

My Family My Story

Expressions of children raised by relatives or other significant adults



Being raised by my grandma has to have been the single most important thing that has ever happened to me. She is the most amazing person I have had the pleasure to know and I thank God everyday for her being in my life. Without her I have no idea how I would have turned out and I am very lucky to have her. She treats me so kind and with so much love that I know she's not "just grandma" she is much more than that, she is my mom. Some people get confused when you try to explain to them that you consider your grandma your mom. They don't understand how someone could drop everything to rescue and take care of a child that they didn't give birth to. But that's the one thing that they are missing. She didn't have an obligation to take in her daughter's child and raise me as her own, she chose to. And that makes all of the difference in the world. Tabitha, Age 17

My Family My Story

My Family. My Story. Art Contest 2016

Organized by the Idaho KinCare
Project

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

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 arrangements 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, 2016

For more information about KinCare in Idaho visit:
www.211.idaho.gov

My Family My Story

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My Family My Story

Winning Entry
Age 0-8

Kylee, Age 7



I'm Kylee Solders I am 7 years old. Me and my brother have lived with our grandma for a year now. My grandma put me in Girl Scouts and when Kade is old enough he will be in Boy Scouts. She helps out at my school and is a leader in Girl Scouts. We have lots of fun and are learning to be considerate and caring by the Girl Scout's Promise and Law. Grandma helped me sell my goal in Girl Scout cookies. We had a booth. With my cookie dough money I had enough to pay my dues for next year. I am a Daisy now and will be a Brownie next year. We are planning a Girl Scout camp out. I can't wait to go!

My Family My Story

Winning Entry
Age 0-8

Audrina, Age 6



My Family My Story

Winning Entry Age 9-12

Lidia, Age 11

This is all my family before it got separated and my mom passed away.



My life has changed so much without my parents. I live with my sister Daisy and my brother. My sister Daisy has always told me do your best at school to make my mom proud. I always do my best at school because I know my mom is watching me from above. I sometimes ask myself why did my mom leave so soon and it gets me sad and mad. I just wish my mom was here beside me. Without my mom it's been hard for me. I just wish my mom was here hugging me and being able to hear her voice again. I wish I could hear my mom tell me I love you one more time. I always go somewhere I could be all alone and talk to god and ask why did he take my mom so soon. When we celebrate a holiday or Mother's day I just wish my mom was here to celebrate it with all of my brothers and sisters. It's kinda hard for me to focus in a lot of stuff like school work but I still try my best to make my mom proud. I am thankful my sister Daisy takes care of us or else we would've been in a foster house. She is always there for us, helping us and making sure we have everything we need.

My Family My Story

Winning Entry Age 9-12

Annika, Age 9



When I was 1-3 months old I lived with my mom. When I lived with my mom I was really sick. I had a lot of disabilities. When I lived with my mom we did not live in a house we lived in a car because my mom did not have a lot of money because she spent all of her money on drugs. It was an emotional time and a sad time. I got sick really easily. But my life got sooooo much easier and better. I moved in with my Aunt Sunshine then I moved in with my Aunt Mimi (Jamie) and then I moved in with my papa and my grandma. I live with my grandpa and grandma still and I love them so much! My grandpa is the one that mostly takes and took care of me. My grandpa got married to which is my grandma now. Now I have a normal life except I still have to take some medicine to help me go to sleep and help me stay asleep. I also started gymnastics at Meridian Academy of Gymnastics and I go 3 days a week. I started in a rec class and then my coach asked me if I wanted to go to team. Then I had only been in rec times and it was fun

