



"Saving Lives and Reuniting Families"

Jean

When I was a little girl I had a lot of dreams; no one grows up wanting or thinking they would be an addict but at the age of 14 it all began. First it was a little pot occasionally with my friends, then every weekend, smoking pot and drinking became my life. I then progressed to experimenting with harder drugs to keep life fun and interesting.

I always thought I was smarter than the drugs. Addiction had its hooks in me. I knew my children deserved a better life, but I never worked on my underlying issues. My attempts to stay clean were always short lived.

In September of 2011 DYFS removed my three beautiful girls from my care. I had been shooting drugs, lying and not providing for my children. I was devastated when they took the girls from me. I knew I didn't want to live my life like this but it was like I was stuck on a runaway train with no brakes. I was rapidly running out of options. Then one night I made an agreement with God. There was something so freeing in that moment.

On February 27, 2012 I checked into a long term treatment facility. I felt like I was losing a year of my life but in reality I was dead already. I completed the program but had no car, no place to live and DYFS was suggesting that I permanently sign over my parental rights. All I wanted was custody of my girls.

I met a girl in an outpatient program who told me she lived in The Family Afterward house with her daughter. This was my saving grace. On February 27th, 2013 I moved into the program and over the next few months all 3 girls were returned to my care. The Family Afterward program provided me with a safe place to adjust to the shock of being back in the real world as well as gradually adding the responsibility of caring for my 3 amazing daughters. The staff not only helped me get food and took us to appointments but they helped to connect me with resources so I could support myself and my girls – all the vital skills key to my family's success.

Most importantly they cared about the success of my family and they believed in us. I am eternally grateful to all The Family Afterward Staff and to people such as you who choose to support Freedom House and the mission to Save Lives and Reunite Families. Because of Freedom House, because of people like you, people like me are able to be a part of their families again.

I try to live everyday like it is a gift from God with dreams and goals again. Thank you!!!