

The Kahle Family

I (Libby Stoddard) first met the Kahles in September of 2010. They were referred to me by an SB-94 counselor at the JAC (Jefferson County). Her report was that they were a nice family but needed a lot of resources and guidance through the systems they would be encountering. She told me the Kahles had moved here from Nevada, dad had just gotten custody of Mike Jr., and Mike Jr. had taken a knife to school.

I contacted Mike Sr. and met with him. He had worked for several years to get custody of Mike Jr. and was finally successful in June 2010; A Nevada court had granted custody to him, as of August. Mike Sr. was working as a long distance trucker so he asked his company for a day route but since the majority of the company's need for truckers involved long distances, there wasn't a position for him. Having lived in Denver for a number of years and liking it, as well as being close to his adult daughters and their families, convinced Mike Sr. to move to Colorado. Before coming here, he found a day trucking job that even had the same health insurance company as he had in Nevada. His oldest daughter agreed that Mike Sr. and Mike Jr. could live with them until they found an apartment of their own. Mike Sr. was concerned about school for Mike Jr. since Mike Jr. had attended many different schools in Nevada, seemingly being withdrawn whenever Mike Jr. had any problems with grades, attendance, or behavior. Mike Sr. was hoping a stable environment would help Mike Jr. be successful in school. Mike Sr. was excited to start their new life in Colorado together.

Things began to veer off course when Mike Sr.'s back problems got considerably worse in the move here. When he went in to start his new job, he was unable to pass the company health screen, so he lost the job and his health insurance (he wasn't able financially to pay the COBRA amount). Two weeks later, Mike Jr. took a steak knife to school, in his pocket. Mike Jr.'s explanation was that he felt unsafe and the knife was for protection. He never took the knife out nor did he threaten anyone. Mike Jr. was arrested and taken to the JAC. He was removed from his school and enrolled at Sanctuary, a day treatment facility used by Jefferson County School District.

I met the Kahles and we talked about their needs and how I could help. We reviewed Mike Jr.'s IEP (school plan) prior to meeting with Sanctuary for an IEP meeting to be sure Mike Sr. was able to get his ideas incorporated in the document. The meeting went well. I researched resources to help Mike Sr. get the medical attention he needed for his back so he could return to work. Mike Sr. followed up on all suggestions. By the middle of October, Mike Sr. felt he was able to handle things himself, although he was concerned about his unemployment insurance payments and an upcoming review. I helped him with some paperwork and we discussed the upcoming phone review so he was prepared for their questions. I also helped him with online job searches and resume submissions. The review went well and his benefits would continue, as

long as he made the required job contacts. We agreed to meet again in several weeks when another IEP meeting was scheduled for Mike Jr.

I received a voice mail from Mike Sr. a few days before the scheduled meeting telling me the meeting had been changed to the following week. He also asked if I knew where he could get crutches cheaply. When I called back, I discovered that Mike Sr.'s back was a lot worse, so he could barely walk unaided. He qualified and was signed up for a medical program (CICP) but there was at least a six month wait to see a specialist. He felt a crutch would help him get around without relying on Mike Jr. In addition, his daughter had had her baby early and her husband's family had needed to move into her house so Mike Sr. and Jr. had to move out. They were now technically homeless and living in a motel on I-70 and Kipling. Mike Sr.'s saving was almost totally depleted, except a small amount earmarked for a deposit for an apartment.

Using Flex Funds, I was able to get a pair of crutches (almost impossible to buy just one) and pay their cell phone bill so father and son could stay in contact. Their food supply was limited and gas for their car was getting hard for them to pay for. Again, Flex Funds were used for King Soopers gift cards to be used for food and gas. Meanwhile, Mike Sr. and I reapplied for Medicaid for him, food stamps, rent assistance, food banks, SSI, etc. Mike Sr.'s unemployment benefits put them \$13/month over the income cut-off for food stamps but we were able to find enough help through several food banks. Due to the severity of Mike Sr.'s back injury and their lowered amount of resources, he qualified for Medicaid and was able to find a doctor, referral and surgeon. Mike Sr. insisted on waiting for the surgery until Mike Jr. left for his court-ordered Christmas vacation in Nevada with his mother, even though his doctor recommended the surgery be as soon as possible.

After Christmas and back surgery, with my assistance Mike was able to find a small apartment that he could afford. The only problem was that it was unfurnished and Mike had no money for furniture or kitchen stuff or anything else. We started searching. Through other families I was working with, friends and co-workers, and Craig's list, we were able to find furniture, dishes, pots and pans, small appliances, towels, and even some food donations. The Kahles were very grateful.

Before Mike Jr. left to visit his mother, it was determined at his IEP meeting that Mike Jr. would transition back to public school after Christmas. Unfortunately, the apartment Mike Sr. found was in Broomfield, just over the border into Boulder school district. The transfer from district to district did not go as smoothly as hoped so there were several weeks when Mike Jr. came back to Colorado when he was out of school. This did allow the two to spend more time together as Mike Sr. recuperated and Mike Jr. waited for his new school. During this time, Mike Jr. did have some trouble, trying marijuana with some new "friends" in the new neighborhood. Mike Jr. was scheduled to meet with his probation officer the day the urine test was taken that would show

his mistake. He called me to ask what he should do. I advocated for him to be honest and offered to go to the meeting with him and his father for support. He agreed he wanted support so we went to the meeting together. Mike Jr.'s honesty and willingness to change certainly tempered the consequences of his choices.

When asked to testify in front of a legislative committee about the advantages of working with an advocate, with in a System of Care process both Mikes were eager to participate. Both wrote letters of support.

(Attached with this document – March 15, 2011)

In update to the above report Mike Sr. and Mike Jr. continue to make progress as a father and son family. Mike Sr. is gainfully employed and Mike Jr. is now in 9th grade maintaining a 2.5 grade average. The Mike Sr. and Mike Jr. call me on an as needed basis and we feel comfortable with that arrangement at this point. Mike Jr. continues to meet his probationary requirements and is due for is annual IEP review in March 2012.

3/15/2011

Hello, my name is Michael Kahle Sr. I'm writing in regards of the help I've received from both Libby Stoddard and the system! I and my son Michael Jr. were able to sit in downtown Denver on the first meeting but weren't able to make today's meeting! I've received so much support and help from Libby and her knowledge of your guy's system for my son and I. From when my son got in trouble, 3rd day of school, start of 2010 8th grade for Michael Jr. and I was introduced through the Jeffco system (to) Libby! We've been receiving excellent support from Libby. My son is now getting straight A's in school and hasn't been in any trouble since. We are currently doing parenting classes with Libby. Also things are going really well for Michael Jr. and I now thanks from the help from Libby and the system. I also would like to add the furniture and dishes, pots and pans to get my son and I on our feet when we moved from a motel to our first apartment together here in Colorado.

Overall if not for the assistance and support Mike Jr. and I have received from Jeffco Support System, things would have been a little more difficult, possibly longer for my son and I! A very excellent system you guys run! Please don't let it go away! For there's a lot of other single families that will also benefit from the support system. It really does work. I and my son are proof of that!

Thank you so much for everything.

Michael D. Kahle Sr.

P.S. I would also like to add Libby Stoddard is a very special, professional person who believes in her work and the system! She performs and represents your system very professionally!

Hello, My name is Michael Kahle Jr. I'm writing to you for Libby and how much she has helped us in our time of need. If we didn't have her we would be lost, and I wouldn't have much direction because Libby has showed me that even if times are rough I can still keep faith. She has given us food support and direction. I appreciate her and all she's done for me and my dad and we are so lucky to have her.

Thank you.

Michael D. Kahle Jr.