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Former Youth: ‘Staff and Counselors Believed in Me’

Andrea is a happy 35-year-old mother of two teenagers, working a great job. Her own teenage years, however, weren’t so happy.

Beginning at age 13, Andrea was incarcerated three separate times at the former Scioto Juvenile Correctional Facility, also known at the time as Scioto Village.

“I had a hard time controlling my temper, and I was always fighting and cussing out staff,” Andrea said. “But they never gave up on me. What helped me the most was learning to trust the staff enough to talk to them about what was really bothering me and what I had been through prior to getting into trouble.”

Andrea explained that sexual abuse had a profound impact on her attitude toward life. While at Scioto, she received counseling. She recalls how staff helped her work through struggles and look forward to a brighter future. “They helped me with anger management and depression,” Andrea said. “They helped me be more positive about goals, 1, 5 and 10-year goals, and where I wanted to be.”

When she was 17, Andrea received her GED at the facility. She described how it was a “big thing” for her because she hated school. Andrea went on to earn certifications in medical
assisting and phlebotomy. She said, “Now I love to learn new things.”

Faith played an important role in her transformation. “Going to church and being saved helped me as well,” Andrea said.

Andrea recalled, “I hated being there, but now I look back and realize that it was the best thing for me at the time. I still utilize some of the things I learned to this day.”

“I will not forget how many staff and counselors believed in me despite my issues,” Andrea expressed. “I just want to say that place changed my life and thank you to all the staff who are helping kids. Not all bad kids grow up and become criminals. That place made me smarter and more aware of my actions and learning to make goals for myself.”