Christie’s Story

Christie had a plan. She was going to finish her master’s degree, get a job as a librarian and give her family a good life. But when her husband became abusive, Christie’s plan had to change.

The night the police came, she borrowed enough money from her mom to rent an apartment, put her three daughters and whatever else would fit into her car, and never looked back. Though Christie and her kids had escaped the worst, their future seemed uncertain.

Through United Way, Christie got help filing for divorce and custody of her children. She knew she had to get a full-time job to support her family, so she dropped her graduate classes to part-time and started working full-time as a circulation assistant at a library while she finished school.

When Christie earned her master’s degree and landed a job as a children’s librarian, an old dream resurfaced. “As soon as I got the librarian position, I thought, OK, now how am I going to get a house,” Christie says. “It’s not just something I wanted recently. It’s something I’ve wanted my whole life, to be able to say, this is my house.”

Once again, Christie turned to United Way for help. A United Way THRIVE counselor sat down with Christie and went through her budget. “When they broke it all down for me, I could see that I could meet all my basic needs, but there was nothing extra,” she says.

Through United Way THRIVE, Christie took budgeting, credit counseling and homeownership courses. She attended peer group meetings and learned about lenders, insurance, taxes and down payments. Christie also enrolled in a matched savings program that provided a 2:1 match on the money she saved to buy a home, and she began socking away every bit she could.

“I wanted to be able to get a house I could afford on my income so I would never be in that position again,” Christie says. With a lot of hard work and help from United Way THRIVE, she did. “Walking through the doors and being able to tell my children that this is our house, this is where we’re going to live, this is our neighborhood, I can’t even describe it. I feel so happy.”