

Bobby Joe

My name is Bobby Joe and I am 17 years old and live in central Nebraska. Currently, I go to a day treatment and residential program based at a ranch part of the day for school, and the part of the day at my home school. Before that, I went to school at the Boys and Girls Home in South Sioux City, Nebraska. I had to go there because I wrote a bad note about somebody and got into trouble. I don't remember what the note said, but I couldn't stay at home with my family any longer. That was the worst thing about going there.



Some of my interests are: auto racing, repairing VCR's and other electronics. My strengths are: working with my hands, being friendly and helping others, building things, and repairing electronics. My friends at Y.E.S.* tell me that I am kind, caring, and always happy and smile a lot. Currently, my goal is to finish high school and get a job afterwards. I want to be a mechanic or work with electronics someday.

I have several different diagnoses including: post-traumatic stress disorder, delusional disorder, impulse control, and R/O schizoid-affective disorder. I was first diagnosed with these disorders in 2001. Some of the problems I have with my disorders and my medicines are: I have trouble sleeping, they make me feel tired, sometimes my hands start to shake and I get thirsty a lot. I used to hear voices, but not anymore. The worst thing is that my medicines make me so sick sometimes that I can't protect myself from the other kids.

While I was in the treatment home in South Sioux City I was liked by everyone. Some kids tried to get me to do bad things, but I never did what they wanted me to do. I learned a lot more bad stuff kids did than the good stuff the staff was teaching. I got the most support from my family coming to visit me, my therapist, and conference calls for my wraparound team meetings. My parents, therapist and Amy on my team always said good things about me and made me happy. Since I've come home my friends and family have been real supportive of me.

I am not sure when I got my first IEP, but my identified disability is emotional/behavioral. My emotional problems began when I was being teased and bullied in my school and in the neighborhood. I received very little support from the school I was in. The teachers didn't help me with the bullies and teasing. They didn't

* Y.E.S. (Youth Encouraging Support) is a program for youth with emotional, mental and/or behavioral challenges sponsored by Families CARE a family organization in central Nebraska.

give me enough time to do my work and got upset with me when I didn't get it done on time. They never listened to me why I was having problems.

In the beginning not much helped me. I didn't understand what people were trying to do. But they took time with me and I came back day after day until I finally got it. My therapist helped me a lot too. She helped me to learn to tune out the teasing and how to deal with it properly. She also allowed me to start talking on my own and not forcing me to talk. She was patient with me and took the time to understand who I really was. Being with my family was what really helped the most. If everyone would understand this, I would do better.

My advice to others is to be nicer to me and my family. I wish my caseworker would help us out more with the stuff we need instead of getting mad or making my mom cry. I would like to see stiffer punishment for bullies in school. I would like teachers to pay more attention to what is going on around them. They need to listen when I tell them something bad is happening and do something so it won't happen again. They need to make me feel safe at school. I would recommend that teachers not single kids out in class. Don't call them to the front of the room to belittle them. This only tells other kids this is all right to do. Tell me when I do something right instead of always when I do something wrong. If I do something wrong in your class, talk to me in private not in front of the class. Don't get mad at me, try to help me instead. Then everyone can be happy.

Bobby Joe, Age 17
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Nebraska