

A Mother's Testimony

by Susan

Cassie had become uncontrollable and we were unable to reason with her. She was drinking and smoking with people I never would have imagined her being with. There were countless nights she would not even come home and her father and I would go out looking for her. She was stealing, lying, and was never where she said she was.

It seemed our little girl had changed overnight, but looking back it had been slowly happening over the course of two years. She had slowly pulled the wool over our eyes. I was at my breaking point.

After weeks of looking at programs for high-risk teens, from the east coast to the west, we finally admitted to ourselves that we couldn't financially handle any of them. I was exhausted, desperate, and disillusioned when I called my sister for advice. She happened to be visiting with a friend when I called, and when the friend learned of our situation, she kindly suggested we look into

Project PATCH. It was at this moment that things began to look up.

When Cassie arrived at PATCH, she felt the program was not for her, and fought it for a while. Now that Cassie has been in the program for a few months, her father and I have seen significant progress. She even told us recently, "As difficult as it is to be away from you guys, this is where I need to be." Wow!

I really can't express enough how wonderful the PATCH staff is. They are true professionals and I can see the sincerity in their hearts. They want to help these kids. They are attentive and helpful not only to our daughter but to us as well.

I am so very grateful to everyone who played a role in getting Cassie into the program at PATCH; they gave her a second chance on life.



"My daughter needed help."

Contact us at 360-690-8495 or patch@projectpatch.org
www.projectpatch.org

CARES & PRAYERS

Thanks so much for filling such a deep need! – C.S.

My son completed the PATCH program ten years ago and is now serving with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan. He asked me to send this \$500 donation to you; he hopes it will help keep the hope alive for other troubled teens. Our family is so grateful for all PATCH did for him. God bless you and your ministry. – J.L.

I am very interested in the wonderful work you do for so many young people. How special it will be for you to meet many of these students again in Heaven because of your efforts now. Your work is in my prayers. – E.H.

What an amazing place the Family Life & Conference Center is! It's so easy to feel God's presence there. Your made our weekend there such a special time, and I thank you for all the special touches you added to make our weekend over-the-top amazing. May God richly bless your ministry in Goldendale. – C.N.

To share your PATCH experiences and offer encouragement and support to our staff, email info@projectpatch.org or write to us at 2404 E Mill Plain Ave., Suite A, Vancouver, WA 98661.

Grandparents: Parenting the Second Generation

Earlier this year, as a result of a high number of calls from grandparents raising their grandchildren, Project PATCH presented a weekend seminar aimed at encouraging, equipping, and empowering grandparents to become effective parents to their grandchildren.

"Some parenting tools used two generations ago are simply illegal now," says Laura Montané, admissions coordinator for Project PATCH, trained counselor, and seminar presenter. "Others are inadequate when it comes to dealing with kids affected by divorce, abandonment, loss, or trauma." Other seminar

presenters were Jim Smith, Family Life & Conference Center director, and Chuck Hagele, executive director.

Attendees were primarily concerned with technology and conflict, and were interested in improving their grandchildren's attitudes and scholastic achievements, and gaining insights into how teens relate to their grandparents.

"Many expected to get 'ammunition' to use against their teens," says Chuck Hagele, executive director of PATCH. "They left understanding that connecting and communication lead to stability, trust, and the ability to deal with difficult topics."

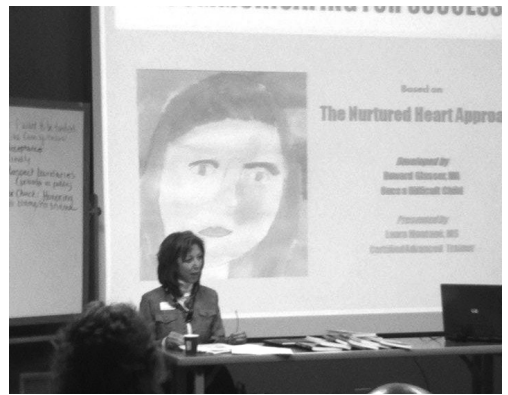
Family Experience

"Families don't need to be broken, and they don't have to be under terrible stress," says Jim Smith, program director at the Project PATCH Family Life & Conference Center. Smith played a key role in developing the Family Experience, a 3- to 4-day Christian-based program that focuses on building stronger families. The program is designed to challenge and encourage families in a fun, vacation-like environment, away from the distractions of work, school, and ongoing distractions at home.

