

Upside of living in care

Family fun on Coney Island

By James Riley



A positive memory for me being in care was when I went to New York with my foster parents. New York was such an amazing opportunity.

I would never have had this opportunity without being in the system of care. When I traveled to New York I went to the Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, and Coney Island.

Coney Island was my favourite because it was an island filled with amusement parks. Still, my main highlight of the trip was being with my family and being in a new environment.

Group trip to Disney

By Ashley Baxter

One positive memory I have is when I got older and realized my social worker was giving me much more freedom than I thought she would.

Without this freedom I could never spend my weekends with my boyfriend, or be able to spend my whole Christmas break with my boyfriend. I wouldn't be able to stay out late or do anything; I would be stuck at home all the time.

Another good memory is when I was 10 and was able to go to Disney World with the youth in care. It was the best time I ever had. I would have never thought I could have been so lucky by being in care but I was and I am happy that I did.

Great people for support

By Manda Jackson

I've been in care for almost seven years now. My most positive memory since I've been in care is when my social worker moved me to the Nova Scotia Home. There are so many great people there who helped me through my journey in life. Many things happened to me and they stood there by my side helping me through everything.

I love how the youth care workers come on shift and are so excited to see you. It just makes me feel so good and proud of myself that I have a group of such great people by my side — I honestly don't know what I would do without them.

Soon I am becoming a single mother. I really don't know what I would do without all the support — especially from my key worker at the time since she went through almost the same thing. She can relate to me and how I feel. I love you guys so much, thanks for everything — you mean a lot. You helped me through the negative and taught me to keep my head high up. Thanks!

Just looking for my place in the world

By Shakisha Downey

As a minority in society, people in our communities think we are so much different than the rest of our generation. Foster kids are stereotyped as out of control teenagers who have trouble with the law or their parents have trouble with the law.

In all reality, we aren't that different. Yeah, we have some anger, but what kids don't? In some cases, it's the stereotype itself that gets up our anger.

Just like every other kid in this world, we just want to belong and have a chance to be successful. People need to understand that and respect us for who we are and the situation we live in.

Little do they know that we have less control over our lives than they might think. Their attitudes toward us determine how we deal with living in foster care.

Missing you

By Ashton Glasgow

My happiest memory was when my social worker arranged a visit with my mom for the first time in awhile. I was so happy that I cried until I couldn't anymore.

When my mom got to the office, she was in the waiting room. When I saw her I ran for her and we hugged for 15 minutes, crying from happiness and joy.

We went in the visit room and ate hamburgers and talked. She had brought presents, toys and clothes for me.

It was the happiest I ever felt in my entire life.



Ashton just chillin' at the Newsletter.

Living in Care

Social worker gives more freedom with maturity

By Ashley Baxter

My social worker is a young worker who really understands me and she really gives a lot to me. When I see her she's always pleasant and understanding and she really explains stuff to me.

Carol (my worker) is truthful but nice and also thinks about what I want and how we can work to achieve it. She does have a hard time calling me back but when she does she is usually positive and has good answers. If there's something she doesn't know then she always figures it out in time.

Carol knows I'm 18 so she is very understanding when it comes to my boyfriend or going somewhere and that makes me happy. I know she understands I am older and have to learn stuff on my own.

My worker is looking out for me

By Patricia Schofield

My social worker is very nice to anyone that she meets. And she is always there for people, even if she doesn't know them.

My social worker's name is Karen. If social workers find out there's a problem in the community, they investigate it. If it's bad enough, they put the child in a foster home or group home until further notice or until the child moves out.

And if you want to do something outside of the house like go to the movies, they will give money to the parent or parents. Then they give it to you so you can go and have fun while you are a teenager.

That's good to do because when you're an adult, you can't have as much fun as when you were young — especially if you have a child. When you have a child, that becomes a lot of responsibility.

If I were in charge

By Shakisha Downey

If I were in charge of the foster care system, I would change a lot of the rules and regulations.

I would change the fact that the kids are not allowed to request their own worker. A child's worker is the one who decides everything that goes on with the child. If the child and their worker do not get along, it's not going to be a good situation at all. A child's worker should be someone they feel comfortable with and someone they can open up to.

I would like to also change the budget. The children would get more of the things they want and need to make them happy. They would also have the opportunity to go into different social groups and organizations to help them build better social skills.

I would also change that some kids do not get visits and some do,

even though they may be less deserving. I would at least make it so that all kids would have a visit with their family — the only thing that would be different is the monitoring of the visits.

There should be generally more freedom about who foster kids are — and are not — allowed to be with or visit. Above everything else kids in care should have more independence if they show they are capable so they do not feel like they are living in a box.

Explain to Me

By Ashley Baxter

I am a person like everyone else — I have a voice.

Why should I be looked at or treated differently because I live in a group home. Am I not human? Do I not have emotions like everyone else? Listen to me like you would others. I am not alien. I am not a baby. I am 18 and have the right to be listened to like you or anyone else.

I may be in care but I have something to say. Would you not listen to me because I don't live with my family? Would you ignore me because I am not always happy? Who are you to judge me when I don't judge you? You don't know me or my past.

I am not a child or a baby. I have a life, a voice, a right. I live fully and you will treat me like you would treat others. Do I even look like a child?

I could be younger than you but do I crawl or cry? I know for a fact I am mature for my age — for you to treat me differently is not mature.

I am not you but I am me and for that you should not think of me differently.



Tonya Haislip receives Andrew Safer Award at 2009 launch. Other winners were James Riley and Grace-Ann Timmins.