My Family My Story

Winning Entry

Age 13-18

Dailee, Age 17

My Grandparents

I grew up in their loving care, was taught right from wrong and to always be fair.
My soul was made strong because they were there, by my side, all our burdens we share.
They taught me many things growing up, countless things, the list piles up:
Kindness, manners, courage, love, don't act rash when push comes to shove,
Keep my head on my shoulders and my chin held up high, if it's the stars I want I aim for the sky.
Don't abandon what I've started no matter how boring,
Even if it means staying up late to finish work due in the morning.
They taught me to think for myself and to use my head, ignoring what others may have said.
Keep my grades high and my spirit higher, with confidence flaring in my eyes like a burning fire.
With everything I do, I do with determination, to keep myself going despite my frustration.
The things my grandparents taught me are numerous and unending,
To hear them all, would all be depending,
On whether or not you'll listen to my life's story. Every now and I still cause them to worry,
But I'm still young and there's still things to learn, from my grandparents who seem to be stern,
But they're stern out of love and no matter how many years pass I'll always love them,
Because after all, it's because of them that I'm proud of who I am.

My Family My Story

Winning Entry Age 13-18

Tabitha, Age 17

Being raised by my grandma has to have been the single most important thing that has ever happened to me. She is the most amazing person I have had the pleasure to know and I thank God everyday for her being in my live. Without her I have no idea how I would have turned out and I am very lucky to have her. She treats me so kind and with so much love that I know she's not "just grandma" she is much more than that, she is my mom. Some people get confused when you try to explain to them that you consider your grandma your mom. They don't understand how someone could drop everything to rescue and take care of a child that they didn't give birth to. But that's the one thing that they are missing. She didn't have an obligation to take in her daughter's child and raise me as her own, she chose to. And that makes all of the difference in the world.



My Family My Story

Distinguished Entries

Destiny, Age 16

My Grandma is my source of hope,
Throughout my life she's helped me cope.
Teaching me from right and wrong,
Telling me I'll always belong.
Pushing me to do my best,
Making success my favorite quest.
My smile never seems to fade,
Because my grandma's love will aid.
Me in every struggle I come across,
She is totally awesome sauce!
Without her I wouldn't be me,
For that I am grateful eternally.

My Family My Story

Jazlynn, Age 9

Jazlynn aged grade 5
Bachista

Time goes by so fast I wish that it could just stop for a minute and I can just pay attention to the world because it just falls apart when I try to stay still for a minute. Some times I wish that every thing and every one around me can stay still and just be quite and focus as hard as they can and be a good kind person and happy. And that is why time goes by so fast. The End

My Family My Story

Xavier, Age 8



My Family My Story

Jessica, Age 14

My grandma is my angel, she saved me and protects. If it wasn't for her I would be in a mess. God sent her down just for me, I'm glad she is my family. I never want her to leave my side, she gives me great advice. I'm getting older way too soon, I remember when she tied my shoes. Helped me get rid of the monsters in the night. Helped me keep fighting when I wanted to die. She's taken care of my every need, and when I didn't deserve her she was there for me. I love you grandma I'm glad you care and I want you to always be there.



My Family My Story

Faith, Age 4

Faith Age 4



My Family My Story

Haley, Age 10

Living with People is Bad But
Living with People how care is
Just Divine! ☺ Haley ♡