"We believe that God designed families to be an amazing, functioning team that makes parents better and makes kids better," says Chuck Hagele, executive director of PATCH. "So many families now are under attack and our vision is to reclaim families to be what God designed them to be."

Families who participate in the Family Experience not only find they have relaxed, casual time to spend together as a family, but they also enjoy group discussions with trained counselors, hands-on activities and crafts, such as woodworking and a ropes challenge course, and both outdoor and indoor recreation.

"The profile test we took has really helped us understand each other better," says Jenae*, a recent Family Experience participant. "Having the ability to think, 'that's their other talking,' gives us handles we can use to really comprehend where each other is coming from."



An attending mother wrote, "Implementing the methods I learned at the seminar was a lot easier than I thought it would be. I don't know if I'm doing it all right, but it's working! My son and I have been talking a lot more, and we understand each other more than ever before. This seminar was just what we needed."

PATCH plans to hold seminars in the Portland, Ore., and Boise, Idaho, areas this summer and fall. For more information on Project PATCH, to invite a speaker, or to host a seminar, email info@projectpatch.org, call 360-690-8495, or visit projectpatch.org.

Families come to the center to simply get away from it all and to learn as a family how to resolve conflict and how to better communicate with each other, often after other methods have failed. Highly trained counselors reveal how individual characteristics affect the entire family and offer insight into parenting styles and discuss family boundaries and problem-solving.

"I'm still using the communication skills we learned for those times when emotions are high," says Dan*, another Family Experience participant. "My family and I were really blessed by the Family Experience and I would encourage any other family I know to try it, too."

"Our goal is for families to leave here and take away the idea that they can do this," says Hagele. "We want them to leave with a willingness to talk, to work, and to make this thing called 'family' happen."

**Not their real names*



Katelyn*

Continued from page 8

of Katelyn's history with the doctor, who then handed them a brochure for Project PATCH.

"Mom was interested, I was not," she recalls. "I became even more defiant the more she talked about PATCH. Boy was I mad."

Three weeks before she was scheduled to arrive at PATCH, Katelyn's parents told her about their plan. She was livid. She stayed with friends for a while so she didn't have to be around her parents.

"The day we left it took me quite a while to get in the car," she says. "I didn't know what to expect, and I didn't want to go."

Since arriving at the ranch, Katelyn says she's had a lot of ups and downs. Before she arrived she had neglected her schoolwork so much she had fallen a year and a half behind. In just a few months of working with the teachers

and counselors at PATCH, Katelyn had brought her grades up three letters, which she considers to be one of her biggest accomplishments.

"Katelyn is very teachable," says Dustin Young, Katelyn's counselor. "She's willing to admit, 'I messed up,' and is very ready to move forward and learn from her mistakes. She's done really well, and she's still growing."

Set to complete the PATCH program this spring, Katelyn feels this is her biggest current goal, but she says one thing she hopes for in herself as she continues to grow after PATCH is that she is able to accept and appropriately deal with whatever life throws at her, using the skills she's learned at PATCH.

"She's made quite an impact on the staff here at the ranch, too," says Young. "She's taught us the value in knowing we want our future better than our past."

**Not her real name*

TOOLS OF THE TRADE: TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARENTING

**BY LAURA MONTANÉ,
MARRIAGE & FAMILY
COUNSELOR**

Report card time? Focus on the best grades. Ask how your student worked toward getting such a high score. Ask what they enjoyed most about that class. Ask if there is anything you can do to help in the classes they are struggling with – without lecturing, warning, or criticizing. Stay in the moment – no reminders of past failures, and no prophesying about what might happen down the road.

