

Cycle of Abuse: Broken

by Antanese McZeal, a Youth Ranch resident

My family is the perfect illustration of how abuse travels in cycles. My poem “Cycle of Abuse” was inspired by the abuse that has traveled generation down to generation in my family. Through my stay at Project PATCH, I have learned tools to stop this cycle that causes so many children to suffer.

“You are not doing this for you. You are doing this for children who may be going through what you have gone through,” is the only thing I can say to myself that keeps me composed while doing a public presentation. And even that does not settle my nerves completely.

The first time I ever presented a child abuse prevention-awareness speech, I was in front of the entire girls’ dorm; and, on top of already being nervous, I was being graded! I could not even feel my legs; I stuttered my words and even forgot to ask if anyone had any questions. I felt that I had done terribly. I lay right on the floor. I felt that I had failed at helping children. But later when reading my grade sheets, I found that even though I messed up, the girls got the message and the speech had touched them all. The responses I saw gave me hope that I could actually make a difference.

I have since presented two more times. Public speaking has become easier and even enjoyable for me. These skills will be helpful as I leave Patch and go on to college to major in social work. The poems and speeches I have done while here at PATCH’s school are just the beginning of what I plan on doing. I want (and WILL) try to put a stop to child abuse by encouraging people to report suspected abuse through poems, speeches, and maybe festivals. I believe the experiences of my own life will empower me to be an effective change agent in the lives of many young people.

Cycle of Abuse

She sits in a corner, silently sobbing,
The fresh welts she received from her mother are painfully throbbing.

She runs to her father’s lap for a comforting tap on the back,
But with an unfulfilling sigh, a daddy’s love and comfort becomes a predator’s rub on the thigh.

There’s nowhere to escape and nowhere to hide,
The once happy girl wishes now to die.
The only freedom she feels is blood running down her arm,
Wanting to feel free she decides to self-harm.

Years pass, and she’s now sixteen with a baby,
She goes to its father for help, but he claims that she’s crazy.

She’s now nineteen and struggling for food,
She can’t find a job because she’s never finished school.
She’s ashamed.
She has a baby and no ring.
She wants away from the world but finds herself surrounded by everything.

Her daughter starts to cry and with anger to the sky,
She holds her hand high and brings it down to a strike:
Here’s for the mother who abused me.
Here’s for the father who raped me.
Here’s for the man who hurt me.
She lets it all out and sees what she’s done.
Her daughter laid out,
The abuse has begun.
She sits in a corner, silently sobbing.
The fresh welts she received from her mother painfully throbbing
The cycle of abuse has just taken a win.
Another family ruined by the evils of sin.

Cares & Prayers

Keep up your most valuable service. —RJ

I so enjoy your letters how I help patch. I pray for you. —EL

We salute you & pray that God will continue to bless you abundantly in your ministry to youth & their families. Keep on keeping on! —SC

My husband and I have a special place in our heart for Project Patch and the work the organization does. Thank you for all you do to give people hope and second chances! —RP

Thank you for your prayers for my granddaughter who has cancer. God bless your ministry for our precious Jesus. —JP

Thanks again for all you did for my daughter & son. Showers of blessings to each of you. —SM

My son was at Project Patch a few years ago. I really appreciate your influence in his life and getting him turned around. He is doing very well now and actually just got married. —TB

To share your PATCH experiences and offer encouragement and support to our staff, email info@projectpatch.org, call 360-690-8495, or write to us at 2404 E Mill Plain Blvd., Suite A, Vancouver, WA 98661.

Retreat = Treat

We were blessed again by conversation and good fellowship at the Family Center this past week. More than that, God showed through you often during that time. The food was delicious. The accommodation was quiet and comfortable. It was such a treat to spend time there again. Simply said: many thanks for such a nice stay.

—JG



Tools of the Trade: Parenting Tip

Why You Should Stop Telling Your Teens What To Do

Parents — when you get scared for your kids, it's normal to tighten down the screws on your sweet, innocent, loving teenagers. But what would happen if just the opposite happened?

It's About Equipping, Not Obedience

Parents who demand obedience will have lots and lots of rules. And yes, you may win that battle for a while. But I believe that creates teens who are not prepared for the real world.

It leads to kids having to stay home longer after graduation. It leads to kids getting into bad relationships. It leads to kids losing their faith shortly after gaining their freedom from mom and/or dad.

When teens don't learn to think for themselves, they end up following whatever voice is strongest at that moment—no matter what that voice is saying. They learn how to be good followers. And there are LOTS of things teens shouldn't be following.

Equipping Parents

Equipping parents allow their kids to make their own choices as early as possible. They know that the kids will make some bad calls, but that's okay. The costs are small and the lessons are huge.

Equipping parents are comfortable having a dialogue with their kids about things that need to get done, instead of just telling your teen what they should do.

