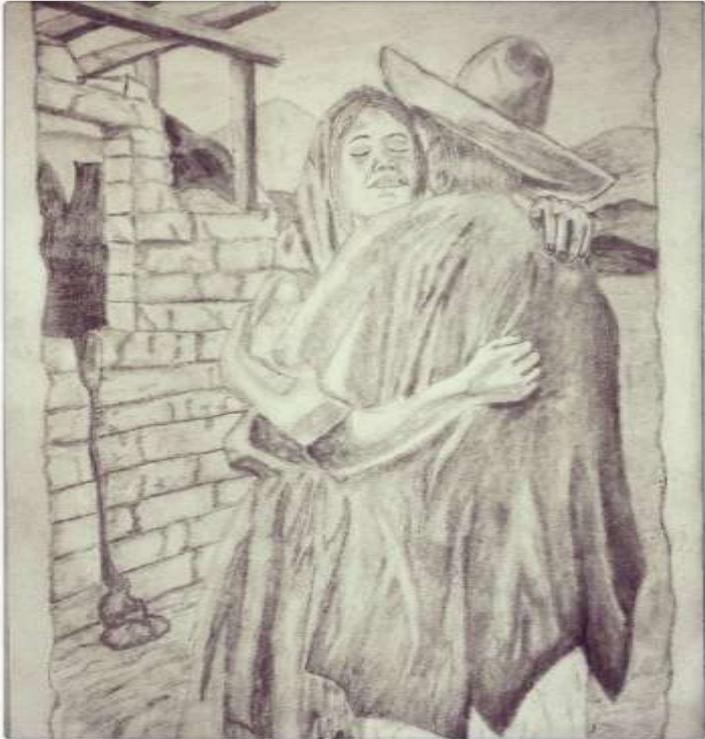


Idaho KinCare Project 2013

My Family. My Story.

Expressions of Children raised by relatives or other significant adults



My Grandparents
Glenis, Age 18

My Family. My Story.

My Family. My Story. Art Contest 2013

Organized by the **Idaho KinCare Project**, a joint Project between the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and Americorps VISTA members

This booklet can also be found online at
www.211.idaho.gov

My Family. My Story.

My Family. My Story.

Our best hope is for parents to love and care for their children and to raise them in a happy, healthy home. However, family crisis sometimes requires children to be placed with relatives or other meaningful adults in their lives. This type of custody arrangement is commonly referred to as 'KinCare.'

In Idaho, over 29,000 children under the age of 18 live in households headed by grandparents or other relatives. Roughly 10,000 of these children are being raised without their parents present.

The My Family. My Story. Art Contest's purpose is twofold: to recognize the contributions of KinCare providers and to provide the children who participate an opportunity to feel connected with other children in similar situations.

The following poems, essays, and drawings are the expressions of children who were placed in difficult circumstances and yet have the resiliency to share their experiences with others.

These are their families and their stories.

The Idaho KinCare Project, 2013

For more information about KinCare in Idaho. Visit:
www.211.idaho.gov and follow the KinCare tabs.

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My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages up to 9

Laryss, Age 5

I like living with nana & papa because they don't take naps all day and nana feeds me every time. She takes care of me and reads me books, and my bed is clean every time. Nana teaches me things and say, "Awesome." She lets my brother go to school and he read to me now. My mom was just always sleeping. Nana watches me all the time! Nana gets us toys to learn words and pluses and take away so we will know everything! At night time she says "Sweet Dreams" and tickles us when she's just supposed to give us hugs. That way there's no more bad dreams to make us scared. Nana and papa take care of us and keep us safe until my mom follows the rules and doesn't take pills anymore. When she gets better we can be a family together! My nana loves me moster than a toaster and I love her all the way to heaven and back- That's a lot! Me and my brother miss my mom but nana helps us be happy even if we get in trouble. She says she always loves me and to try better. That's all I can think of, is that good enough to tell them nana?

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages up to 9

Kanon, Age 9



Me and my Grandma and brother like bike riding speeding to the park it's Fun.

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry
Ages 10-14

Tyrannng, Age 11



You're doing good!

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages 10-14

Ryan, Age 14

My Family Story

Living with my grandparents has helped me a lot. My grandparents care for me, encourage me, and make me a better person.

When I came to live with my grandparents I felt like no one loved me. I didn't have good cloths to wear and I know if I need something I don't have to be afraid to ask for it.

Now I know I am loved, cared about, and I know that my grandparents want me to succeed in life and that they encourage me to take all the opportunities I get. They also help me stay on the right track.

I love the school I go to and I know if I need help that they will do the best they can to help me. Now I am able to play football, ride four wheelers, hunt, fish, and take job opportunities and make a little money and help.

My grandparents and I go to church just about every Sunday and before I move here I didn't get to express my faith because my mom didn't let me. Now I have been baptized. I also feel confident in myself because God is with me.

My grandparents strengthened me by teaching me discipline, right from wrong, and by telling me about scholarships I can get by getting good grades.

My grandparents want me to make something of my life and they help me be creative.

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages 15-18

Crysta, Age 15

Grandmother..

When my parents couldn't do it, she could.
When they thought a baby was too much, she thought I was just enough.
When I thought I'd never see her again, she showed me I would.
When everyone left me, she stayed with me.
When the rain poured in my heart, she was my rainbow.
When it seemed the nightmares wouldn't go away, she told me they'd leave if I believed.
When my faith failed, she shared hers.
When love seemed like a dream, she was as soft as a dove.
When I fell to the ground, she picked me up.
When I lost all hope, she spoke her words of wisdom.
Now, I'm a teenager facing challenges that seem impossible.
She makes them possible.
God blessed me with her. What more could I ask for?
He sent me to her, for he knew I'd need her more than she needed me.
Without her, I'd be nothing. I wouldn't be who I am today.
Who is she? Well that's simple,
She's my Grandmother.♥

Crysta Jean Shacey♥

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages 15-18

Crysta

Grandmother..

When my parents couldn't do it, she could
When they thought a baby was to much, she thought I was just
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When I thought I'd never see her again, she showed me I would.

When everyone left me, she stayed with me.

