

Safe Home= Healthy Child

Five-year-old Destiny* lived in a crime-ridden area of East Savannah where she was accustomed to hearing the occasional sound of gunfire or watching “deals” being made on the corner. Her great grandmother, Rosie*, tried to shield her great granddaughter from the violence outside their home until all that changed one evening when Destiny witnessed a violent act right on her own doorstep. Destiny witnessed a man being shot. Luckily for Destiny and Rosie they were unharmed, but Rosie could not allow her granddaughter to endure this troubling environment any longer. It’s easy for many not living in this neighborhood to advise Rosie to “just move”; however, it’s much more difficult than packing up your belongings. The 65-year-old great grandmother has worked a stable part-time job for a local manufacturing company for the last 15 years and has been taking care of Destiny since the child’s mother became addicted to drugs. In order to provide for Destiny, Rosie could not accept full-time hours. Working 30 hours a week just barely provided the essentials, let alone enough for rent of a one bedroom apartment in a safer neighborhood.

One Sunday in church Rosie was sharing her frustration with a dear friend when she suggested that Rosie contact Habitat Savannah to see if she could qualify to become a Habitat homeowner. After meeting the initial eligibility requirements, Rosie was chosen by the Family Selection Committee to become a Habitat homeowner.

Rosie was able to work on her house on Saturdays while family members cared for Destiny. Rosie put in the require 350 sweat equity hours and took pleasure in knowing that she helped to build her own house. With the zero percent interest loan, she was able to pay the same amount she was paying for rent, but this time she was a taxpayer in a safe, stable community. Destiny is a changed child as she can safely play in her front yard while her great grandmother Rosie watches nearby.

**name changed to maintain privacy*