

TED'S STORY

(In families, one person's difficulties usually affect everyone. Rarely is there a single, simple solution, but rather complex relationships require support on some level for everyone. Big things and little things all matter. A recent letter we received illustrates this.)

I would like to tell you how helpful and positive the staff and services provided by Family Continuity have been to my family.

My 15 year old son, Ted, has had many emotional difficulties over the years, yet was never given a clear diagnosis or effective treatment. Although I took him to numerous counselors and evaluations for over 8 years, nothing seemed to work and his behavior never improved significantly. About two years ago, our family consisting of Ted, his sister Sandy, now 13, and I started treatment with Family Continuity. After a while, the therapist who works with Ted suggested we get another evaluation, and then proceeded to find us several places that not only took our insurance, but had appointments open in the near future. Ted soon got an evaluation and a diagnosis of bipolar disorder that allowed us to move forward. As a result, Ted was started on medicine that did make some difference, and the evaluation revealed some other medical problems he had as well.

Dealing with a 15 year old with bipolar disorder and a volatile temper has been hard on all members of the family, and I feel that Family Continuity has taken a holistic approach where all areas are addressed. In addition to Ted's counseling, my daughter Sandy and I have benefited greatly from talking with other counselors. Even Sandy, who had been resistant to counseling, has delighted in having a positive mentor and looks forward to seeing her.

But it's Ted that has benefited the most from counseling and mentoring. He is currently very much enjoying the relationship he has with his mentor. Ted has been seeing him weekly and spends time doing a variety of positive activities such as hiking, building things, and exploring, all stuff he loves to do while at the same time being exposed to a positive, calm, male role model. Additionally, Ted attended karate classes for over a year, courtesy of Family Continuity, which was good for his self- esteem and also kept his weight, which has gone up with medicine, in check. Although he eventually tired of karate, he is now signed up for swimming at the YMCA, through a membership given to us by Family Continuity. He will be working on his swimming merit badge there, which is a step on his way towards the Eagle level in Boy Scouts, also good for his health and self esteem.

I am truly appreciative of all Family Continuity has done for all of us. After many fragmented years of trying to get help, we have found the staff truly committed and thoughtful. From smaller morale boosters such as giving us movie tickets or the wonderful opportunity to go horseback riding, to the important, comforting knowledge that there is someone to call and strategize with, or even just vent to, I can say we have not even come close to a group of professionals that have helped us nearly as much as the staff at Family Continuity.

I thank you, so much, for your help.

To find out more about the big and little things that make a difference in Family Continuity's counseling and mentoring programs and any other services that we provide in your community to families like Ted's, or how you can help, contact us at (866) 219-3320, or on our website at www.familycontinuity.org.