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Without her, I'd be nothing. I wouldn't be who I am today.

Who is she? Well that's simple.

She's my Grandmother..

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry Ages 15-18

Maileigh, Age 16

My Family. My Story.

My name is Maileigh Taylor, and I live with my aunt and uncle. I entered this contest because I want to explain how my life has changed since living in Boise, Idaho. With my Aunt Pam's support, I have changed my outlook on life. Going through court for molestation has been extremely difficult on me. My aunt supports all of my decisions, and if I feel like giving up she pushes me to be a 'strong ninja!' It may sound silly, but it represents how being strong and pushing through all of the bad experiences helps. My whole life I have always been self-conscious, insecure, and I frequently put myself down. My aunt pushes me to "believe in myself!" Because of her encouragement, I am starting to build my self-confidence; therefore, I am thankful for her. There is a saying that reads, "You must do the thing which you think you cannot do." It is constantly running through my mind because it reminds me of my aunt. It is because of my aunt that I am not afraid to push past my comfort level and just be me, a strong ninja!

My Family. My Story.

Winning Contest Entry
Ages 15-18

Maileigh



My Family. My Story.

Distinguished Contest Entries
Ages up to 18
In Alphabetical Order

Adrian A., Age 7



My Family. My Story.

Adrian B., Age 14

When I was 2 yrs. old I got taken from my mom and put in foster care. Brandis' dad Billy and Gloria took care of us, me my brother Johnny, David and my little sister Jessica and my older sister Becky. A few years down the road they came and put me in the home of Steve and Georgie. I liked it there for the first week until I saw the true inside of how they are and It wasn't pretty they made me like their little b***h beat me with a board that's 2 inches thick and he would put my rear on it and beat my ass until it would turn purple literally purple. Their kids would terrorize me by putting a box to cover my eyes and they would stick the cats ass right in my face I hated it. So finally they didn't want me anymore and I moved in with Brandi and Johnny's and I was scared I knew Johnny was my brother but imagine doing like 8 years in an abusive home to a nice one. I mean even ask Brandi when she would put her hand up to scratch her head I would flinch because they would hit me a lot. But when I moved in with Johnny they taught me a lot they taught me Spanish how to work and how to take care of myself if I'm by myself. They also taught me a lot of stuff like self-respect and how to protect yourself and I matured a lot. And they put me in sports and stuff like that. But the reason I love Johnny and Brandi is because they would do stuff with me like go fishing, to the park or hang out and Brandi gosh I love Brandi because when I see her I see her as a mom to me because they would treat me as their own kid you know I'm just glad that I live in a home where they would take care of me really good and all the fun stuff. I guess I could say they saved me from leaving a life of living hell. I get treated right love and I love them with all my heart and soul. I'm still maturing but I have a lot to learn and I hope I live here forever.

My Family. My Story.

Aiden, Age 12

My Story

My name is Aiden and I am here to tell you my story of how living with my grandparents made a positive difference in my life. My friends say moms give the best hug, my friends also say dads give the best advice, for me my grandpa will always come up with a solution to fix any problem. My grandparents help me with my homework and they help me with school problems as well as piano lessons. Anyone can come to our house and get a warm meal and a nice place to rest. They taught me respect and that's how I made the friends I have today. One time when I was 9, I came home crying because on the bus some kids made fun of me, and my grandma told me "people are going to be talking about you until the day you die and there's nothing you can do. She also said listen to me, it isn't what people call you it's what you answer to remember that okay." And those words changed my look on what people say to me. To not let things get to me if I don't want them to. And I love them for that. I used to think that my life meant nothing, but my life has been made into a wonderful dream. My story touched my friends' hearts when they heard it and I hope you have the same feeling as my friends. This is my story of a life my grandparents could provide.

My Family. My Story.

Alana, Age 7



Me, Ben, Gramma and Papa

My Family. My Story.

Aletha, Age 13

Coming To Live In Idaho

At the age of 5 years old my brothers, Jon and Glen and I came to live with my cousins Tina and Mike in Idaho. Before that we lived in Nevada. We have been living with them for 9 years now.

When we were little, my mom and dad struggled with drugs and alcohol. The state took us away from them. Now we have 3 moms and 2 dads. My favorite memories are when all of us, 6 brothers and 4 sisters, went to our Grandma's house in Nevada.

We go camping and fish a lot with Tina and Mike. Every Sunday we go to church and have fun. We have one home and we are safe now. We get everything we need and sometimes what we want too. We play a lot of sports at school and baseball, and go running. We now have 7 sisters and 8 brothers our house is full of love. We have a good future now. I am glad I am here with them.

My Family. My Story.

Alexis, Age 8



My Family. My Story.

Alyssa D., Age 10



My Family, My Story

Alyssa M., Age 15

My Family, My Story

My name is Alyssa; I was born in Nampa, Idaho on July of 1997. I lived there for fifteen years until recently I moved to Nebraska with my mom to her boyfriend's farm. My story is very unlike all of the other 15 year old girl stories that I have heard; it's unlike anybody's that I have heard. Living with my grandmother has been worth it in the long run. I grew up a very angry child, I would take my favorite doll Suzie that I still have today and throw her in the trash. My grandmother or Nana as I called her then would question why I threw her in the trash when I loved her so much and I would tell her that I threw it in the trash just like my mom threw me in the trash all those years ago. My grandmother would get a sad look on her face and then take my doll out of the trash. I would find it in my room later freshly washed and clean on my bed. Or I would get angry because she wouldn't let me do something and I would get so mad that I would either throw this plastic stool that I had or I would bite and kick and hit myself. This wave would come over me and it would take over my mind and body, I still struggle with it but I've learned to deal with it better than I did when I was little because I understand it but sometimes I slip. I love my grandmother more than anything; in fact I love her so much that when I was thirteen I started calling her mom.

My Family. My Story.

Andre, Age 5



My Family. My Story.

Angel, Age 9



Thank you
grandma

My Family. My Story.

