose custody of their children
Hostings are short-term, with an average about 30 days; but can be as short as just a night or two	Foster care placements often end up being long-term, often with no clear ending. Children are in foster care for an average of 2.5 years
Safe Families volunteers build caring, compassionate relationships with the parent to help achieve target goals.	Foster care focuses on the safety of the child and deep friendships between foster parents and biological parents are not often encouraged
Safe Families volunteers are recruited from and organized through local churches	Foster families are recruited from the general population and are licensed through social service agencies
The goal is family reunification...98% of children hosted return to their families	Nationally, less than half of kids in foster care return to their families; some states and counties have lower percentages
Host Families get no compensation, but get support through a network of volunteers	Foster Parents are monetarily compensated by the government
One hosting costs an average of \$1,500 to the Safe Families Chapter	One child in foster care costs at least \$35,000-\$40,000 a year to the state.