Equipping parents don't have to be right. They are secure enough within themselves to entertain opposing views about life, clothes, relationships, politics, faith, cars, and TV shows.

by Paul Elmore



Today's Family Experience

The 'boondocks' are great places to help teens find hope and help families thrive. The Project Patch Youth Ranch is in the mountains of Idaho, in a place without cell phone coverage. The Family Life and Conference Center is about 15 minutes into the wilderness outside Goldendale, a place people from Washington need a map to find.

For years, we had a model in which we helped people grow as they came to us. That's all changed as Project Patch is now bringing the 'boondocks' to you on your phone, tablet, computer, and even in your local church. We are now connecting with families from around the world through our blog, podcast, online videos, and seminars. With the launch of "Today's Family Experience," what was once only available to a few adventurers is now available to you.

Blog

(Today.thefamilyexperience.org)

Every week we release articles, share things you can watch or listen to, and announce seminars. The blog is also a great place to ask questions and be inspired by what other parents are doing. Here are some readers' comments:

Thank you for the reminder that it's the little things that counts. In this crazy-busy life, I often find myself putting my most important relationships last. – Andrew

Great piece! Thanks so much for addressing this issue. – D.S.

Thank you! This is one of the clearest explanations of good leadership style and positive conflict resolution that I have seen. For me, equal parts reinforcement and reproof. In short, I learned something! – L.R.

Thank you for the motivation, Chuck! Excellent! – Mike

Podcast

(Available on iTunes and the blog)

Each month we release several "shorts," episodes full of information from our blog for those of you who like to listen rather than read. We'll be featuring interviews with innovative leaders who are making a difference

today in the lives of teens and families. We'll also be sharing inspiring stories of alumni, including teens and families.

Videos

Starting December 2014, we'll be launching informational videos that capture the stories of today's teens and families who have found hope and are thriving because of Project Patch. We'll also share parenting tips and introduce you to inspiring people. These videos can be accessed through our blog, and we'll be sure to let people know that "Like" us on Facebook.

Seminars

Bring "Today's Family Experience" to your local church or community to help parents and mentors connect with teens and help them become great adults. Technology brings some very real risks into the homes of today's families including: pornography, gaming addictions, and pressures from social media. These seminars focus on steps parents can take to protect their children without requiring a move into the woods. Please contact us if you'd like to host a seminar in your local church or community. Call 360-690-8495 or email info@projectpatch.org.

Could you help us get the word out about how Project Patch is closer than ever to those who need help? "Like" us on Facebook, subscribe to our blog and podcast, write a positive review on iTunes, and share our content with your church and friends. Thank you!

Upcoming Family Experience Weekends

Nov	20–23	Jan	29–Feb 1
Dec	4–7	Mar	26–29
Dec	18–21	Apr	9–12
		May	21–24
		June	18–21
		July	16–19
		Aug	11–14
		Sept	3–6

Be sure to check our "Events Calendar" online at www.projectpatch.org for current information on upcoming weekends, seminars, and other events.

We acknowledge that approaching another family, your church, or even your own family about attending The Family Experience can be a challenge. For ideas and suggestions, please see our website for tips on how to facilitate this conversation:

www.thefamilyexperience.org/tips.

Can This Really Help My Family?

A wave of anxiety swept over me as I pulled our minivan off of the main road and onto the gravel drive that led to the Project Patch Family Life and Conference Center. Our whole family was a bit apprehensive that we were headed to the Family Experience weekend. We weren't really sure what to expect. Would this weekend actually help our family get close again?

Up to just a few months ago, raising four kids had had its challenges, but things were going along pretty well. Our boys grew into their teens without too much drama or getting into trouble.

Then our oldest daughter became a teenager, and our world changed. She started hanging out with questionable 'friends,' got into trouble at school, argued with everyone, and got into 'standoffs' especially with her mother. We could see her gaining momentum in a downward spiral and tension in our home rose day by day. Something had to be done. Something needed to change.

I glanced at my wife, then scanned the back seats filled with three teens listening to their mp3 players, and one smaller one not quite to her 'tweens' yet. I thought to myself: "Well, here we go!"

It was hard to believe how quickly the weekend flew by. The lodge and hospitality team enveloped us with warmth and encouragement. We ate like kings and queens! And

the peaceful ambiance of the surroundings let us relax and unwind.

But the best part came with our family coaching team. They wrapped us with love and care, allowing us to express our frustrations and fears without being judged. At one point, in one of our experiential learning exercises, some of our family members really came unglued and a true conflict was in motion. The coach and facilitator stepped in professionally and walked us through a healthy process of dealing with the situation. We then were able to use the tools they taught us, practice them with coaching, and completed the exercise successfully. Amazingly, everyone in our family gained a new perspective and saw real-world applications within our family situation. And that was just one of many learning opportunities we participated in and gained invaluable insights and tools for living.

On our long drive home, the ear-buds were less frequently used and we all talked a whole lot more. In just a few short days the Family Experience pulled our family back together, not perfectly; we knew there would be more challenges ahead, but we now had hope and we felt that we were on the road to healing, with tools and experiences to remember and keep us on that path.