Austin, Age 11

Austin Age 11 | My Family my Story

| Before | Now |
|--|---|
| Hungry Scared  Sad depressed Angry Mad | Happy Safe  Full Loved Smart |

When something bad happened it always turns into something good. Like a thunderstorm turns into a clear sky and then a rainbow appears. I lived with my mom and dad I was angry, mad, sad, depressed, and hungry. Living with my grandparents is like the sun that shines after the thunderstorm. This is my family, my life.

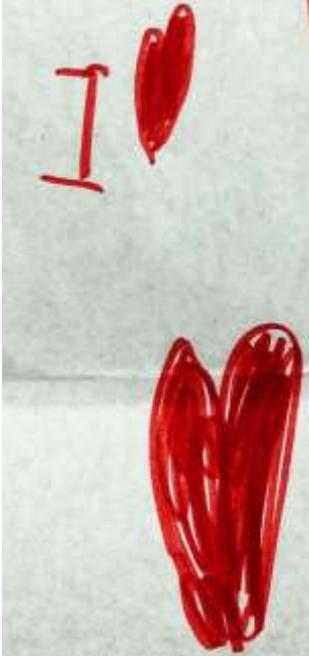
My Family. My Story.

| Before | Now |
|-----------|-------|
| Hungry | Full |
| Scared | Safe |
| Sad | Happy |
| Depressed | Love |

When something bad happens it always turns something good. Like a thunderstorm turns into a clear sky and then a rainbow appears. I lived with my mom and dad I was angry, mad, sad, depressed, and hungry. Living with my grandparents is like the sun that shines after the thunderstorm. This is my family, my life.

My Family. My Story.

Braxton, Age 6



Grandma & Braxton
I love my Grandma
She loves me too
I care about her
And she care about me, too
And that's how it is!

Grandma & Braxton
I love my Grandma
She loves me too
I care about her
And she care about me, too
And that's how it is!

My Family. My Story.

Brett, age 11



I love making cars with my grandpa
I can use that money for more car parts
And baby staff for my ant.

My Family. My Story.

Brianne, Age 17

Thin walls, and small beds,
A lot of drinking, and harsh words said,
I was a young girl who thought I was better off dead.

I walked the halls in descize.
While I was a regular everyday Joe at school,
When I went to what I called a home,
I was nothing but a tool.

When I woke up in the morning,
I wondered what I did to deserve such a bitter life.
I looked from my bed and thought about ending it with a
knife.

Now, when I wake up after such a long time ago,
I am thankful for this new place I now know as home.
Surrounded by people who love and care,
Family, who don't avoid me with a can of beer.

I love my aunt, she's a doll.
She shows me right from wrong,
And she promises to catch me when I fall.
She's the only one I've learned to count on.

Sometimes I give her a hard line to tow,
But I want her to always know that she fills my heart that
was once a hole.

My Family. My Story.

Campton, Age 5

My Family loves camping



Campton's picture is of us camping: the 4 of us by the fire, our camp trailer on the left. His words say "My family loves camping."

My Family. My Story.

Chance, Age 7

When my father left, my Uncle came to Boise from Post Falls and took my clothes, toys and me and we drove a long way to his, Aunties' and my two cousins home. They had a small farm and I went to kindergarten and first grade. I liked school. It was fun being with the family, but I got into trouble every once in a while. I was sad that I had to leave my Dad. In the summer time we went swimming, camping and fishing. We had a cat and two dogs I loved to play with. We moved into a new house in town and I had my own room and friends next door.

In the spring I moved to Grandpa and Grandma's farm in Jerome and finished first and second grade. I'm doing good in school!!!! I love to wing on the wings, ride the horse, my bike and the ATV with Grandpa. We have good neighbors and lots of places to play. I like going to church and Sunday school. I get to visit my Dad and talk on the phone to him and my Mom. I get to see my Uncle, brother and sisters sometimes, too.

My Family. My Story.

Cheyenne, Age 14

Warriors

I am the warrior of light and Dark
You are the warrior of lava and Ice.

I keep looking for you.

I never found you until now.

I am in heaven.

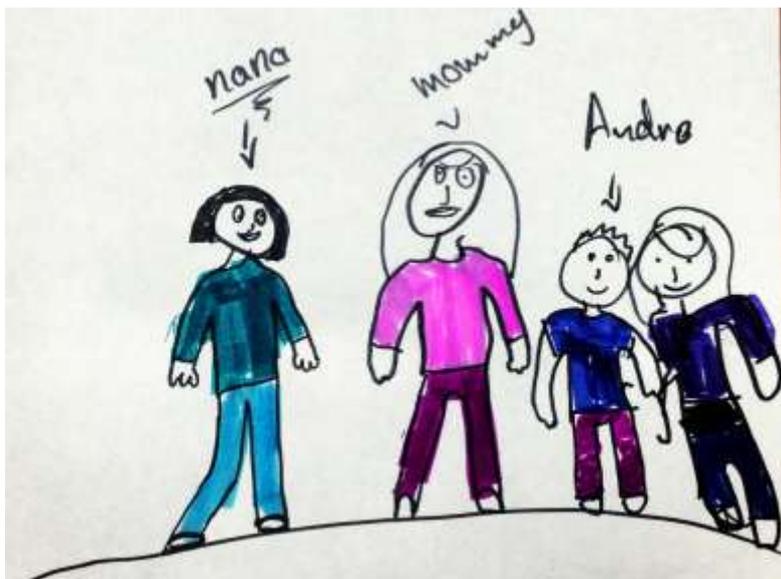
Your eyes sparkle in the sun and make my day.
For when you come up those stairs of the dragons
Den into my room I could not see who you were,

For you were in a cape.

The Cape of love All I could see was that you were going
to Be there in my life. You would be there when I was
dying you were there always and you are still there
waiting for me to take my first step to happiness
Couse you are my grandma.

My Family. My Story.

Claudia, Age 10



My Grandma has made my life easy and great
She is awesome and she is a great person.

My Family. My Story.

