

DCF's Supportive Housing for Families Program

Testimony of Evelyn Santiago

Good Afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity to present myself to you this afternoon.

First I would like to give you a brief story about my family. I recently participated in programs from DCF and The Connection, Inc.

My name is Evelyn Santiago, I am a former client and graduated from The Supportive Housing for the Family Program. I would like to share with you this afternoon my experience of myself and my sons Craig and Tishawn Tillman. This story how it happened and how I met a Case Manager from the Supportive Housing for the Family Program, who happened to be a wonderful person and has helped my family come a long way to success, this person was my Case Manager Chelsea Humphrey.

This is how my story began, I was a victim of Domestic Violence from another state, I escaped along with my sons came to Connecticut in Oct 1997. I had no possessions and went for help to the State of Connecticut Dept. of Social Services. A worker helped my family with a temporary stay at a hotel where I first lived. I started my life over again, finding a day care for my sons and a part-time job for myself.

Then I found a one bedroom apartment for a small start with myself and my sons. As years passed by, I started to have a difficult situation. I lost my father and my best friend suddenly passed away. It took a toll on me. As I continued to struggle on my path, my sons were growing older then the place I lived was having problems. My son Craig was having emotional and behavior challenges. I lost my job then my mother suddenly got ill. I was receiving disability checks for \$950.00 a month and had to pay \$650.00 a month for my rent and expenses it wasn't enough. I attempted to pay my bills and assist my mother. Things fell behind and I was threatened with evictions several times. I was devastated, I had no where to go. Then DCF came along I had a worker which gave me some help for other programs to help me and my family's situation for a place to stay. I did not want to go to a shelter. Day by day, I grew more distressed, when finally DCF called and told me I will be meeting another case worker from The Supportive Housing Program.

In 2007 I met my Case Manager. Chelsea's first reaction was to be sure my family was well. The apartment wasn't in good condition. She was very concerned of my family and the Chelsea started to work on helping me and my family as quick as possible to find another work on my budget expenses and other services. Within a few months, I received a the state, which was such good news. So my family will not have to deal within this ing again.