My Family My Story

Journi, Age 15

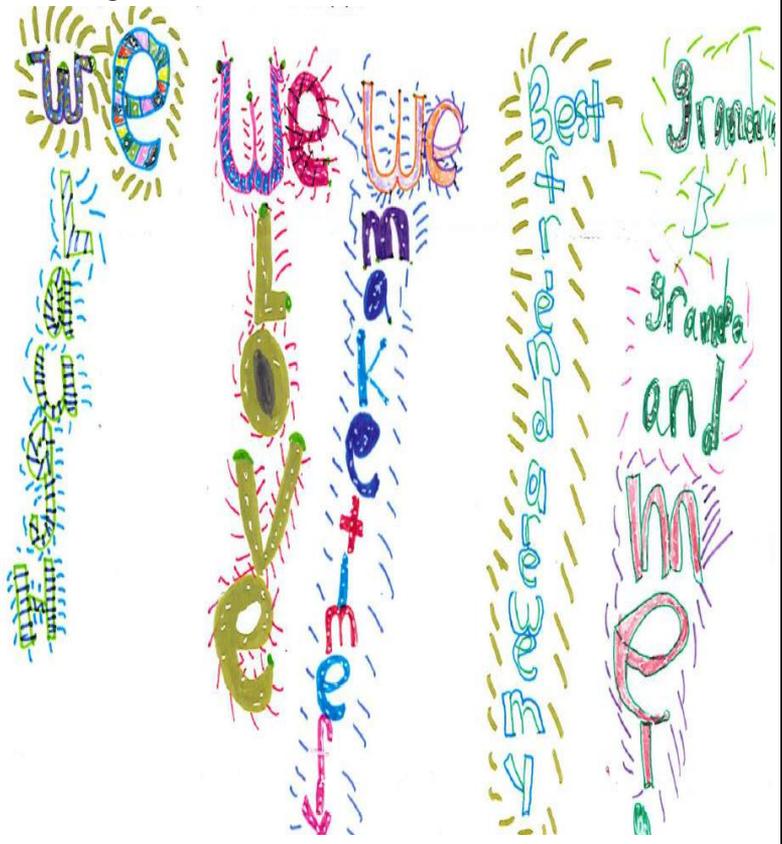
My Family, My Story

My name is Journi Shayne Smith, I have lived with my grandparents all my life. This is how they made a positive difference in my life. For example, they have always supported my needs no matter how difficult it is. When I was 8 and a half years old my school teacher noticed that there was something special about me. That is when my mom (gma) knew she had to take me to see the doctor.

So we did and that is when I got diagnosed with childhood psychosis. So from then on I have been on medication to help with my psychosis. When I first got diagnosed I was back and forth through BHC and other hospitals. And now I feel better because I have my grandparents on my side to support my medical needs.

My Family My Story

Nina, Age 8



My Family My Story

Kiera, Age 9

Living Two Different Lives

First day here, anger issues.
Throwing tantrums, slamming doors,
Being sad, got me nowhere.
With my mom, it was off key.
It didn't work out.
No food, no drinks.
She would always be gone.
My brother watched me 24 hours a day.
After living with my grandparents for a year,
Good grades, enough sleep.
A lot of energy.
I play more.
Enough food and drinks.
My dad is getting help in prison to be a better
father.
I am healthier, I am in gymnastics.
Everything is so much better.
They take me to fun places.
I AM SO HOPEFUL NOW.

My Family My Story

Haley, Age 15

Cracks on the inside
Bruises lay beneath
My scars tell my stories
Yet nobody sees

Daddy didn't know the difference between
Right and Wrong

Mommy has too much history
To love a child on her own

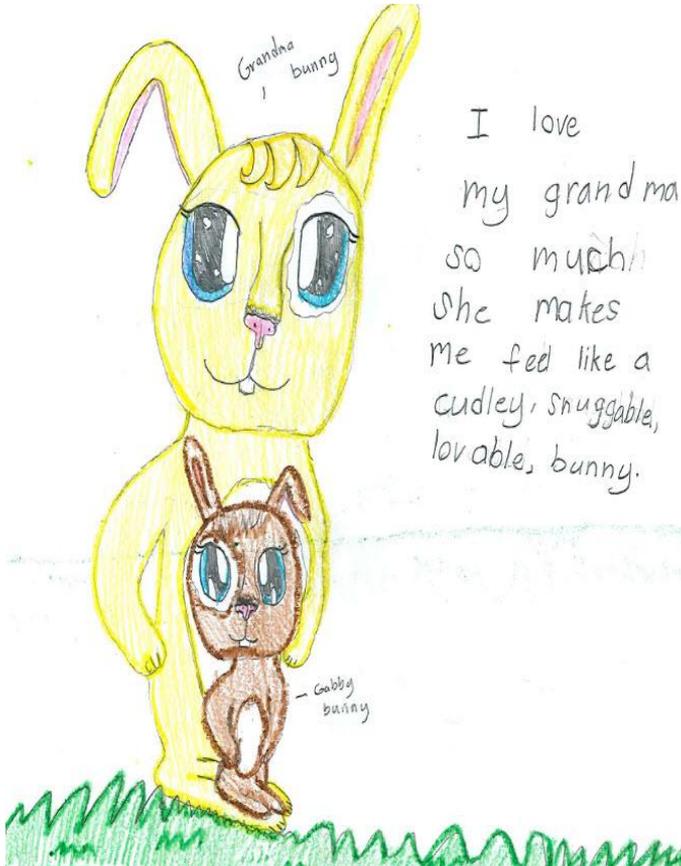
A father's mistake... A mother's worst nightmare
Pawned off on another