Colter, Age 15

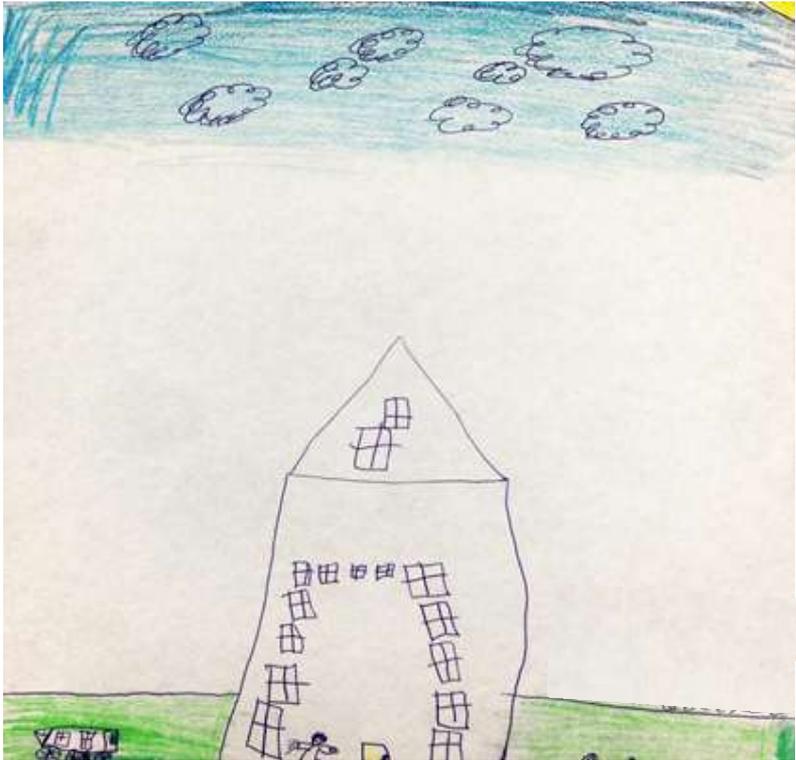


I was boxed in total
Darkness

Until I live with my
Grandparents
Who opened the
box to reveal light.

My Family. My Story.

Coltin, Age 7



Coltin playing soccer

My Family. My Story.

Corey

My uncle is helping me paint the house by telling me what to do.

He is a good uncle.

My Family. My Story.

Danica, Age 10



My Family. My Story.

Daveni, Age 8



My Family. My Story.

Dezery, Age 7



I like my Family

My Family. My Story.

Dominik, Age 10



I like to Help Grandma

My Family. My Story.

Donny, Age 11



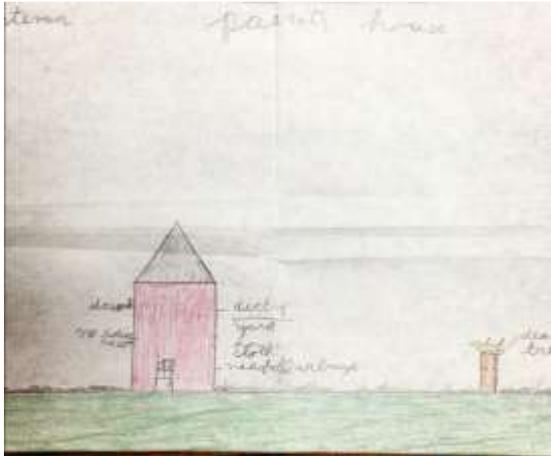
LOVE IS

Love is about flowers and family. The reason I wrote that is because flowers make good gifts. Family is a good source of love, and family gets me through things. That's what love is.

Dear MoM, you're the best at cleaning the house, you rock MOM without you I'll be dead I love the way you make my favorite cookies milkshakes, and meatloaf. You're the best MOM in the world!!

My Family. My Story.

Estevan, Age 9



Parents house-dirty-yard-house-cloth-garbage-neglect-dead tree-drunk-no education



Clean house-yard-cloth-food-learn-education.

Grandparents' house the list how my life change with my grandparents, but I lived with my grandparents after I was born. I have seen my parents' house.

My Family. My Story.

Fabio, Age 10

I am living with my grandmother for 13 months. She takes me to school and picks me up from school. I have a snack when I get home do my homework. And play a game or watch TV. read a book. We go to the park sometimes. We go see my cousins and go to church on Sundays. I feel good living with my grandma because she helps me and feeds me. I get a lot of b's and c's and a few A's.

My Family. My Story.

Fernando, Age 9

I like living with my grandma. She takes me to school. She cooks for me, She helps me with homework. And she loves me at all times. She also buys me fruit, she takes me to the park to play I use to play with my dog. I also used to play with my brothers. I also love my grandma to. I go to church and my grandma pray for my mom to be safe. The grades I get are A's and a few B's I don't know about C's or F's.

My Family. My Story.

Glen, Age 13

My Family Story

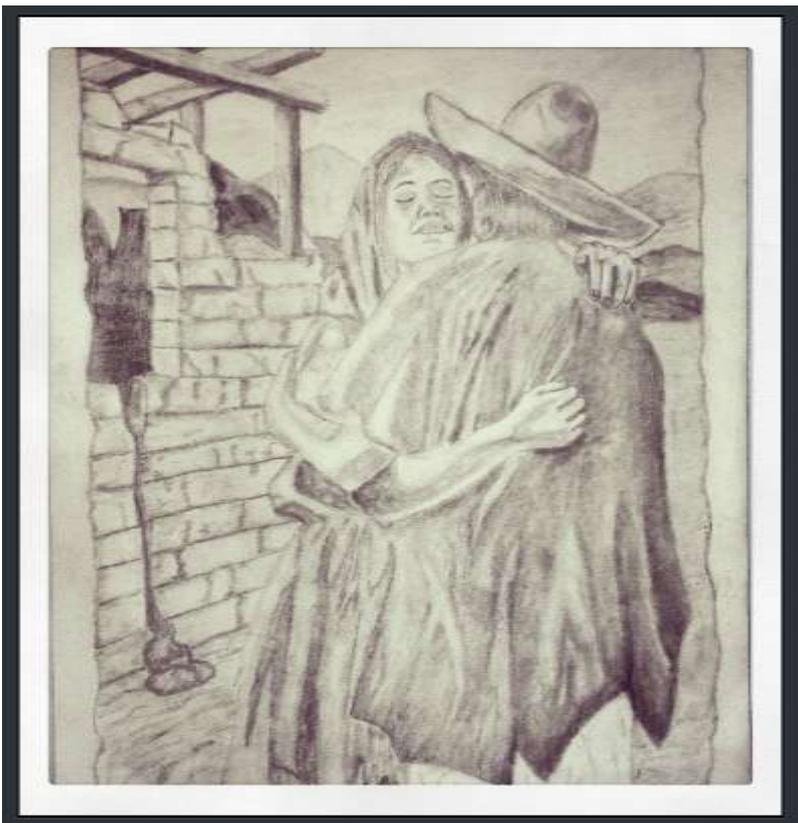
I was born February 2nd, 2000. I was born first and my sister Aletha came a few minutes later. That right I am a fraternal twins. Fraternal means we are not identical twins. When I was a very little boy, my parents really struggled with drugs and alcohol. When my parents were arrested we ended up in foster care. My grandparents said we could live with them. There was 6 brothers and 4 sisters, that is a lot of kids. My grandparents couldn't handle that many, so we went back into foster care again.

