Kristen
Ahlberg

In August of 2007 I was 7 months pregnant with my now 17 month old daughter, I had a 9 year son and a 13 month old daughter, I was using heroin on a daily basis. My children were removed from my care by DCF on August 7. I had to leave my apartment a week later, I was basically homeless. I had just started back on methadone maintenance, and all I wanted was an opportunity to get my kids back and give them a life they deserved. I asked my DCF worker to place me in a women and childrens residential treatment program. In September, one week after giving birth to my daughter, she and I became residents at Women and Children's in Middletown. We were there for 11 months, with regular visits with my other two kids. In February of 2008 I started working with SHF, originally I was going to find housing in Watertown, my worker Christina Franco got to know me and my needs and helped me realize this was a bad decision, she helped to get me a new worker for the Middletown

area, where I could truly start over away from where I had used. Without a SHF worker who really paid attention and listened I believe I would not be where I am today. I started working with my worker Xiomara Gaburri in May and she helped me obtain the apartment I have today. I moved in in July 08, she helped a great deal with my relationship my landlord. I was upfront with him about my addiction and my past. Xiomara assured him of how the program works and that she would be working closely with me. This apartment is beautiful, in a residential neighborhood, on a dead end street, in a safe part of Middletown. SHF gave me the chance to have a place like this. I moved in with no furniture and SHF helped me obtain bed, dressers, and a kitchen table and chairs. In December 2008 my now 30 month old was reunified permanently. My 10 year old is living with his paternal grandparents until the school year is over, he is with us every weekend and school vacations, DCF has closed his case. My girls are under protective supervision until June.

If not for SHF none of this would have been possible. This has been an amazing opportunity to start over, I've been clean for 18 months, I have my kids back, I dont worry about where we will live, what we will eat, if the bills are paid, and if my kids are safe. I owe a great deal of credit to both SHF workers, for their time, patience, and understanding. 18 months ago I did not think this was possible and with SHF's help it's my reality.