And you can, too ... see below:

Upcoming Seminar Dates and Locations

November 15

McMinnville SDA Church
McMinnville, OR

December 13

Selah SDA Church
Selah, WA

January 22 – 24

Yuba City SDA Church
Yuba City, CA

February 20-21

Boise, ID

In the works

Seattle, WA

Be sure to check our "Events Calendar" online at www.projectpatch.org for current information on upcoming seminars and other events.

Consider the impact you can make on your church, school, or community by partnering with us to host a seminar in your city. For more information, call us at: 360-690-8495, or go to www.projectpatch.org/seminars.

Win a Family Experience Weekend for Your Family!

Be creative! Craft a short video commercial for The Family Center and then enjoy a spectacular winner's weekend for your family. It really is quite easy and can be done with a "smartphone". Simply visit our website at

www.thefamilyexperience.org/commercial for the guidelines. Winners will be announced on the Project Patch Facebook page in December!

Don't delay — get your creativity on today!

The Artist's Corner



Stand Tall (left)

Medium: Found Art

Lesson: Perception of medium changes as the medium is manipulated in unfamiliar ways.

Untitled (right)

Medium: Salt over wet color

Lesson: Applications of organic materials over liquid mediums create intricate, organic patterns and change the overall persona of the painting.

Note: This piece was completed by a staff member of the Youth Ranch. The staff gets involved on every level, even creating pieces of art.

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

Weather station	\$100
Hockey sticks	\$300
7 Laptop computers	\$2,800
Hay baler feeder converter (alfalfa to grass)	\$500
2 or 3 nice guitars	\$325
Repair of air leak in fire suppression system	\$800
Therapist continuing education	\$2,500
Two-post car lift (10,000 lb. capacity)	\$2,950
Phone system & wiring	\$10,000

Family Center

Light-weight folding tables (6 to 8)	\$300 to \$400
Folding chairs (11 to 24)	\$350 to \$750
Sound system	\$850
Boxwood bushes (60)	\$1,000
Deck furniture (table w/chairs)	\$1,200
Greenhouse (used)	\$2,000
Wi-Fi enabled commercial copier/printer (1)	\$2,000
MacBook Pro	\$2,250
Gravel for main drive (20 loads)	\$3,000
Scissor-lift – used, 20 ft. (1)	\$3,000+
Miscellaneous hand tools:	
Hammers, chisels, drills, hand sanders,	
Minor saw, metal chop saw, cutters,	
air tools, G-joiner, Heavy duty electric	
cords, large drill press & bits	

Vancouver Office

Kitchen floor repair	volunteers
	materials
	donations

Piecing It Together



In the spring of 1999, we introduced a 2-color version of the *PatchWorks* newsletter, and we've followed the same pattern for the past 15 years. The newsletter was cutting edge in 1999. Just to give you some other perspective, in 1999 many of us had a special device just for rewinding videos, and some of them were shaped like cars. We also booked travel through a travel agent, used floppy disks, had to develop the film in our disposable cameras, and our internet made screeching sounds.

With this issue, we are introducing an update to our *PatchWorks* newsletter. The most noticeable changes are that it now comes in an envelope and is all color. We switched to an envelope because the rules for folding mailers now require so many sticky-tabs that it's nearly impossible to open without shredding the cover. We also switched to full-color because it's the same price as black and white, and allows us to show you compelling pictures, including artwork that our teens have made.

What stays the same is that we are focused on sharing stories about the amazing kids and families that we get to work with. The newsletter is a bit shorter to save shipping costs, but is focused on our shared work of building thriving families, restoring hope to teens, and empowering supportive communities.

For those who are interested in helping us save even more money, you can subscribe to the electronic newsletter which will deliver this newsletter to your email for free (www.projectpatch.org/e-lettersignup).

There's a lot of information about teens and families that you miss if you are only connected through this newsletter. We have a blog (Today.thefamilyexperience.org) that shares tips and encouraging stories. We also have a podcast called: "Today's Family Experience" (www.projectpatch.org/itunes) that you can listen to for stories, family tips, interviews with leaders in helping teens and families, and hear inspiring interviews with families and teens. Finally, we are launching video content early in 2015, which you won't want to miss.

The easiest way to keep in touch with all of this is to subscribe to our blog, and "Like" us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/projectpatch).

Thanks for your financial support and prayers. We look forward to sharing many stories about God at work in the lives of teens and families.

A Connection Restored

Twenty-five years ago my husband and I were invited to take a 13-year-old teen into our home for the summer.

Just a few days ago, we were reunited for the first time and believe me, we could hardly wait. I am proud of this son who has married a lovely wife and has three amazing daughters, has developed some very valuable beliefs and skills, and has a grateful heart for Project PATCH in his life.

I am also grateful and blessed for this reunion, and intend for us to stay connected.

~ Janice Schnurr

