***LETTER TEMPLATE - DFCS (Child Abuse/Protection)***

Dear Parent,

During your child’s recent visit to [HOSPITAL], you were informed by [his/her] caregiver that we needed to file a report to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). This is the department that oversees child welfare in our state. We understand this can be a very confusing and stressful time. In an effort to help ease your concerns regarding this situation, we feel it is important to provide you with some additional information.

We would first like to assure you that our primary role is to provide a safe environment and compassionate, high-quality care to your child. As caregivers, the hospital has a unique role that also requires us to report anything that may indicate the child’s safety is at risk, while continuing to provide the needed medical care.

DCFS and state law require hospital staff to report certain types of injuries (including, though not limited to, bruising, bone breaks, fractures, sprains and malnourishment) to a state hotline. As an advocate for your child’s welfare, the hospital caregiver is to report what injuries they observe. Please understand when reporting such information, we indicate the specifics of the injury and, according to parent and child report, how it occurred. It is then the role of the individual taking the call to determine what, if any, action needs to be taken.

If you have any concerns about the disposition of the information shared with the hotline, we encourage you to contact them at [CONTACT NUMBER]. The caregiver receives very little information back from the individual taking the report and is always encouraged to share with you any response or direction that the hotline offers.

Thank you for choosing [HOSPITAL]. We value the trust you place in us and are always grateful for the opportunity to partner with you in caring for the wellness of your family.