

In Her Own Words

A Providence House graduate reflects on her experience in our program.



Mannie
Demosthenes
Graduate
August 2013

Living at Providence House was a great life experience for me and my son Caleb. When I came here I was overwhelmed with all sorts of problems... hospital bills, car problems, single parenting and so on. Being a single parent with a part time job was very tough for me because I was on my own with a 3-month-old child for the first time. The cost of daycare was high. Sometimes I could pay and other times I couldn't. This meant I couldn't work which meant no money to pay my bills and I'd have to find someone to borrow it from. This hurt a lot.

I was shy and didn't speak my mind. I never learned as a child to assert myself when I needed to. So, I feared going to my boss about my childcare problem and accepted it as my problem. But at Providence House not only did I have a place to stay I learned to how to speak my mind, assert myself, and not to be afraid. Through coaching I began to speak my mind and discuss my goals, needs and fears. Now I successfully assert myself at work, in school, in relationships with friends and family—and most recently in the negotiation of my new condo!

One of my first goals was to become a CNA, but I didn't have enough funds for the class. Instead of crying (which I did often) I discussed it with the case manager and she shared my need with supporters of Providence House and within two days I had the class paid in full. They also paid for evening child care. I have my CNA certification today. And, I'm now studying for an accounting certification. This is big for me because I couldn't read a book from the beginning to the end. I used to read from the end of the book and skip around until I got to the front. I never understood what I read and found reading boring. Again, through coaching I expressed my frustrations over this and the coach challenged me to just try reading from left to right using my finger. My assignment was to read one of my child's books in this manner and discuss the story in the next session. Not only did I do it—I understood what I read and found it was fun! My TABE test score in reading went from 320 to 710! I read every night to my son and I enjoy it!

I have grown emotionally, and feel much more capable of handling my life better as an adult. My son is doing well in VPK and performs at an academic level above his age. He loves assisting his teacher and is always offering his help to others. My advice to other Moms thinking about starting a new life at Providence House is to know what you want, respect yourself and others...and, realize there is a time limit for reaching your goals here. The staff was really there for me whenever I needed them with any questions. They were reliable and genuine. I could trust them completely, which is why I stuck with the program.

By coming to Providence House I stopped partying and made new friends who are now family because of the community life here. As a graduate these wonderful friendships continue.

I am free of the medicals bills I had and am on the path to getting a higher degree and a better career. I especially thank God, my coach, and Nancy for the great advice and words of encouragement. Providence House was a great experience and one of the best decisions that I made for me and my son Caleb.