## Testimony by Dr. David Anderson, Founder SFFC

**About the presenter:** Dr. David Anderson is a Clinical Psychologist, Executive Director of Lydia Home Association, and Founder of Safe Families for Children. Prior to Safe Families, he served as a clinical psychologist at Lutheran General and Mt. Sinai Hospitals.

David has been recognized as a global social entrepreneur (Ashoka Fellow), a national social movement leader (Prime Movers Fellow – Hunt Alternative Fund), and won the 2010 Peter Drucker Award for Nonprofit Innovation. He served as adjunct faculty at Wheaton College and Trinity International University.

**Safe Families for Children hosts vulnerable children and creates extended family-like supports for desperate families through a community of devoted volunteers motivated by compassion to keep children safe and ultimately together with their families.**

Founded in Chicago in 2003, Safe Families for Children (SFFC) is a multi-site volunteer movement that gives hope and support to families in distress. SFFC reframes how families are supported during a crisis. Parents voluntarily place their children in safe, loving homes where they are cared for while the parents seek to restore stability in their lives. SFFC is dedicated to family support, stabilization and, most importantly, child abuse prevention.

SFFC is a community-based movement predicated on the belief that the safety and health of children in our communities is the responsibility of all of us, and that parents are the key to providing that well-being for their children. Accordingly, SFFC focuses on strengthening and supporting parents so they can be safe families for their children. SFFC is rooted in faith-based principles of welcoming strangers into our hearts and homes.

### Facts
- Screen and approve host families similar to foster care
- Monitor children in host homes at the same frequency as foster care
- 17,000 placements since we started
- Average stay is 6 weeks
- 70% 5 years old and below
- 92% of kids return home or to a relative, 3% go to foster care
- Referral Sources: schools, homeless and domestic violence centers, substance abuse, hospitals, child welfare

### Why Safe Families Works
- Substitute care vs. supplementary care.
- Parents place voluntarily and retain full legal custody of their children.
- Parents are not punished or humiliated for their difficulties.
- Host families are motivated by care and concern, without financial reward.
- Host families understand the temporary nature of their role.
- SFFC directly addresses most significant problem facing child neglect: social isolation

### Year End Summary - Chicago
- Growth in placements

| 2007 Total | 2008 Total | 2009 Total | 2010 Total | 2011 Total | 2012 Total | 2013 Total | 2014 Total | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 210 | 405 | 683 | 913 | 811 | 895 | 958 | 961 | 6199 |

- Growth in Host Families

| 2007 Total | 2008 Total | 2009 Total | 2010 Total | 2011 Total | 2012 Total | 2013 Total | 2014 Total | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 316 | 136 | 181 | 128 | 98 | 95 | 104 | 1058 |

- Cost per foster care placement in Illinois: **$30-40,000 (estimate)**

- Cost per host family placement in Illinois: **$543**

**Year End Summary – National**
- Growth in Placements

| 2007 Total | 2008 Total | 2009 Total | 2010 Total | 2011 Total | 2012 Total | 2013 Total | 2014 Total | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 210 | 456 | 1057 | 1560 | 2174 | 2987 | 3615 | 4762 | 17209 |

- Growth in Host Families

| 2007 Total | 2008 Total | 2009 Total | 2010 Total | 2011 Total | 2012 Total | 2013 Total | 2014 Total | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 346 | 270 | 434 | 506 | 512 | 620 | 617 | 3305 |

- 75 Safe Family sites throughout the US (32 states)
- International Growth: Canada, 12 regions in England, Scotland, Wales,

**Evaluations and Legislation**
- In process: Illinois -  Randomized Control Trial Evaluation by Dr. Mark Testa, University of North Carolina
- In Process: England -  Research Evaluation by Dartington Social Research Institute
- Safe Family Law in Oregon, Oklahoma and Wisconsin

**Illinois DCFS Involvement**
- Largest referral source: child neglect and risk of harm
- Child Protection Investigators referral process
- Intact family (in-home services) referrals