



## A Mother's Perseverance Through Unforeseen Hardships Allows her Family to Thrive.

**Anna was six months pregnant with her daughter when she nearly fell through the floor of her recently purchased mobile home. Her husband found the whole subfloor was rotten. They moved in with Anna's mom to save enough money for repairs on the house. Anna worked as a certified nursing assistant (CNA), and her husband worked landscaping.**

Eight days after repairs began on their home, the couple received a call from Child Protective Services (CPS). Anna's stepsons were removed from their mother's custody. The children all had behavioral and physical problems; the oldest was non-verbal. Anna and her husband received immediate custody of three boys under the age of 5.

Overnight, their family more than doubled in size, and they could no longer stay with Anna's mother. CPS rented a hotel for a month for the family. The boys came without food, clothes, diapers, or car seats. Anna recalls, "... it was a big struggle becoming an instant parent. I was pregnant at the time, I hadn't even experienced parenting myself yet."

Anna always wanted to work in healthcare, but when her family expanded, she became a stay at home mom. She felt as though she had lost part of herself. Anna knew she wanted to serve people and find her identity outside of motherhood so she looked into classes at Everett Community College (EVCC).

Anna shared her struggles with another student who told her about the [Innovations in Creating Access To Careers in Healthcare \(I-CATCH\)](#) program. She applied right away. By the time Anna had started school at EVCC, she was caring for her ill grandfather in addition to her four children. "My grandpa was my cheerleader. Every day when I got home, he would ask me what I learned and tell me I was going to be a badass doctor one day."

For Anna, I-CATCH came into her life at the right time. Anna lost her grandpa that first quarter at EVCC. "My first year of school I had four deaths, I lost all my cheerleaders. I-CATCH has helped in every way possible emotionally, financially. They provided scrubs, gas cards, and they helped with PUD (housing). When my husband had an order of deportation, there was always someone to talk to. Heather and Jennifer were my largest support system when I had lost my support network."

Anna is grateful for more than just the financial assistance of I-CATCH. The big difference was having people in her life who cared. With the help of I-CATCH, Anna completed the medical assistant (MA) program at Everett Community College in spring of 2019. She works in the field as an MA but plans to continue her education. Eventually, she would like to be a registered nurse or a physician's assistant.

Today, Anna's family is thriving. Her oldest, who did not speak when he arrived, now has full conversations. Their family has gained strength from traversing those hard times. "I have a hard time giving myself credit, but I did that. I think, honestly, I probably wouldn't have made it without I-CATCH. With other programs I never felt like I was cared about as a person, I was just another number. I-CATCH had the extra study help for classes that were hard, they pushed me and told me you got this. The cheerleaders, sometimes you need that."

**"I am beyond grateful to be given the opportunity to have an education. I'm so grateful for my I-CATCH family."**

This success story was self-identified by the grantee and information contained in this document was provided by the grantee.