

## Teasha's Story

When I was young I was introduced to a man who I had two kids with. He was accused of criminal sexual misconduct against children he babysat. He talked me into moving away from my home town. During this time I believed him when he said he did not commit the offenses and continued to live with him with my boys. Because I allowed him in my home with my boys, the boys were placed in foster care during this time. There was no way I was going to lose them so I worked with the courts to win them back. I chose to move back home into my mom's home and get an order for protection. Shortly after, my boys were with me where they belonged. It took four years to realize I was in an abusive relationship and that this man was a sex offender. I still fight to keep him away from us.

I started some life changes which included finishing high school as I had dropped out only a few months short of graduation. After that I enrolled in college in Communication Art & Design. I ended up working for a company that I am still at and I manage and design their website and am always designing something for them.

Living in the home I am in now has been a blessing because I have my boys, but it also is very hard. Every winter the pipes freeze, sometimes for days at a time. I have to keep buckets of water set aside just in case. I have tried various things to keep the pipes from freezing, including running a space heater nonstop. My electric bill doubled and it didn't work. The bathroom floor was replaced but I can see the water underneath creeping through the floor. The electrical is unsafe. Recently I unplugged a space heater and the end of the plug was burnt and melted.

One of the hardest things in this house is that I have to sleep in the living room because my boys cannot share a room. I don't have my 'own' space and I have no where safe to keep my own personal belongings. A lot of my stuff is just packed away. Ever since I have moved in here I have headaches every day and am tired. It may just be a coincidence, but I am eager to see if the headaches go away after I move out.

Throughout my boys lives I have always tried to make their life as normal as possible despite all we have been through. One of the most exciting things about getting a Habitat house is that we will have our own house that we could NEVER have been able to afford on one income and we each will have their own room. This is truly a dream come true.