A Letter Home

Dear Mama,

My counselor told you I was nominated to represent Project PATCH at the golf tournament this year, but I wanted to tell you I had a fantastic time there! I'm very good at talking to people and am not afraid to approach them. One of the people I saw was a guy named Irwin who took the time to teach me a little bit about how to play golf. I will never forget that day – he told me I have a powerful swing! He's extremely nice and he has a great passion for kids, including us here at PATCH.

Is there anything new happening in your life? Have you gone out to dinner with the family this month? Tell Great Great I "lalala love" her and miss her a lot!

Are you still stressed about your job? I hope everything is going better than it was before. Remember, if you find yourself getting stressed with a situation, try to distract yourself from it so you can rationalize. Then maybe if you feel up to it, you can appropriately approach that person and let them know how you felt in the situation. Use only "I" statements, though. That's something I learned here at PATCH.

Well, I love you and can't wait to speak with you again. Tell everyone I love them, and tell Daddy I said "HeIIIIloooooooo!"

** Not her real name*

Love, Danielle*

Hope Within CHAOS

by Darlene Waybright

My heart was so touched by his hug. "What's so unusual about a hug?" you might ask. Here is a boy who just a year ago wasn't able to allow even the slightest touch on his shoulder without jerking away from you, but who recently reached out to hug both my husband and me. That was his way, I knew, of saying thank you to Project PATCH for rescuing him. I almost didn't want to let go of that hug, it felt so good!

Prior to his arrival at the PATCH youth ranch, another young man I know asked me, "Are there bars on the windows?" His voice quivered with emotion. I assured

him there were no bars. The teen found the ranch to be as I had explained it. He chose to stay and his life was changed.

We live in a world of chaos, but there is hope. We live in a world where even young people live on the streets, sometimes not by choice. But there is shelter at our ranch. There is hope, love, compassion, safety, and so much more to be found at PATCH. Miracles are seen and felt by those of us who witness the change, and by the kids as well.

Our treasured donors are part of those miracles, for without them, there

would be no refuge for the teens who so desperately need direction in their young lives.

On a visit to the ranch, I was blessed to hear a group of kids at PATCH sing a familiar Christian tune that says, "Thank you for giving to the Lord; I am a life that was changed. Thank you for giving to the Lord. I am so glad you gave."

Darlene is the clerical assistant for Project PATCH and the one who is honored to send hand-written notes on each donor's receipt every month.

The Meaning of Life

Editor's Note: The following was written by a current PATCH resident as part of a counseling assignment.

What's the meaning of life? There's a different answer for every living thing on this planet. For some it's complicated, and for others it's seemingly nonexistent. But for me it's simple: To live life to the fullest and to do what God put me on this planet to do.

See, I believe God has a purpose for putting us on this earth; a purpose for each and every one of us. Now, I have no clue why or what my purpose is, but I hope to find out someday, maybe in the near future, maybe on my deathbed. As long as I am happy and proud of the life I've lived, it won't matter.

