

## Y.A., Massachusetts

I was referred to Healthy Families by Welcome Families. I felt like it would be a great resource for myself and Austin. I had just come out of a domestic violence relationship. Living back home with my mom, my car had just broken down and I had just given birth to Austin, I was overwhelmed. But Healthy Families was more than just a support, they were more than what I expected. I anticipated someone coming over and answering questions but it was much more. I was heard, respected, and cared for. My family support worker did not just answer questions. My family support worker referred me to several other community programs and linked me with resources I did not even know existed. I was also provided with information to better understand Austin's needs. I was then able to care and provide for him better than I anticipated.

My family support worker is the reason I have everything I have. She will not take credit for it and has instilled in me that I am the reason for my own success and she was just there to support me. Either way I can say that just 4 months later, I am in my own apartment which is now fully furnished. My car is back up and running and Austin is developmentally right on track. I feel secure and I feel like I can breathe again. I would like to send the message that I know it is a hard and bumpy road, but if I can do it, anyone can. I want to give all families faith. Healthy Families believes in me and they will believe in you. Together WE ARE creating healthy families, we are still creating mine and for that I will be forever grateful. [*Unedited written submission*].