Three years later Jonathan, Aletha, and I came to live with our cousins, Mike and Tina Smith. Now I have 8 brothers and 7 sisters, and we live in 6 different families in 3 different states. I like living in Idaho City, and having one home.

My favorite memory is going to Las Vegas and riding on one of the fastest roller coasters in the world. I went on the coaster with both of my dads and with my siblings. When we got off the roller coaster we were all dizzy, that is except my dads. The moms wouldn't go with us, they were to scared.

My Family. My Story.

Glenis, Age 18



My Grandparents

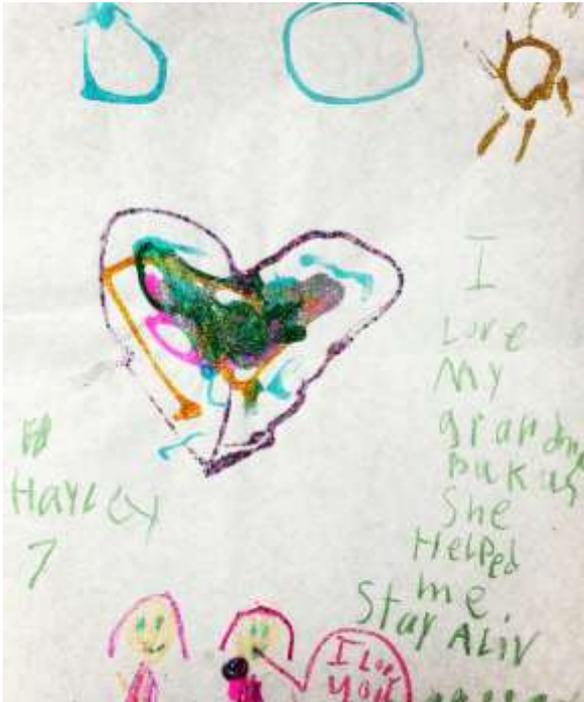
My Family. My Story.

Hailie, Age 9

Hi my name is Hailie. My brother and I live with our grandparents. Because our parents did not take care of us right. Lots of good things have happened since I have lived here. Like I get to eat good food. I get to have my own room, with a bed and clean sheets and blankets. I get to go to school every day. I also get to have friends. I don't have to worry about my parents being drunk. I am so glad that I have grandparents that want me. I am very happy where I live.

My Family. My Story.

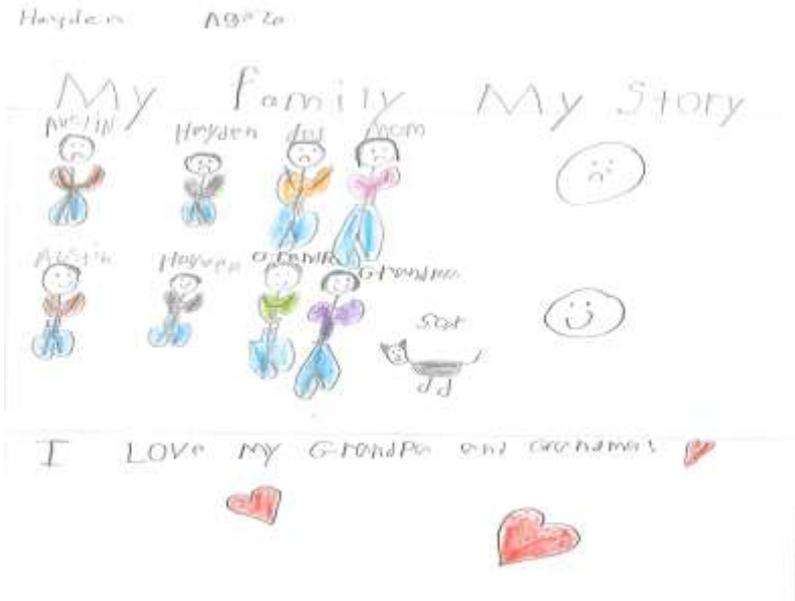
Hayley, Age 7



I Love my grandma Bukus she helped me stay aliv

My Family. My Story.

Hyden, Age 6



My Family. My Story.

Austin, Hayden, dad, mom—Sad face

Austin, Hayden, grandpa, grandma, sox-- Happy face

I Love my Grandpa and Grandma!

My Family. My Story.

Isaiah, Age 7

I think it is a good thing to live with my nana and papa. Because they take good care of me and my sister. They feed and give us a bed and help us be a good person. And help me get good grades. I love living with my nana and papa. They are nice to me and my sister. My nana got me my birthday cake. She took me out for dinner. She gives me clean clothes to wear to school. She lets us record things. It is much better living with them. My papa is fun and my nana is funny. I love them. And I am glad to live with them.

My Family. My Story.