Now engulfed in love and care
A little girl finally gets to grow up
And live a life that's fair

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My Family My Story

Gabby, Age 9



My Family My Story

Tristin, Age 16

A Grandma's Love



My grandma's loyalty has got me thru many tough times. Always standing in my corner, encouraging me to always do my best, She has inspired me to be strong, respectful and trustworthy. I may not have the same last name or her blood in my veins, but she has my heart.

Our family is exactly how it was meant to be. We have persevered and weathered the storm. I'm proud to know I was "chosen!"

Tristin Griffis age 16

My Family My Story

Alexis, Age 11



My Family My Story

Austin, Age 15

What Matters

What is the most important thing for a child? Some would say it has to do happiness, or whether the parents are in the picture. In long run the best thing for a child is the thing that benefits them the most for their future, just because a child has his or her parents with them doesn't always mean they are getting the best treatment. I believe it is much simpler than that, more simple than just a mom or a dad. I think it all has to do with the kind of role models each child has in their lives, for me, I had my uncle and my grandparents.

I believe in strong family values, but as a person who grew up in a different situation now living in a broken family, I believe the stereotypical idea of strong family values aren't universal for each child. I have been taught old school concepts, while living in a world that has slowly began to remove these ideas from our everyday lives. My uncle and my grandparents have taught me every basic attribute that has made me the person I am today, a person I am proud to be.

My Family My Story

Lexi, Age 11

My story begins with me getting taken away from my parents when I was about 3 or 4 because they did drugs. I was in and out of foster care. I did not like it was not fun. When my dad got out of jail, I went to live with him. After about 2 to 3 years he went back to jail. Then my great aunt and great grandmother came and got me, they saved me from going back into foster care again. My aunt and grandmother got full guardianship of me, and they gave me a stable home. I live with my aunt and she has 3 kids who are like brothers and sisters. My aunt has made it possible to do sports and other fun things. I got to stay at the same school and stay in the same neighborhood. I use to not speak to my mom but my aunt told me I should, so now I do. My aunt said when my parents get out and are doing good I can go and live with them. I'm happy where I'm at and I hope other kids like me feel the same way.

My Family My Story

Eli, Age 13

My Grandmother Became my Fairy Godmother

This is how it all began – long, long ago in the Treasure Valley far, far away. There was boy that was born thirteen years ago. He was born into a family who argued a lot, but the mother of the family loved the young boy and still does. That poor boy was not taken care of by his father, and all of his teeth had cavities. So his grandparents paid for his teeth to be pulled out or capped. Then his mother started to take him to his grandmother when she had to work more often. So, his grandmother become his legal guardian. She took care of him, and she supported him at some things like baseball, Junior Bible Quiz, and Teen Bible Quiz. She taught him how to use his manners. He gets all the necessary things that help him through life like going on a vacation to Disney World or Minnesota. POOF! That is how his Grandmother became his Fairy Godmother.

The End

My Family My Story

Jaime, Age 12

I may live with my grandparents but I'm pretty sure it's way better than living with my mom or dad. When I was born my dad left my mom and I haven't seen him ever since. I lived with my mom for 1 month and she does drugs and when I am glad I live with my grandparents. They spoil me and let me hang out with my friends and my mom never did. But it's not bad living with my grandparents except the fact that my grandpa has Alzheimer's & dementia and I help my grandma with him all the time. But it's not that bad. I enjoy staying or living with them, it's fun and they are fun.

