

## **PATRICK'S STORY**

I would like to tell you the story of my son Patrick. I have been a single mother his whole life. Our journey through the system began when my son was in elementary school and was a very active, perhaps overly energetic child. I brought him to a therapist and he was diagnosed with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As he got older, he became more frustrated with authority and began to be disrespectful towards teachers and myself. His therapist and psychiatrist began to talk to me about the possibility that he may have a mood disorder in addition to his ADHD. He continued therapy and tried medications to address these challenges, but as he entered a charter middle school, he began to act more aggressively than in the past. Soon, we made our first trip to the emergency room for a psychiatric screening. Things went from difficult to worse. Over the course of a year, Patrick went through an endless series of treatment programs and supports (day treatment, hospitals, acute residential treatment, family stabilization, CHINS, educational advocacy to obtain an Individual Education Plan).

Patrick was approved for services through the Department of Mental Health (DMH) while he was at his last acute residential treatment placement. It was time to act and make sure he got into a stable setting where he wouldn't be missing school for his frequent hospitalizations. He had deteriorated so much in one year time, I couldn't stand to watch it go on any longer. DMH agreed and Patrick was placed in a specialized foster care program, through Family Continuity's Therapeutic Home Care Team. This was the best thing that could have happened to him. He was given an advocate, we were given weekly family therapy and he was safe. Having a father figure in his life helped him to stabilize to such a great amount it was unbelievable.

Patrick is now home and beginning to transition back to public school. He hasn't had school problems for over a year. He is almost 15, a freshman in high school and is a straight "A" student now. He played football on the public high school team, and even scored a touchdown. He is now playing on their basketball team and he has made new friends. We have a wonderful relationship and will be leaving the Family Continuity program.

He is a true "success story" of how our hard work and appropriate help can make a huge difference.

If you want to learn more about Family Continuity's Therapeutic Home Care, and other programs that change the lives of individuals and families in your community, call 1-866-219-3320 or email us at <mailto:info@familycontinuity.org>.

Extracted from a letter written by a parent (Kate) 12.29.08.

Edited letter for Real Stories 1.9.09; 1.19.09

---