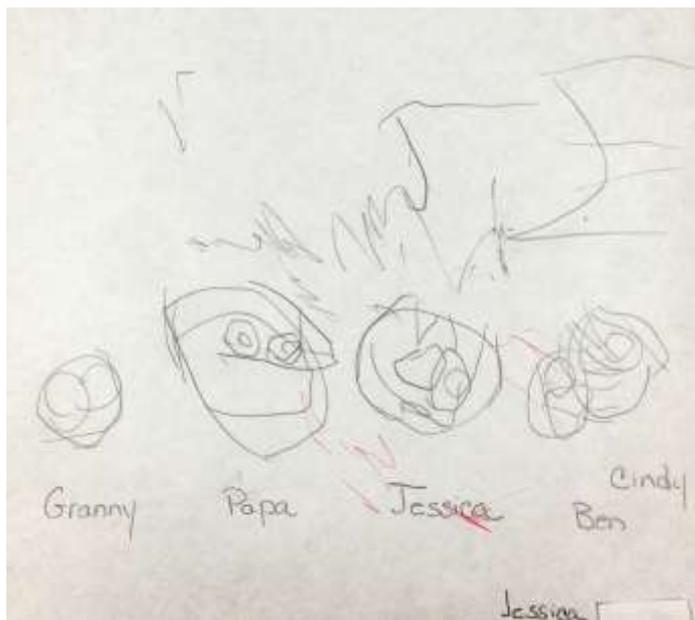
Jacob, Age 10



Living with my grandma is Stevetastic

My Family. My Story.

Jessica B., Age 5



Granny, Papa, Jessica, Ben, Cindy

My Family. My Story.

Jessica E., Age 16



My Family Surrounds Me

Always kiss me goodnight
Always Forgiven
Love Forever
Never Forgotten
The Best Wish Is...
To Have A Loving Family

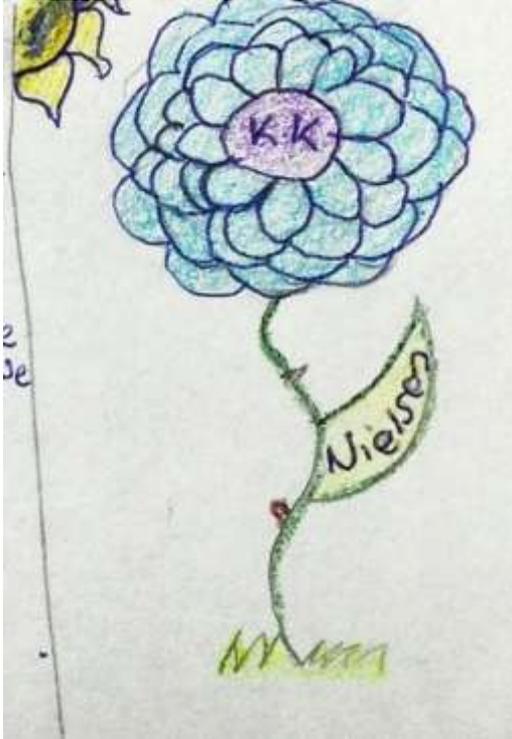
My Family. My Story.

Justin, Age 12

My grandma Teresa is the greatest. She feeds me and my two sisters Tasha and Tiffany. She puts a roof over our heads. I love her bigger than the universe. If she needs shoes and we need shoes, she will always buy our shoes first. Over the summer she got us all a puppy. I use to write really bad, but one day my Grandma says to slow down. So now I can write really neat. When I'm scared that we are going to die. She calms me down. My grandma has even taught me how to cook. Thank grandma for taking us in and taking care of us.

My Family. My Story.

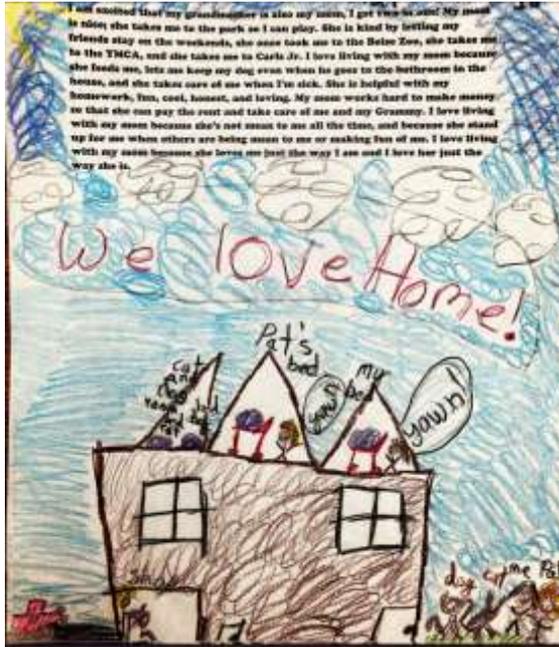
K.K., Age 13



This is my Flower. I Bloom when I am happy
And I wither when I am sad. I wither so much
I am hardly Glad, but when the sun comes out.
I blossom again. I have no need to run.
Because of the son, I have a warm spot in the
Soil with 2 other flowers greeting me each day.
I have a reason to spread my beautifulness
All over my home and the world.
Most of all I can be me.

My Family. My Story.

Katherine, Age 9



I am excited that my grandmother is also my mom, I get two in one! My mom is nice; she takes me to the park so I can play. She is kind by letting my friends stay on the weekends, she once took me to the Boise Zoo, she takes me to the YMCA, and takes me to Carls Jr. I love living with my mom because she feeds me, lets me keep my dog even when he goes to the bathroom in the house, and she takes care of me when I'm sick. She is helpful with my homework, fun, cool, honest, and loving. My mom works hard to make money so that she can pay the rent and take care of me and my Grammy. I love living with my mom because she's not meant to me all the time, and because she stand up for me when other are being mean to me or making fun of me. I love living with my mom because she loves me just the way I am and I love her just the way she is.

My Family. My Story.

