I’m going to make the most of this situation.

The Comeback Kid
Things were going okay until I found myself in a really bad situation. I left the state with my daughter. We had nothing, but at least we were safe.

Today I’m looking to the future investing in myself through school and work. I will bounce back and be an even better person than before.

“I can only imagine where I’m going to be in the next 3 years if I got this far in the past 3 years. As long as I push, I’ll get what I want.”

MY FRUSTRATIONS

» Issues that distract me from making progress

» Judgement that I don’t work hard enough

» Case workers who don’t meet me where I dream

MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS

» Time to pause from daily issues to set my aspirations

» Opportunities to help me learn and grow

» Belief that my dedication will pay off

Name: LaNae

Family: Single mother of 6 month old daughter
Housing: 1 bedroom apartment, subsidized housing
Education: GED, pursuing Associates degree in accounting
Job: Part-time clerical assistant
interaction with public assistance:
  • First time enrolled
  • Active enrollment; Escaping a bad situation and finding herself in a new state with nothing

7/1/18

The Comeback Kid
Why is it so hard to do the right thing?
I know several people in situations like mine – other fathers, parents of adopted children, even grandparents. We’re all struggling with a system that doesn’t recognize who we are and what we need. Instead of helping, the system feels like it causes me more headache.

My family’s needs don’t fit neatly into a category the system recognizes, but we are a family and we need help.

“I think there needs to be an understanding of who social services systems are now serving and that it’s very different than what it was 20-30 years ago.”

**WHAT BRINGS YOU IN TODAY?**

- [x] I need immediate help to get my footing
- [ ] I’m ready to start investing in myself
- [ ] I’m one step away from being independent

Explain:

**HOW CAN WE HELP?**

**MY FRUSTRATIONS**

» Justifying that my family deserves support

» Solutions that don’t meet my family’s needs

» Feeling penalized for being different

**MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS**

» Customized support to meet the reality of my responsibilities

» Agency to make choices that are right for my family

» Feeling empowered to navigate this complex situation

DATE: X 7/1/18  
SIGNATURE: X Uncredited Caregiver
Generation Shifter

My kids won’t face my struggles
I was raised to believe welfare is a weakness, and I do everything I can so that my kids live normal lives. All I want is for them to achieve their dreams, even if I have to set mine aside.

I’ve only ever wanted to be a good mother. **My biggest challenge is finding a job that allows me to raise my children right.**

“**If I don’t pay attention to him he will become a street kid. I’d rather take the sacrifice. I don’t let him realize the struggle. You never know what he would do to try to help me, I could never take that chance.**”

**MY FRUSTRATIONS**

- Missing out on time with my kids
- Judgment that I choose time with my kids over a bigger paycheck
- My kids feeling shame because we are on welfare

**MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS**

- Predictability with schedules so I can plan for my family
- To feel like I’m protecting my kids from the stigma of welfare
- Feeling my sacrifice will make a difference
Caught in the Middle
Maybe I’m not ready to stand on my own
I was so excited to finally have a full-time job, but I wasn’t fully prepared for how a new job would change my benefits. I knew I’d be making more money and that my benefits would change. But that much? And so suddenly?

I was caught in the middle between standing on my own and needing help to survive – but there was no one to help me.

**WHAT BRINGS YOU IN TODAY?**

- [x] I need immediate help to get my footing
- [ ] I’m ready to start investing in myself
- [ ] I’m one step away from being independent

“Once you get a job, you’re on your own. There was no overlap when I needed support while I started working. Within 2 months I was back on my feet. All it took was about 2 months before not needing anything.”

**MY FRUSTRATIONS**

- Feeling unprepared to face the future alone
- Feeling abandoned by those who turned off support
- Being treated like a case closed, when I was far from it

**MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS**

- Help preparing for upcoming changes
- Understanding that I need help even if the eligibility system says I don’t
- A buffer period to get temporary help

**DATE:** 7/1/18

**SIGNATURE:** Casey

**Caught in the Middle**

**Family:** Single mother of 3 school age children

**Housing:** 2 bedroom apartment, owned by mother who passed away

**Education:** GED, LPN license

**Job:** Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

**Interaction with public assistance:**
- Enrolled twice before
- Not actively enrolled: She landed a full-time job, and is no longer eligible to receive benefits
The Lucky Unlucky One

What would I do without my support team?
I recently survived trauma, and though it was tough to trust people at first, I was connected to an amazing group of people who help me and my family with housing, counseling, food, support groups, day care, and more.

