

TESTIMONY OF MARK AND CAROL SYLVESTER

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. NO. 6386 AN ACT DELAYING IMPLEMENTATION OF
LEGISLATION RAISING THE AGE OF JUVENILE JURISDICTION
AND IN SUPPORT OF EXPANSION OF FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS**

MARCH 4, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

My Husband and I used Family Support services for our son Chris, because he needed more help than we could give him. So we reached out for help and connected with the Family Support Center and they helped us find the right avenue of help for Chris that we needed. They worked with us with the probation officer and with the school on how to get help for us and Chris. They also helped with getting an Education Consultant for Chris.

And without their services we would not have known what to do or where to go. Chris was starting to act up in school, and at first it was only at home but now it was rolling over into school. Police were being called at home and at school. It looked like Chris was going to have to be placed in residential. The school could not handle him anymore, if it were not for the Family Support Center program helping us to handle and teach us how to control his behaviors and guide us through very difficult times with our son. We would call them any time of day or night for support and how to handle certain situations. They say kids do not come with directions, well they, the Family Support Center, were our directions on how to parent our child. The team they had working with us was wonderful.

I know of a woman that had two children and she needed help. There was no Family Support Center services for her where she lived. So, she ended up with DCF and they could not help her in the way Family Support Centers would have.

They helped us so much that now our son is in a wonderful school doing well and he is still living at home with us. And without Family Support Center, I believe that our son Chris would be placed out of the home and in a residential setting. We believe there should be a Family Support Center in every county, because having the right services for the right problem and family is so important. They really helped us be a family and stay a family.

The Family Support Center also helped us get outside, extended help that we needed that we did not know existed for us. And even though our six months are over with them, they still check in with us to see how we are all doing and if we need them we can still call and ask for assistance. And in this day and age it is so important to have the right kind of help for your family.

I just hope there are other families that can be so lucky to have Family Support Centers help their families like they helped ours. We just want to say we are so grateful for Family Support Centers for helping us stay together. We cannot say this enough. When you have the right services for your family it makes a world of difference! Thank you all for listening to our story.

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Mark and Carol Sylvester and Chris