

. . . I felt like a failure being in a situation where I couldn't provide for my kids. And my mom used to have us in and out of shelters.

I always told myself, "I never want my kids to experience that." I wake up every day apologizing to them, but they don't even know it's a shelter. It's so beautiful here. They still ask me when we're going to the shelter. They think this is a hotel with amenities for kids.

I thought it was going to be a room with 30 other families. Bunk beds everywhere. Fighting for showers. Instead, we have our own room that looks like a little apartment. It was a relief. I appreciate the privacy that they give to each family.

I have a case worker who keeps me motivated, too. I got my kids into school, connected with doctors, got food stamps. With the kids set up, I've been able to sit down and take care of the things I need to do, like figuring out housing and employment.

I've always been independent and organized. Before this experience, me and my kids had everything we needed. Then it all crashed. I never expected that to be me. Since I got back to Tacoma, I've been . . .

discombobulated. I didn't know where to turn. They tell me, "Just take one day at a daytime."

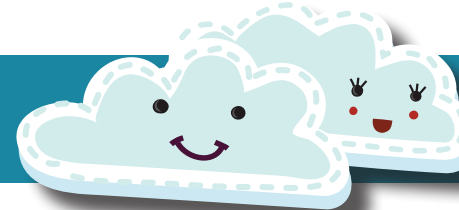
One of things I have to shout out is the youth program. I have a nine-year-old, six-year-old twins, a five-year-old, a three-year-old, and then my baby is due this August. The youth program staff helped take care of my babies so I could get more done to better our situation. It's helped them develop their independence, too. They tell me, "Mom, I'm going to program now. I learned something new. I did good today." I'm happy when they're happy. I don't ever want my kids to not have opportunities because we are homeless. The youth program helps keep them engaged and happy.

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Last thing I'll say is I want people to know that it can happen to anybody. You can have everything one day and it be gone tomorrow.

This place is helping good families who want to actually go out and make a change in this world. People here are not really looking for handouts. They're looking for just a push. I got the push I needed here.

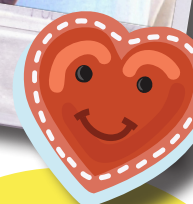
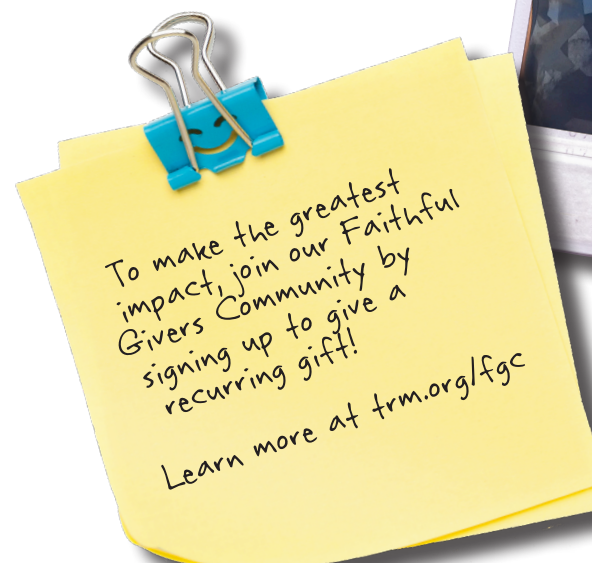
## Help Kids Thrive



Our summer activities, one-on-one mentoring and tutoring in our youth program, and even our family shelter building, itself, are all designed to help set families and children up for success in school and in life.

You can come alongside families at our shelter and kids heading back to school in the fall by collecting and donating the following items:

- Underwear (all sizes)
- Teen backpacks (big kid & teen)
- Earbuds & headphones
- Binders (1 inch or larger)
- Summer appropriate clothing - for men, women, and children
- School clothes for kids and teens
- Deodorant



Duke Paulson serves as our Executive Director. Learn more about our board members and leadership at [trm.org/leadership](http://trm.org/leadership).

## MISSION MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Tacoma Rescue Mission

### Courtnee's Story: I'm Happy When They're Happy



#### INSIDE:

- Courtnee's Story
- School's Out for Summer!
- Help Kids Thrive





Courtnee’s Story:  
I’m Happy When They’re Happy

I grew up in Tacoma, but I’m from Mississippi. I went back to take care of my grandpa all the way from Tacoma with my five kids. I worked two jobs, took care of my grandpa, and the kids until he passed away.

Coming back to Tacoma, I had things lined up. My housing voucher transferred to Mississippi and I was told it would transfer back to Washington, no problem..

But, when we got back, they said “I don’t know why you were told that. Your voucher’s closed. Good luck reapplying.” I came back with deposit money. I thought, “I’ll pay my deposit, get in housing, then figure out a car and employment.” My voucher not transferring put me in a really big bind.

I had to spend my deposit money on hotel fees just to make sure we had a roof over our heads. I didn’t have money for childcare. The jobs

I applied for didn’t want to hire me because I’m pregnant. I’m high risk.

I had a plan A when I should have had a plan B, and plan C behind it.

We came up here with nothing. I didn’t have anybody. My sister’s here and my mom, but they’re trying to get themselves together so they couldn’t help me and all my kids. I just broke down. It was very overwhelming . . .

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**At least when I got to the Mission, I could breathe a little bit. I knew that it wasn’t permanent, but it was a guaranteed roof. I didn’t have to worry about scraping up money for a hotel and food.**

Story continues . . .



Summer programs, activities, and family outings are some of the fun-filled parts of summertime for kids in our community. At the Mission, we make sure children experiencing homelessness with their families have the same fun-filled opportunities.

In addition to regular programming here are some of the activities our Youth Program has planned for kids staying at our shelter this summer . . .



JULY 2023

	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30					1 Visit animals @ Northwest Trek
31					
	3 SEattle Adventure	4	5 North Bend Waterfall Hike	6	7 Ropes Course + Laser Tag
	10 The Nature Center	11 Blackberry Picking	12	13 Picnic + Kite Flying	14
	17	18 Swimming at Kandle Park	19 Golf Lessons with First Tee	20	21 3-day Mt. Rainier camping trip with rock climbing, paddleboarding and hiking
	24 Music therapy classes Thomas Brown Music	25	26	27 BBQ at the beach	28
					29 Back to school shopping event