

IT'S
BEEN A
LONG
COLD
LONELY
WINTER

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**YOU ARE
MAKING SUCH
A DIFFERENCE!
THANK YOU FOR
BEING A RAY OF
SUNSHINE
TO OUR YOUTH!**

HERE
COMES
THE
SUN



MANY OF OUR YOUTH FEEL STUCK IN LONG COLD LONELY WINTERS WITH NO HOPE IN SIGHT.

AKEYA stared across the table at me as we sipped on steaming bowls of hot soup. Her black scarf wrapped snugly around her neck, hanging down over her fuzzy gray sweater as we sat across from one another in the local soup and sandwich joint. Karen Alexander, our In-Home Crisis Intervention Program Director, sat next to her, offering support. It was bitterly cold outside.

I asked the Lexington-based 20-year-old how she came to be involved in the In-Home Crisis Intervention program of The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth. She paused momentarily, embarrassed, and then explained to me that at age 14, she wasn't getting along with her mother and she had fallen in with the wrong crowd and began to act out. Before long, Akeya was pregnant and had landed in jail. When she returned home, she had to face her problems.

"What happened next?" I asked her. "I had to learn to identify whether people in my life were making me better or holding me back," she replied. Karen Alexander was pivotal in helping her make the realization. "Akeya engaged very well with the program. She is serious about her goals and her future," Karen explained. "She knew what she was up against and she never laid down. She pushed through it."

Akeya has seen some dark days, but our in-home interventions made a difference for her. She says what most stood out to her was the love that Karen showed her. It took a lot of work, but after committing to individual and family counseling at Karen's recommendation, Akeya communicates better with her mother, has learned how to ask for help when she needs it, and is back in school. The sunshine is returning for Akeya, who is now on a path to a bright future.

STORY BY Heidi Weaver, PR/Communications Coordinator

WITH YOUR HELP, THINGS CHANGE FOR KIDS LIKE AKEYA.

THE ICE AND SNOW MELT AWAY.

SUNSHINE AND HOPE RETURN.

PLEASE GIVE.

Your support helps bring sunshine, hope, and healing back into the lives of the 1400 youth we serve each year. Please help children like Akeya to receive the counseling, love, treatment, and life-skills they need to overcome abuse, neglect, and other trauma. With your help, they can bounce back.

Akeya's face is full of smiles now. The sun has come back into her life after many seasons that have felt like long, cold, lonely winters. *But she couldn't have done it without your help. Thousands of children like Akeya need your support today!*

The upcoming months bring with them extra expenses as we prepare to give extra care and attention to our youth in the summer months while they are out of school. Please consider a generous gift today to help us prepare for a summer of healing for youth like Akeya. Send your donation in using the enclosed card and envelope or give online anytime at www.kyumh.org.

- \$30** can provide a **SUMMER HAIRCUT** for two children.
- \$40** can provide summer clothing for a youth. **(SWIMWEAR, FLIP-FLOPS, SHORTS, SUNSCREEN)**
- \$50** can provide **ALLOWANCE** for the summer months for a youth.
- \$65** can provide a week of licensed personal **COUNSELING** to a youth.
- \$100** can provide a **BIRTHDAY GIFT** and party for two youth.
- \$250** can provide a **SUMMER DAY-TRIP** for a youth.