

Taylor Miller

Topeka, Kansas

I am Taylor Miller. I am twenty-four. I am a CNA at the Kansas Rehabilitation Hospital in Topeka. I work nights. Two days a week, I work at Keys for Networking, analyzing transcripts for IGRAD. Dr. Adams asked me to tell you briefly about what has happened to my family in the last five years. I have four brothers and a child. Our mother died after a long illness from cancer six years ago. Even before my mother's death from cancer, my brothers were getting into trouble. Chris was truant—he wanted to stay home with my mother. Charges were filed. I did stay home with my mother. Keys helped me finish high school by working with Highland Park High School. Blake and Brian one night “borrowed” a car to visit our mother at Stormont Vail. They were picked up. Because my mother was not home, because my mother could not take care of them, the court would not let them return home. Chris stayed with me. Brian went to Wichita and many other places. Sometimes we did not even know where he was. He was moved many times between placements in Wichita, Kansas City, Marillac and Topeka. Blake went to live with his grandmother. They were not allowed to see each other or to come home, our home, on weekends, because the experts said the boys were a bad influence on each other.

Neither Chris, Blake nor Brian has finished high school. Chris is now at Lansing. Brian lives with his girl friend. He just found a job at Wal-Mart. Blake lives with me. Parker was adopted by a teacher at his school. We are no longer a family. All of us have lost hope that life can get better. Dr. Adams asked me what I would tell you today, if I could. I came to say that out of home placements, custody destroyed my family and has created trauma and anger and terrible depression for all of us.