They constantly teach me how to handle my situation. I’m lucky to have them... they are like my own support team.

"To have people I know I can go to and we can figure it out and get something done. It’s the best feeling in the world. I’m used to being independent and not being able to count on people, so it’s really refreshing."

“Explain: refreshing.”

MY FRUSTRATIONS
- Feeling judged that I’m helpless and too dependent
- Case workers who don’t care about my emotional needs
- Feeling I rely too much on others

MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS
- Addressing my situation holistically
- A team of support that knows me and what I really need
- Self-care and life skills to empower me

DATE: X 7/1/18

SIGNATURE: X The Lucky Unlucky One
Stuck & Searching

My time could be better spent
New to the benefits system, I **struggled to understand how to effectively get help.** No one is taking the time to explain what to do. What makes it worse is that I **am wasting precious time** that could be used to make money for my family.

Your system is supposed to make things better, but I *feel powerless and puzzled* trying to sort out how to get the help I need.

“I feel like I am sitting in front of social workers and I’m completely helping myself. If you’re my social worker, who is supposed to guide me, then why am I here not even being guided? I felt like just a number.”

**MY FRUSTRATIONS**
- Expectations that I should know what to do when there is little information
- Wasting my time on hold for hours on end
- Feeling at the mercy of a situation with no control

**MY NEEDS & ASPIRATIONS**
- A knowledgeable guide to steer me in the right direction
- Immediate answers so I can get back to what’s important
- Feeling empowered with clear information

**WHAT BRINGS YOU IN TODAY?**

- [ ] I need immediate help to get my footing
- [ ] I’m ready to start investing in myself
- [ ] I’m one step away from being independent

**Explain:**

7/1/18

**Name:** Tony
- **Family:** Single father of 3 year old son
- **Housing:** Rents a bedroom in sister’s apartment
- **Education:** GED, enrolled in associates program
- **Job:** Part-time receptionist
- **Interaction with public assistance:**
  - Enrolled as a child, first time as an adult
  - Actively enrolled: When Tony’s family forced him to move out at the age of 27, he had to apply for benefits for the first time on his own

**DATE:** X

**SIGNATURE:** X
Distressed & Defeated

If I stop, I’ll crash
I’m in over my head. I just moved into a subsidized apartment, and I’m working day and night to keep my family there.

Life is so hectic, and I feel like I’m on the edge. I spend all of my time juggling no-win decisions and ruthless prioritizing my responsibilities. I feel defeated and wish for a moment of relief.

What brings you in today?

- I need immediate help to get my footing
- I’m ready to start investing in myself
- I’m one step away from being independent

“...I’m training to be a bus driver, host, a cleaner, and a helper at an event space. My hours are all over the place. By the time I get home, I still have to get my kids, clean, and make dinner. I’m tired all the time.”

How can we help?

**My frustrations**

- Feeling so short on time that I can’t make good decisions
- Being unable to give my kids stability
- Feeling exhausted from calculating and prioritizing immediate needs

**My needs & aspirations**

- A moment to get organized and tactics to help me do that
- Peace of mind that I can cover the next few expenses
- Flexible hours with work, school, and daycare

Name: Michelle
Family: Single mother of 5 year old son and 6 year old daughter
Housing: 1 bedroom apartment
Education: N/A
Job: Waitress, barista, driver, health aid
Interaction with public assistance:
- First time enrolled
- Actively enrolled: After she separated from her boyfriend, Michelle had to move states due to cost of living. Michelle applied for benefits and moved from a shelter to an apartment.

Date: 7/1/18
Signature: Distressed & Defeated