

A Mother's Journey to Health and Happiness

Haley was first diagnosed with depression at the age of 19. For much of her life, her mental health issues went untreated. Immediately after the birth of her first child, Haley was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. She underwent a variety of treatments with mixed results. By the time her first son was about two years old she had gained some stability. Then, just days after finding out that she was pregnant again, she was sent spiraling into a deep depression after the tragic death of her best friend.

Haley's Husband worked long hours and much of her time was spent alone. "I gave birth in a haze of depression," Haley remembers. "Looking back, I am saddened by the fact that my children's births weren't nearly as joyful as they should have been."

When Haley gave birth to her third child, who was premature, a nurse from the hospital connected her with Family Service of the Piedmont's Healthy Start program. Haley remembers her caseworker was very attentive to her needs. "I told her about how I had been experiencing mental health issues my entire life," she says. "I was finally on a medication management program that worked well, however I struggled to find a therapist to talk through my problems. With three children, it was very difficult to go anywhere, not to mention the high cost of private talk-therapy."

Soon Haley was connected with an in-home Healthy Start therapist. "Within two months, I was much more stable," Haley recalls. "After struggling with postpartum depression for months, I was finally on my way to becoming healthy and bettering myself for my children. Family Service is a huge part of my continued progress."

Haley is proud of the changes she has made after finally receiving proper care for her mental health issues. Not long ago, she says, she would sit at home on the computer all day. Now she is involved with her kids' lives. "My children have noticed a difference," Haley smiles. "I was not as good of a parent when I was sick. I was a lazy parent. When you're depressed you just don't care."

Haley recognizes that just being on medication was not enough. The introduction of talk-therapy into her treatment made a huge difference in her progress. "My experience reinforced to me that you absolutely have to have both—medication and therapy," she says. "Mental Health is like a broken leg. Without the proper receipt of both therapy and medication, the body isn't going to heal properly. Family Service makes it as easy as possible to get the help that you need. The fact that I can see a therapist in my home has made all the difference in the world. It has made it possible for me to be the best mother I can be."