

To Whom It May Concern,

03/14/2013

This letter is regarding my history with the Healthy Start Program. I have been with the program for almost 5 years now and have nothing but great things to say about it. This program has helped my family and I when we have needed it the most. When I have had no one to turn to, Healthy Start has been there. I truly consider my support worker as family. She has been a beacon of hope and someone to hold my hand through the tough times. Without the help of my support worker and the clinical specialists, I'm really not sure what I would be doing right now.

Children do not come with an owner's manual and in the beginning stages; they cannot properly express themselves or explain their needs. There is no such thing as a perfect parent; however I would like to think we all strive for it. This program has helped me understand the things that my children do and has given them a voice before they could speak. Sometimes we all need someone to better explain the situation so we can handle it a different way. I have been given an abundance of tools; such as better understanding the developmental stages of children, disciplinary skills, and ways to reduce and better handle stress through this program. They are absolutely priceless.

When you are in the hospital and handed this beautiful being that you are now responsible for it is an amazing feeling, but an also overwhelming and stressful one. Having the Healthy Start people come right to your room and make sure you are doing okay and offer their services to those new parents who might not have a clue what to do with this new responsibility is an absolute necessity! There is a definite need for this program and there are so many families out there that rely on these amazing people to help them out in any way that they can. People like me who look forward to the visits and the exchanging of stories and love.

I strongly urge you to keep funding this program! It is extremely important to our families and our keiki!

Thank you,