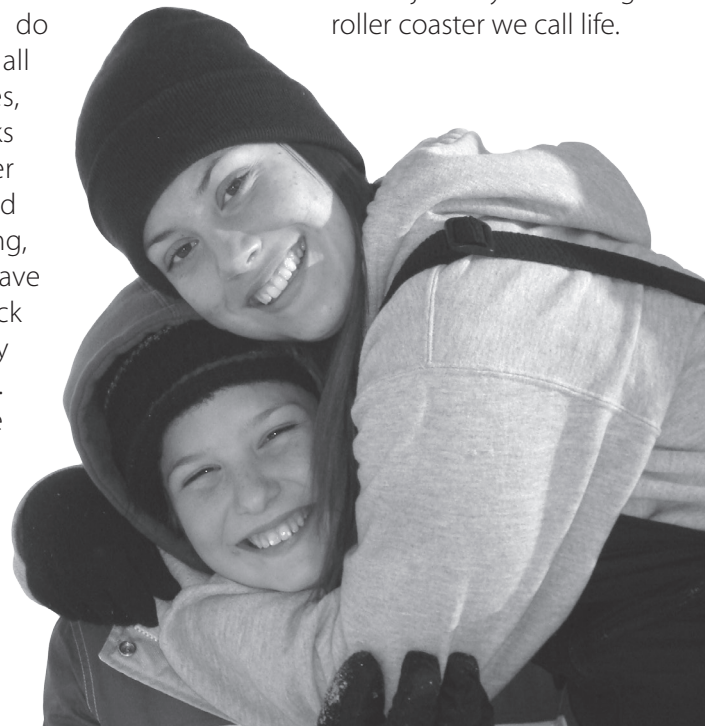
I want to take advantage of life – do something amazing like write a book or become a world famous veterinarian. Yeah, I have dreams. Doesn't everyone? I want to strive for my dreams, make it possible for them to come true. I have smaller dreams in-between the bigger ones, like rent my own apartment and go to college, however, for right now

my goal is to complete the PATCH program and then start working toward a new goal.

Life for me is all about pushing yourself to do good. Yeah, we are all gonna fall sometimes, but hey, if Rosa Parks hadn't stood her ground on that bus, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., hadn't given his "I Have A Dream" speech, Barack Obama probably wouldn't be president. We are capable of doing things today because of our history. So I believe if all of that started over one girl, we can all make a difference – by ourselves or

working together with other people, anyone is capable.

That is the meaning of life for me, the reason to journey on through this roller coaster we call life.



PATCH Snaps



▲ PATCH residents take a break from clean-up duty in the chapel.



▲ Several girls enjoy an evening of bowling as one of many social activities ranch residents enjoy during their stay.



▲ A group of girls takes to the main PATCH road in an effort to level out several potholes and smooth out the drive.



▲ Boys on a sledding trip up the mountain enjoy some down time together during a winter break.

Giving Back

"It all started with me, a friend, and one machine," says Ann Knofczynski with a smile. "We never went looking for work; God directed us."

Ann prayed that God would connect her with people who needed blankets or clothes, so she could use her sewing gift for Him. For the past six years, Ann has been filling the needs of God's children around the world. The group has touched lives across the United States and Mexico, and is currently working on projects for children in Uganda, Bangladesh, and Belize.

When she heard Project PATCH needed two dozen quilts for their new Family Life & Conference Center, Ann and her group went straight to work, creating 24 beautifully

handcrafted quilts that brighten up each of the guest rooms at the center.

"The quilts are gorgeous," exclaims Linda Hill, hospitality director for the center. "And they are quality; they will last us for years to come."

Ann says she and her group will continue to provide quilts for the center as needed.

"God has led my friends and I to care for the needs of others using the resources and skills He gave us," says Ann. "Nothing is impossible with Him; He is never short on anything. All we have to do is step out in faith."

If God has led you to use your talents and skills to benefit Project PATCH, please contact us at info@projectpatch.org or 360-690-8495.



▲ Ann and fellow quilting group member, Cindy, with the finished quilts.

WISH LIST

Below is the current wish list for Project PATCH. If you are interested in helping us fulfill these needs, please call us at 360-690-8495, or email info@projectpatch.org.

