

## Isaac's Story

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"I never heard of a program for teenage dads, I always thought these programs were for pregnant girls."

I knew Mr. Hayes when I was in middle school and he was the social worker that I would always talk to when I had problems. I graduated from middle school and went to high school, but because of my behavior I was transferred to an alternative school.

After a year at the alternative school, I found out that I was going to be a father. My girlfriend already had a child, but became pregnant with my child. I was doing ok with her son, but when she became pregnant with our second child, I became scared.

The social worker at the alternative school contacted Mr. Hayes and made him aware of my situation and he visited the school and explained the program. I was glad to see Mr. Hayes, since we had a cool relationship in middle school and I knew I could be honest with him. Mr. Hayes explained the program and let me know that it was not going to be easy, but we were going to do our best together.

Mr. Hayes would meet with me and another dad weekly at the alternative school and discuss our problems.

I had a lot of problems, since I chose to marry my girlfriend and try to live together. We needed everything. I needed a job, money for diapers, healthcare, daycare, and to graduate from the alternative school.

I was 17-years-old and doing what I needed to do to keep my family together. Because of the program, I did not worry about diapers and food for the babies. This was a welcomed relief. In addition, Mr. Hayes and I always discussed jobs, housing, and how to handle some of the situations I experienced with my wife and children. These conversations were the funniest, since Mr. Hayes would always have a crazy story about marriage and children.

I also want to thank Mr. Bandurski, the alternative school social worker, for his assistance.

The program has allowed me to visit colleges and meet politicians so I can tell my story.

After a year in the program, I have found housing and I have a job. My family is still together and I will be returning to my regular high school next year.

I can honestly say that I understand what it means to be a good father and this was possible because of the Supports for Pregnant and Parenting Teens program.

THANK YOU

Isaac G. (and family)