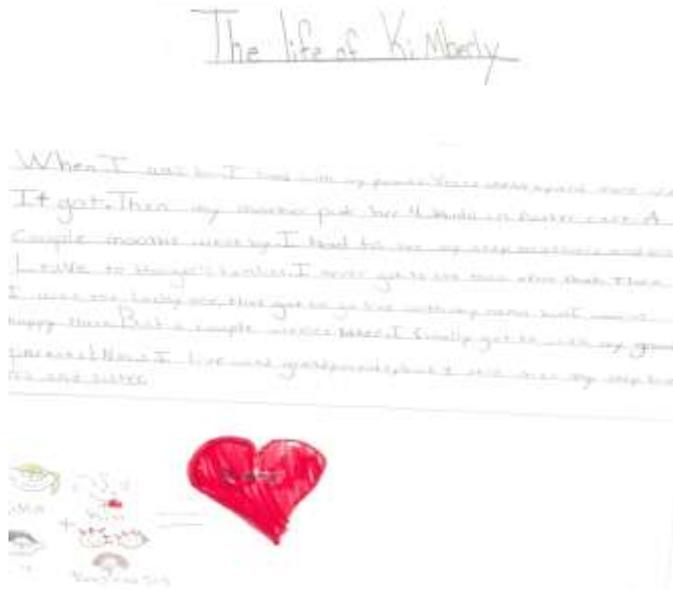
Kialie, Age 10

My Family. My Story.

Living with my grandparents have help a lot. Living with my grandparents I have clothes a shelter a bed, heat, food, and someone how is going to take care of me for the rest of their and my life. When I lived with my mom I had none of those things. So living with my grandparents has made a huge impact on my life. I'm eating healthier I lost 13 lb. I have somewhere to stay instead going from house to house while she's doing drugs and out with the wrong people she's been arrested a lot. I'm just lucky to have my grandparents.

My Family. My Story.

Kimberly, Age 11



The Life of Kimberly

When I was born I lived with my parents. Years went by and more violent It got.

Then my mother put her 4 kids in foster care. A couple months went by. I had to see my step brothers and sister. Leave to stranger's families. I never got to see them after that. Then I was the lucky one, that got to go live with my nana but I wasn't happy there. But a couple weeks later. I finally got to go with my grandparents! Now I live with grandparents, but I still miss my step brothers and sister.

My Family. My Story.

Kyla, Age 10

My Family. My Story.

My biological mother and father were making terrible choices, I was shocked, sad and scared. I didn't know what to expect. But it answered my question of why my brother, Kinishie and my sister, Shayla, have been away.

At eighteen months old, I lived with my loving and caring grandparents. I loved them very much, but they were getting old and it got difficult to raise me. At age four I came to live with my Aunt Kari and Uncle Destry.

Life with Kari and Destry, like the weight of the world has lifted off my small delicate shoulders. I've had my times of drama, and I've had my times of worry, I've even felt as if frustration and abandonment has taken over. I've tried writing a letter to both but only one wrote back. At that sad depressing time I was glad my Aunt and Uncle were at my side to help me. I think if I was up there I'd have a negative attitude all the time. But here I am as cheerful as my toy Hank with a squeaky toy.

My Family. My Story.

Madysen, Age 10

My name is Madysen, and I want to tell you how awesome it is and how loved I feel living with my Grandparents.

I still remember the day my Grandpa flew to the Washington, DC airport to pick me up over three years ago. We took a few pictures to email to my Grandma so she could see we were together and on our way home. I like to look at those pictures often because they make me smile.

January 10th is our anniversary of the day I came to live with them. We usually do something fun to celebrate being together. When we eat dinner, Grandma puts out a red plate for me to use that says "You Are Special Today." Every day with my Grandparents makes me feel like I should have been here my whole life.

My Grandparents and I belong to a group called GAP (Grandparents as Parents). We meet once a month. The grandparents get together and talk about raising grandchildren while the grandchildren all play together. On Holidays we have parties and a swim party in the summer. Being part of this group has been very fun and helpful to all of us.

My Family. My Story.

Marielena, Age 10

I'm happy to live with my grandparent's. They treat me very well they give me every thing I need. I feel like if they were my own parent's. I never feel alone when I'm with them. Since eight years ago they've never left me alone. All the education and things I have, came from them. Since I was a young little girl till now they took care of me.



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My Family. My Story.

Nevaeh, Age 6



Grandmother, me

My Family. My Story.

Reynaldo, Age 12

Living with my grandmother is okay we go to church sometimes. We also go to the park too. She takes me to school and picks me up afterwards. I do my homework as soon as I get home. I like to read most of the time. I spend time with my grandfather, and we go and visit family. I wish we had a bigger house this is a mobile home with two bedrooms. My grades in school are very good because I get A's and B's. Living my parents was okay too I had different opportunities but now. I don't have very many opportunities. I have many friends in school too. But I don't like to tell them where I live. I don't tell them where I live. Sometimes don't eat because I have too much stress, but I do eat most of the time.

My Family. My Story.

Shaniya, Age 16

Since living with my grandparents, I have been the happiest I have been my whole life I have got many opportunities I didn't before and have got to experience a real teenager life. Living has been a dream come true they show so much love & kindness it's amazing. I love them and I feel so blessed to be able to live with them.

My Family. My Story.

Shawna, Age 14

My name is Shawna. I am 14 years old. I live with my grandparents. I was 18 months old when I move in with my grandparents. If I wasn't given to my grandparents, I may not be alive now. At times, it seems as if they don't love me, but I know that they do because if they didn't they wouldn't have taken me in and taken care of me. My parents are good people; they have just made a few bad decisions in their lives.

My grandparents aren't that bad; however, sometimes it gets frustrating because they don't always understand me, like I'm some kind of an alien. We have our disagreements, but they will usually get me anything I want and everything I need. They may not be my real parents, but they try to act like they are. They love me and I love them. There is nothing that anyone or anything can say or do to change that. It's just the way that it is. Nobody will ever love them as much as I will and can.

Sierra, Age 11

Living With My Grandparents

Living with my grandparents is the best place I ever lived. My grandparents are phenomenal! My grandma makes me and my grandpa every meal; the meals she makes are good. My grandpa works in the yard; he is a good a good gardener! My job is to help around the house. My grandparents treat me like parents. They're the best people I know. They take care of me in every way. Whenever I get scared at night, they tell me there's nothing to be worried about. Whenever I have a problem at school, they give me some tips to take care of it. My grandpa sometimes helps me with my homework, I not, my grandma does. They're the best helpers I have! When I lived with my mom, she was on drugs and wasn't clean enough to take care of me. My dad died by overdosing on drugs, it shocked me when I heard, and I stared crying. Whenever I think of my dad, my grandparents would say everything will be alright, and comfort me. I'm doing this so the world, or at least Idaho, will know how my life is, with my amazing grandparents.