My Family My Story

Nate, Age 12

Great is what your all about

Radical is why your fun to be around

Amazing is why I love U

Nice is why I love how express yourself

Dandelions — is your favorite flower

Magnificent is why your so magical

Awesome is why I'm your grandson

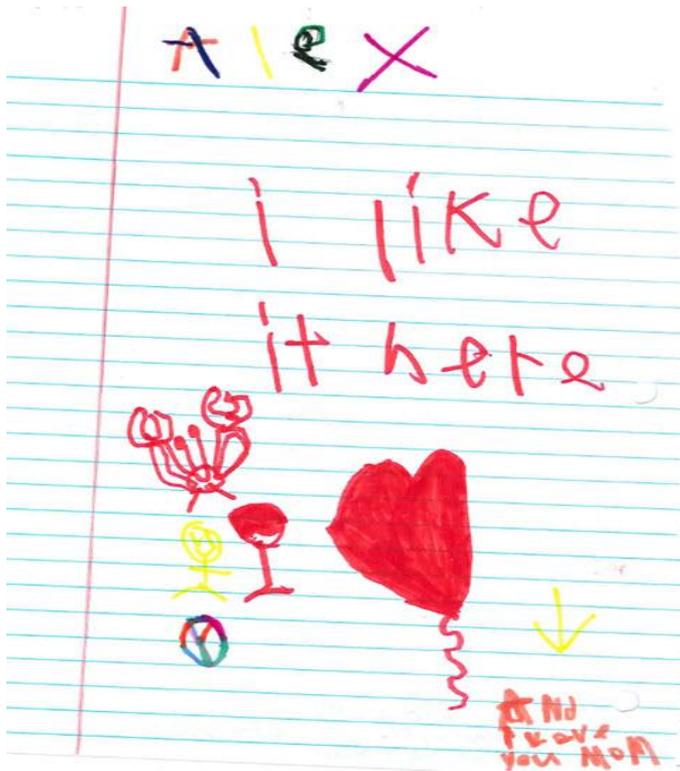
My Family My Story

Estevan, Age 12

So challenge is to write how your relatives as your parents have changed your life. Living with my grandparents they haven't just changed it they reformed it into something that is great. So to say my grandparents have given me many things. They gave me a home. They let me have fun. I play every sport at school and my grandparents pay for equipment. I have straight A's in school because my grandparents push me to do my best. I love to read books because my grandparents read me stories when I was little. So my life is so much better. This may be short and not in depth, but my life is not in depth, it is just simply the life for me. To borrow a phrase from *Fault In Our Stars* "live our best life today," which is true because of my amazing grandparents.

My Family My Story

Alex, Age 9



My Family My Story

Collette, Age 9



My Family My Story

Jazmin, Age 10

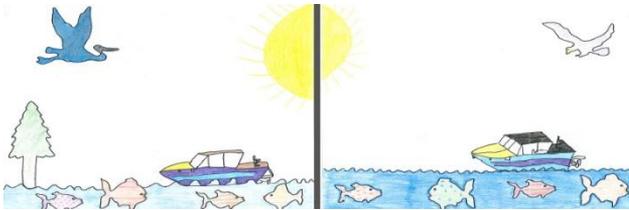
Since I moved in with my grandparents, I have made some nice friends. My grandparents are nice to me and I'm nice to them; they love me to death. They make sure that I have everything that I need. They let me get clothes if we go to town and sometimes I use my allowance.

I have a great school and it has awesome teachers. I love them and they love me. In school I always ask the teachers if they need help; I love to help anyone that needs it. My Grandpa & Grandma takes us camping, fishing, boating & swimming. I help them plant the flower & vegetable gardens. I enjoy working outside.

I have a niece who is almost 2. She's starting to talk a lot & she's the cutest thing I have ever seen in my life.

I'm looking forward to my future. I want to be a teacher or a nurse when I grow up.

That's my story.



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