

Profiles of Hope

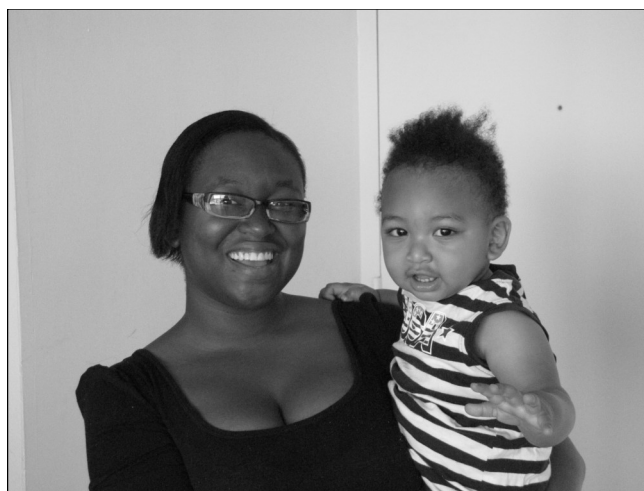


Jahseth Thomas needed help. Pregnant and homeless at the age of 20, she turned to the Healthy Families program at Project Self-Sufficiency. At the beginning her goals were short-term, and she feels wonderful about attaining them all. “I wanted a healthy delivery for my son, and I got it. I wanted things for my son and I was able to get them.” Now that her son is almost a year old, Jahseth has moved into an apartment of her own, obtained a job, and has her eyes on more far-reaching goals. “I want to get my permit, my license and then a car. Then I want to go back to school.” Jahseth hopes eventually to pursue a career in medicine. She credits the Healthy Families program for giving her tips on everything from parenting her newborn to household safety, and she is grateful that she can still count on the twice-monthly visits from her case manager for assistance.

The Healthy Families program at Project Self-Sufficiency is free to eligible pregnant women and mothers of children up to the age of three. Participants receive free parenting tips, baby items, and information about childhood health, through home visits by certified professionals and mother-child educational outings. The program aims to help parents boost literacy levels and address health issues within their new family.

The agency’s Healthy Families program uses the Parents as Teachers curriculum, which was created to help prepare children for kindergarten and to address developmental delays that might otherwise have been overlooked until the child entered school.

Feeling isolated and overwhelmed are common issues with mothers of young children in Sussex and Warren Counties. The Healthy Families program gives mothers the opportunity to meet regularly with other women in similar circumstances by attending monthly Mommy Parties held at Project Self-Sufficiency. Participants receive valuable information about household safety, parenting, health and wellness, and other topics while enjoying lunch and engaging in craft projects with their children. While on site, mothers can also take advantage of the other programs and services available to families at Project Self-Sufficiency. Transportation to the monthly gatherings is available to women in need.



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Jahseth Thomas