

HPRP Provides Housing and Healing for Single Mom

Positive Stories / Lessons Learned from HPRP: *Individual Success Story*

HPRP Grantee:	City of Tucson and Pima County
CoC Name and Number:	AZ-501 – Tucson/Pima County CoC

Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	762	Total persons in TH:	980
Total persons in Safe Haven:	15	Total unsheltered persons:	609
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	2,366		

Like many parents, Sarah's* life for the past sixteen years had revolved around her children. She had raised her son for a decade by herself before giving birth to twins when he was twelve years old. Her constant sicknesses, colds, and general weariness were all products, she thought, of the germs she picked up every day in her job as a substitute teacher. She was simply too busy to worry about her own health.

This was until she was diagnosed with a serious auto-immune disorder, hospitalized for several weeks, and forced to quit her job. Without a steady income, she relinquished her lease and moved in with a cousin who had let her kids sleep over while she was in the hospital. Their welcome soon wore out and they moved their clothes, favorite books, and blankets into their car.

Sarah was determined to keep her children's lives as predictable and normal as possible, including their education. Her son took care of the twins while Sarah was in the hospital, but he no longer had computer access to work on his GED online. She skipped more and more medical treatments to bring him to the

local library's computer room to work on his courses while she read with the twins in the brightly colored, kid-sized reading room.

She also used time in the library to research housing assistance, and was soon accepted into Tucson's HPRP. HPRP's rapid re-housing assistance helped the family move out of their car and into a new apartment, allowing Sarah to resume regular treatments. A childcare voucher through a different program gave her twins a safe place to be during the treatments and she was able to continue home-schooling them when she was free; her son made daily trips to the library until he finished his GED. However, nine months after entering HPRP, Sarah was still waiting for a hearing date for her appeal to her denied disability application, and she was reaching Tucson's twelve-month HPRP assistance limit. Homelessness seemed imminent once again.

Sarah's case manager continued to work with her and made a formal appeal to increase her assistance limit to eighteen months. City and County program coordinators approved the extension within several days, and nearly eighteen months after HPRP entry, her disability appeal was granted and she began receiving monthly checks. She exited with enough income to be stably housed with housing search assistance from her case manager. The twins are now in half-day kindergarten and her son is in his first year of college. With safe housing and child care in place, Sarah continues her journey toward healing.

**Names have been changed for confidentiality.*

For more information, contact Jodie Earll Barnes, City of Tucson at 520-837-5363
or Jodie.Barnes@tucsonaz.gov.

If unable to reach the above contact, please try Jane Kroesen, Pima County at 520-243-6763
or jane.kroesen@pima.gov.