YOUTH RANCH

- Gardening hand tools set - \$15
- 4 river rafting tubes - \$40
- 30-quart, heavy-bottom soup pot - \$90
- 3 girls' bicycles - \$210
- 12 yard rakes - \$240
- 20 hockey sticks - \$300
- Cheese grinder/shredder for mixer - \$500
- Hay baler feeder conversion from alfalfa to grass hay - \$500
- Fixed air leak in girls dorm fire suppression system - \$800
- Notebook computer - \$800
- 2 upright freezers, 20+cf frost-free - \$2,000
- Phone system & wiring - \$10,000

FAMILY CENTER

- 6 outdoor chairs - \$180
- Roller door for kitchen serving window - \$800
- Financing for 3 sleeper sofas - \$2,000
- Playground equipment - \$2,500
- 56 dining room chairs - \$2,800
- AV equipment for conference room - \$5,000
- Pavement for 5 RV spaces - \$5,000
- Water softener system - \$8,500



Unexpected Results

As a 20-something young man, Rick Gillespie, boys dorm staff member at the Project PATCH youth ranch, sat in the back of the church listening to parents complaining about teenagers. *If they don't even like their own kids, someone has to be there for those teens*, he thought to himself.

"It was at that point I felt a strong calling from God to get involved, so I did," he says. Gillespie worked with youth in that church for a while before becoming a leader in Young Life in Garden Valley, Idaho.

The years went by and Gillespie and his wife found themselves struggling through their relationship. Convinced he was no longer a positive role model, Gillespie resigned from his Young Life leadership position and began to focus on his marriage.

"For four years we were separated," says Gillespie, "trying to work through our relationship issues. We both come from backgrounds involving dysfunctional homes, so finding a place where we could fix things together seemed impossible."

One afternoon in the midst of this struggle, Gillespie was chatting with a friend who worked at Project PATCH.

His friend suggested he apply to work at Project PATCH, noting that his personality would really do well in that type of environment. Rick obliged his friend, applied, and was hired.

"It didn't take me long to realize it was a God thing that brought me to PATCH," says Gillespie. "I sat in on group DBT counseling sessions with the kids and realized I was learning just as much as they were."

DBT, or Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, teaches ways to understand emotions and address issues with a better thinking process. The improved thinking helps a person react appropriately in difficult situations, often resulting in better relationships with others.

Successfully utilizing the DBT skills he was learning alongside the PATCH teens, Gillespie and his wife worked through their issues and mended their marriage.

"In reality, I've stayed at the ranch not only because I can make a difference here, but because PATCH and the kids here make a difference in my life," says Gillespie. "We're here for the teens, but God is here for everyone."

Supporting PATCH: Easier Than Ever!

For the convenience of our supporters, PATCH recently upgraded its online donation system. Not only is the process faster and easier, but you can now set up automatically recurring monthly donations, saving you the time and effort of logging in every month to make your generous contribution.

Please note that if you had an account set up under the old system you will need to set up a new account under the new system. Once your account is set up,

however, you will be able to log in at any time to change your information or alter the amount of your regular donation.

Try our new online donation system today by visiting projectpatch.org. If you have questions or concerns about this new system, please call our office at 360-690-8495. Thank you for your continued support of troubled teens through Project PATCH.

(PATCH accepts both debit and credit cards: VISA, MasterCard, and Discover.)



Progress Report: Jeremiah

Jeremiah is a 17-year-old resident at Project PATCH's youth ranch. He has been there for just a few months and has already impressed the staff with his progress in the program. When presented with the opportunity to chat with him, we jumped on the chance and asked him a few questions.

PIECING IT TOGETHER



**CHUCK
HAGELE,
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

I've had a hard time communicating with people lately because I can't seem to complete a whole thought before jumping to another. It usually happens when someone asks me how things are going at PATCH. I start by talking about the great kids finishing the program, but before I'm done with that I'm sharing that they just attended the Family Experience in Goldendale with their family and how that weekend experience helped them manage tough situations at home.

You'd think I was done but at this point I would be reminded about how PATCH staff were able to combine principles from the youth ranch with programming from the Family Experience and present our first seminar for grandparents raising grandchildren, which affected 32 grandchildren.

Then I take a deep breath and share how donors are helping us improve our hay operations in Garden Valley, and how a group that rented our Goldendale facilities for their women's ministry group gave an offering to help families attend our program. Donors are also scheduling Tom and me to speak in their churches, give seminars, and share with their friends.

