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Colorado Safe Haven for Newborns Day Celebrated with Success Stories

Safe Haven awareness day to be observed April 7, 2009

DENVER, April 1, 2009 – Colorado Safe Haven for Newborns, a non-profit organization created to prevent the abandonment of newborn babies by informing the Colorado community about the Safe Haven law, is pleased to announce the celebration of National Haven Awareness Day, 10 a.m. on April 7, at Aurora Fire Station #4, (1110 S. Quentin St.) the location where the first child in Colorado was handed-in under the law in 2001.

The Colorado Safe Haven law was passed in 2000, ensuring that a mother or father in Colorado can anonymously hand over a newborn child within three days of birth to personnel at a fire station or hospital. Since the law was passed, 29 infants have been turned over to a fire station or hospital in Colorado.

One such happy ending could have turned out much differently if not for the Safe Haven law and a worried young mother. The young woman was on Thanksgiving break from college, close to her due date, but had not yet told her own mother that she was pregnant. She delivered a baby girl and kept her for two days, but on the third day she and her boyfriend decided to take the infant to the hospital because the mother was not emotionally ready to care for the baby, and the stress of hiding her pregnancy was becoming too much. The young woman wasn't aware of the Safe Haven law, but knew that a hospital would be able to care for the infant medically.

When she arrived at the Medical Center of Aurora and turned the baby in, the nurses told her about the law, asked her a few questions, and immediately started treating the jaundiced baby. The young mother continued to visit the baby every day, and after seeing her own baby on the evening news and in the paper as a Safe Haven law success, she decided to share her story with her family. Once the girl confided in her mother, she realized she could not give up her baby and returned to the hospital for the infant.

After parenting classes, home approval by Social Services, and support from her family, the young mother got her baby back, a true testament to the success of the law. That little baby is now seven years old, and her mother is currently attending nursing school with plans to go into counseling young women because of her own experiences.

This story has a happy ending, however, if the baby had been harmed or abandoned elsewhere, or if she had waited much longer, she may not have been able to call upon the Safe Haven law and may have been prosecuted for infant abandonment and sent to jail. Sadly, this could be the story for many of the 400,000 women and girls between the ages of 13 and 24 in Colorado who don't know about the law and feel that they have no other choice than abandonment.

In support of educating the community about the law and its effectiveness, Colorado Safe Haven for Newborns will be celebrating National Safe Haven Awareness Day, April 7 at Aurora Fire Station #4. Our young mother will also be available for interviews. Please contact Denise Goltz to schedule: 720.939.1512 (cell); 720.941.6303 (home).

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