

## H.E.A.R.T Alliance for Sustainable Families



### **Jenna's Story:**

*Jenna, a South Florida native, is a Mom to two sons, 6 year old Kevin and 1 year old, Kody. Jenna is a survivor of domestic violence and homelessness. She came to HEART in October 2013 when the project was first implemented. Jenna is a shining example of all of the things HEART stands for. She is a hard-working young mom who currently has two jobs and who is striving to finish her education with a dream of becoming a school principal. When Jenna enrolled in HEART, she was dealing with a domestic violence incident with her children's father. The family was homeless and in need of housing assistance. Jenna is a very proactive young woman. She has been supporting and providing for her two boys. Jenna is resilient and continues to strive to protect Kevin and Kody and provide for them. The family has a close bond and is very supportive of each other. HEART has been able to assist the family in obtaining a housing voucher and finding a stable place to live. Jenna was determined to stand up for herself and obtain a place that she believed was the best for her children. Jenna is goal-oriented. She has a plan for her life and knows what she wants. Jenna is ambitious and motivated to provide a stable future for herself and her children. Jenna is aware of her strengths and weaknesses and knows when to reach out when she is in need. Jenna has been an immense influence on the other women in HEART. Jenna will not let the experience of her past relationship stop her from accomplishing her goals. Jenna meets with her clinical case manager on a weekly basis to continue to educate herself on becoming a more effective and protective parent for her boys. Jenna reports that she has been blessed to have found HEART and considers the HEART team a part of her family!*



### **Alison's Story:**

*Alison, a young mother of a 1 year old boy was enrolled in HEART on February 20, 2014. Alison and her son, Joseph, have been struggling with homelessness over the last year. Alison's parents are deceased, and she was raised by a maternal aunt since the age of 2. Alison reported that since the age of 5, due to her aunt's inconsistent employment and her uncle's death, she and her aunt have had several repeated episodes of homelessness. Alison reported that she has slept at bus stops and in front of public buildings. Alison has been looking for better opportunities for her and her son. Alison, who was living at a shelter at the time of HEART enrollment, is ambitious, friendly, and optimistic. Alison has worked diligently with her case manager to search for an apartment and with her life coach for employment; never giving up hope that her son's life was changing for the better. Even though Alison was not always feeling well, she was eagerly engaged. Alison was recently hospitalized and was diagnosed with Lupus. Due to Alison's fear of what to do with her infant son, without family support, income, or insurance, she had waited months forgoing treatment. When HEART learned of Alison's condition, the team found care for her son, took her to the hospital and stayed in contact with her while finding her permanent residence. When HEART learned of Alison hospital discharge date, the team rallied together to surprise her by furnishing and moving all of her belongings into her new apartment. HEART case managers and life coaches spent an entire day cleaning, unpacking, and arranging Alison's new home. Alison was overjoyed when she walked into her apartment for the first time. Alison's son Joseph is very happy with his room and toys. Moreover, he is happy to be in a stable environment with his mother. Alison meets with her case manager weekly to assist her in scheduling medical appointments, maintaining housing stability, parenting, counseling, and support. Alison meets with her life coach bi-weekly for budgeting, educational, and employment opportunities. Alison is working with Legal Aid to resolve her legal matters. Alison states she will not allow this disease to take over her life. Alison continues to work toward her goal of being a forensic psychologist. Alison reports that she is very grateful for HEART's love and support toward her and her son. Alison stated that HEART is the family she never had and always needed!*