



Laurie's Story



"No matter how many problems I have, I can overcome them for Sam!"



House of Hope gave me everything that I needed: They gave me the encouragement to get done what needed to get done, but they made me do it on my own. I am not afraid to tell my story. I hope that other people will learn and be inspired for themselves.



Homeless Since 15 Years Old

Laurie was 21 when she arrived at House of Hope (HOH). She had lived on the streets and been homeless on and off since she was 15 years old. Laurie was first diagnosed with numerous mental challenges when she was 7 years old. She was living on the streets when she became pregnant and her baby's father left her before the child was born.

Since her son Sam was born, they moved 6 times in 2 years. Laurie tried living with her mother (who she had not seen since she was 7 years old), then she went to a Teen Family Shelter, then to her Father's, then she lived with 3 different friends. During this time, Laurie cared for Sam, went back to school, received her High School diploma, held jobs, and began her first year of college. She was determined to make her life work: "I don't believe in lying around, I have to be responsible for myself. I am always working and trying to improve myself."

She thought she had everything all lined up well, but when the 6th living situation became abusive, she had nowhere to go. She gave Sam to a close friend for a few weeks – so Sam would not have to live on the streets. She was on the streets when she went to the Department of Transitional Assistance and "begged and begged and begged and begged" for somewhere to live. Laurie arrived at House of Hope one September, just in time for HOH to have a group birthday party for Sam on his 3rd birthday.

Coming Back From "Bottom"

During this time, Laurie was not receiving mental health support or medications. While at HOH she lost her job, was denied 3 times from a Transitional Housing Program (for mental stability issues), and she "bottomed out." Julie was the Program Manager for Laurie's shelter site and got Laurie enrolled in the Adult Day Program at the Sullivan Center. Laurie received treatment and when she was released from the hospital, she joined another day program, got back on medication, took a budgeting course, and looked for a job. Laurie now holds a full-time job and has her first apartment. At first, Sam was scared to be in his own room, but he has adapted and he is thriving and happy.