I am so excited by what God is accomplishing through our staff, donors, families, and kids. In a time of short resources we are still accomplishing so much. I pray that as you read this newsletter you will also glimpse the joy that comes from serving kids and families, and that together we can move forward with renewed energy and vision during these tough times.

Tell us about your attitude and behavior when you arrived at PATCH.

Since it was the only way my parents could get me to cooperate, I didn't know I was coming here. So I was frustrated at them. I wanted to go back to school with my friends and was completely against change.

Why did your parents decide to enroll you in the PATCH program?

I was really manipulative and was actually really good at it. That's nothing to brag about, but the fact is that I really wasn't treating the people around me well at all. I was disrespectful to everyone I knew, and would lie to get out of trouble or to make myself look good. I was also in constant fights with my mom.

Once you got here, what did the staff help you work on the most?

They helped me understand how to think more with my 'wise mind' as opposed to what I was used to – thinking with my emotional mind. This is what was causing me to have a hard time listening to my parents, especially my mom.

Tell us about the changes you've seen in yourself since you got here.

My relationship with my mom is so much better. Even on my first visit home after coming to the ranch we disagreed less than we had before. Then by the time I went home for Christmas we were actually able to express our feelings calmly to each other, and negotiate when we disagreed on something. I did a lot more listening to what my mom had to say.

How has PATCH helped you get to this point?

The atmosphere here is so peaceful – the mountains, the woods, the river – that it helps me focus, stay calm, and keeps me from being distracted. It's also wonderful to have the space to give myself an occasional time out to calm down and refocus on what needs work.

What's been the best part of your experience at PATCH so far?

Learning that I'm valuable as a person and that it's okay to be me. PATCH has taught me not to try to impress others but to stand up for what I believe in, and for what I value. I've gained a much better understanding of myself since coming here.

What has been the hardest part about coming here?

The hardest thing for me at PATCH has been teaching myself to admit when I'm wrong. Acknowledging that I need to change, and that my parents were right also took some work! But once I got to that point I was able to analyze past situations and validate what happened, rather than looking at it emotionally.

So when do you expect to complete the PATCH program and head home?

This summer is my one-year mark and I think I'll complete the program sometime around then. I'm looking forward to taking my newfound skills back home and improving my relationship with my mom and the rest of my family even more.

PATCHworks

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PATCH PRAYER WARRIORS

- Sign up to become a Prayer Warrior for PATCH and receive monthly emails with updated requests and praises from all three PATCH locations (Garden Valley, Goldendale, Vancouver). Then, join us in prayer for these special requests throughout the next month. Sign up today by emailing info@projectpatch.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Parenting Seminar – Tom Sanford, speaker
Saturday, May 19th
Pocatello Adventist Church - Pocatello, ID
- Family Experience Weekends
May 25-28, June 8-11, and more
Project PATCH Family Life & Conference Center, Goldendale, Wash.
Additional dates, registration, and info at www.projectpatch.org.

INVITE US TO SPEAK

Interested in having a PATCH staff member speak for your group? Visit projectpatch.org/seminars to request a speaker today!

HELP US SAVE MONEY!

If you are interested in receiving this newsletter in electronic form rather than hard copy, please let us know by emailing info@projectpatch.org.



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Katelyn*

By the time she was in sixth grade Katelyn was suspended and kicked out of school consistently. She was picking fights with other kids and started hanging out with people who were a very bad influence on her and her choices.

"During seventh grade, I was lying about my age, trying drugs, and I was sexually active," she says.

"I was hanging out with 18-year-olds and high school students who got me interested in more drugs and other inappropriate behavior."

Katelyn ran away from home several times in an effort to escape what she thought was dragging her down.

"I just didn't want to deal with my parents," she says. "They'd ask me to do something simple, like clean the bathroom, and I'd just walk away, ignoring them. I was regularly fighting with my sister, and disrespected everyone in my family."

When Katelyn's mother took her to get birth control, she shared some



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