My Family, My Story

Stormie, Age 17

My Family, My Story

When people think of the picture perfect family they usually think of a mom, dad, a couple of kids and maybe a dog. My family wouldn't be considered "picture perfect", however I would never trade my family for anything. I'm seventeen years old, and sense the day I was born I have been raised by my single grandmother.

A family isn't necessarily being raised by biological parents, family is being around people who love you and are always there for you. I have always lived in a house where I was loved and cared for, without my grandmother I know that wouldn't have been possible. She sacrificed so much to raise me, and I've learned more about life from her than I could have ever thought possible. My grandmother has always been there for me, she's taught me what family is, what love is and how to be happy. I am so grateful to have been raised by such an amazing person. Although being raised by my grandmother wouldn't be considered "picture perfect" by others, I could never imagine a better person to be able to call my parent.

My Family. My Story.

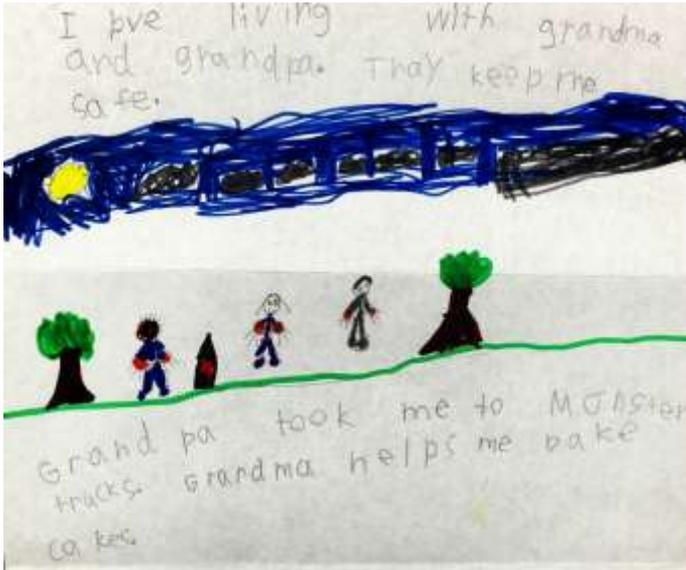
Tiffany, Age 18

My Story

At the age of 14, I was taken into foster care, along with my brother and sister. At first I thought that it was the worst day of my life. 4 years later, I'm here to tell you it was actually the best day of my life when I was 14 I was raising two children, I was using drugs. I dropped out of school, my eighth grade year. Both of my parents were alcoholics who were never home. I never got to have a sleepover, never any family night. And I didn't have one single friend. I couldn't go to school because I had to get my siblings off to school clean the house and babysit all the time. But I was very depressed, always in trouble with the police, acting out begging for attention a change! Four years ago, that finally happened this is how, CPS, Health and Welfare and my amazing grandmother saved my life. My grandma gave up her life to take on the responsibility of us. She quit her job. Got a divorce and moved home to take us. At first they split us up that's why I was so upset. I started adjusting. It was kind a weird at first having a home cooked meal, having new clothes. Not having to do all the house work not having to watch the kids. For the first time in my life. I got to be a kid again. I got that mother figure I had always I saw, in other children's lives. And I couldn't be more thankful. I'm now eighteen. And realize what a wonderful thing that had happened I'm now off probation, I've been clean for 4 years and I almost have my GED. My little sister, who has MD is now healthy and doing things. They thought she'd never do walking and talking. My little brother has now lived with us for 3 years and he is 15 and doing awesome. My grandma is my hero. We probably wouldn't be here it wasn't for her. Thank you grandma

My Family. My Story.

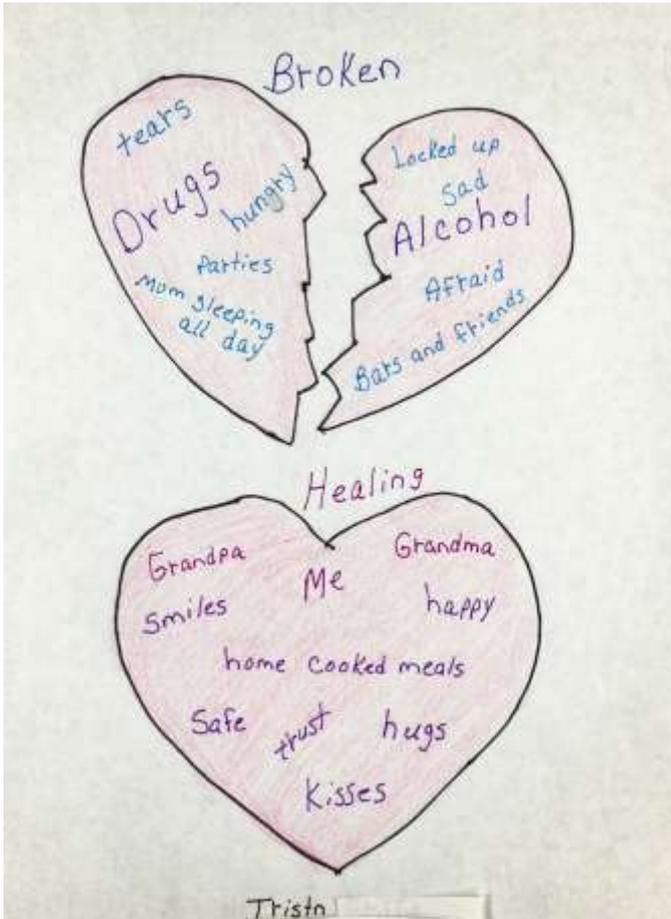
Tristin, Age 7



I lve living with grandma and grandpa.
Thay keep me safe.
Grandpa took me to monster trucks.
Grandma helps me bake cakes.

My Family. My Story.

Tristin, Age 13



Broken-Tears, Drugs, Hungry, Parties, Mom sleeping all day, Locked up, Sad, Afraid, Bars and friends.
Healing-Grandpa, Me, Grandma-smiles, Happy, home cooked meals, Safe, Trust, Hugs, Kisses.

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