**Deciding Together Agreement**

**My name is Meagan Faraone and I will be your Deciding Together Consultant. My role is to help you explore whether or not you feel being involved in foster care and/or adoption with the agency you currently working with is what is right for you by leading you through the 6 book Deciding Together Preparation Program. I look forward to meeting you and helping in any way that I am able. We greatly appreciate your interest in helping local children and families who are involved with protective services and over the next 6 weeks together, we will be discussing what that might look like.**

**Each time we meet, we will be discussing and reviewing the book that you completed over the previous week (so at our first consultation, we will focus on book 1). It is your responsibility to understand and engage with the material before our consultation, reading it in its entirety and answering all the questions in writing. Anyone in your family or household who is going to be licensed with your agency needs to be a part of this work and attend all consultations. The only exceptions to this are:**

* **Sections I inform you in advance that we will be skipping in order to do together during our next consultation.**
* **Any of the activities that prompt you to watch a video, as these are no longer accessible, so please disregard them.**

**The more you use the books, the more you will get out the process. They are yours to keep, but you will turn them back into your agency for your licensing worker to review before they start your home visits. It’s a way for them to get a peek into your experience so they have good context for starting your licensing process, which is why it is important that you complete each one in writing. They will end up back in your hands for you to use as a reference in the future, so feel free to take notes and use them as a learning tool. Please be aware that I will be in communication with your agency’s Licensing Staff throughout your consultation process in order to update them on engagement and advise them on the best ways to support you as a family. As they are the ones contracting with me to provide this service to you, they are making an investment in you are a family. There are no expectations about the end result of this process (a decision not to pursue licensing is still a mark of the decision making process being successful) but we do ask that you fully participate in and out of consultation as this service is made available at no cost to you.**

**A few additional things to keep in mind:**

* **We will meet weekly for the 6 weeks of our time together (unless other arrangements have been agreed to prior to starting our consultations) and it is important that maintaining these appointments is a priority. There is limited availability reschedule consultations outside of emergency situations. We understand that the unexpected does arise and so we permit 1 of the 6 consultations to be rescheduled. If a 2nd is needed, it may result in you being put back on the waitlist and unable to continue with the current program.**
* **When we have our consultations, please be in as quiet and minimally distracting an environment as possible. At times we will be talking about more sensitive issues, so if you have children at home, making a plan so that you feel comfortable to speak freely is important. Having the space well lit is also a bonus so I can see you as a lot of communication can be lost if I can’t see your face.**
  + **If you are not in a position to participate fully and safely (you are working, driving, don’t have a stable internet connection, etc) we will need to reschedule the consultation and it will count towards your 1 time allowance.**
* **Please know that there is no “wrong” way to do the Strengths and Needs Worksheets at the end of each book. Sometimes families struggle with how to complete them because you do one at the end of each book. If you find yourself struggling, let me know and we can discuss them at greater length during our first consultation.**
* **You will get reminder emails for our virtual consultations through your client portal here and if you are on a mobile device, will be prompted to download an app in order to join our visits. There will be additional information in your reminders that is specific to my therapy clients, so please disregard that. Our work together is not to be seen as establishing a therapeutic relationship between us and if counseling is recommended during the course of consultation, I will provide resources for you to connect with appropriate services.**
* **Should we have technology issues, I use google meet and doxyme as backup platforms. If you’d like to test either platform out before our first meeting so you know how to navigate it I am happy to schedule a practice session. Please reach out and let me know if you’d like to do this.**

**I’m excited to meet you and support you however I can on this journey. As I am a contract trainer with the agency you are working with rather than an employee, I have limited availability outside of consultations to respond to questions as it is not my full time job. However, when they may arise as you complete your books, please feel free to reach out by email (meaganfaraonelcsw@hushmail.com) or you can message me through your secure client portal here. I will do my best to respond to you within 48 business hours.**