



"U Trust"

By: Stephanie Shaffer

Most kids who are writing this essay are writing about typical teachers and typical things that these teachers do to help them. Kindness, patience, attentiveness, and trustworthiness are among few of the things that describe the amazing woman I am writing about. I am not your typical, average teenage kid and the woman you are reading about is not your ordinary school teacher. I am going to tell you just how extraordinary I believe that Christie Glover truly is.

I am a foster kid in Trousdale County, Tennessee. There are just a few people in Trousdale County that are willing to be foster parents. Even fewer people have the ability and are taking advantage of it. Luckily, I was placed in Ms. Christie Glover's home a few months ago for an overnight stay. It was only supposed to be until DCS could find me a permanent placement home. This kind, sweet hearted woman let me stay in her home that night, even though I was a complete stranger to her. The day after that, we had to go to DCS so that they could arrange where I would be staying that night as well. At that time Ms. Glover told my case worker that I could come back and stay with her if needed. That entire day, all I remember thinking about was how to tell her thank you. All that kept popping into my head was how grateful I was to have a home to go to. Now that I have lived here for a couple of months, I feel like I am a part of a family again. I feel like the big empty spot in my heart has been filled.

It is not just me that Ms. Glover helps. She has three jobs. The first is being a business teacher at Trousdale County High School. Along with being a business teacher, she sponsors a program called FBLA, Future Business Leaders of America. This

vocational student organization helps high school students, like myself, who want to grow up and explore a career in business and industry. She takes trips outside of school to help kids that are interested in this field, and she hopes that they learn to lead and live their lives as productive citizens of today's society.

Her second job is working as the Site Coordinator in the After School Academy program at the elementary school here in Hartsville. After School Academy incorporates a program called Teen Trend Setters into its Wednesday afternoon activities. This literacy program is designed for 2nd and 3rd grade students to become better readers. Ms. Glover organizes a group of high school students to go to the elementary school every Wednesday to read to these children. In turn, the children receive free books to take home to their families.

Last, but certainly not least, Ms. Glover works with brain-injured people as a Life Skills Therapist. She helps people that were born as normal as you and I, but have had some sort of tragic accident in their lives that has caused them to acquire a traumatic brain injury. Some of these people were in car accidents, farming accidents, and one was even swept up by an F4 tornado. She has even had the opportunity to teach a man who had been buried alive by his own mother, how to read again. She likes this job because it makes her realize how lucky she is everyday. It helps her not to take her life for granted, like most of the people in this world do. She realizes that there is always someone who has it worse than she does. She feels that it is a privilege to help these people try to get their lives back. That is why she likes being a foster parent. She feels that if she can help one child have a better life, then it is worth it. Christie does everything that she can possibly do to help people out of the kindness of her heart. It would be amazing to see more people turn out like her.

Christie has more patience than anyone I have ever known. Sometimes I take that for granted. Well, quite a bit of the time. She has helped me through so much in the short period of time that I have lived here. She has helped me get my grades back on track. They are up to A's and B's for the first time in years. I thought it was going to be impossible, but she convinced me I could do it. I owe everything to her for giving me her time and being patient and understanding. I have never lived with anyone that seemed to care enough to get involved. Now look, since I live with her, and she does care and is willing to give me time to adjust, I am doing great.

Ms. Glover told me that the reason she became a foster parent was to help one of her former students who was having problems at home. She feels that every child should have the opportunity to grow up to be all they can be, despite how they were raised or the situations they were born into. Since Christie has been in my life, she has changed my perspective on living. I actually feel like I belong somewhere, not that I am just being passed around like a roll in the bread basket at the dinner table, waiting for someone to pick me.

I have never met anyone as busy as Christie and yet she is still the most attentive person I know. She juggles so much around trying to keep up with work, home, and her students. She does so much in one day that I would literally drive myself insane. I'm not sure how she does it, but she can go from working all day at school, to the elementary school, and home to cook supper without ever missing a beat. Christie pays more attention to her family than she does herself. She knows when something is going on with anyone, usually before that person knows what's going on. Christie is the most

trustworthy person I know. She is always helping me through odd situations that I wouldn't be able to pull myself out of alone. I actually feel like I can talk to Christie, which is amazing because I have not felt like I could talk to anyone in a long time. I usually do not trust people enough. I guess in a way, that makes me cynical. I trust Christie more than I have ever trusted anybody. She speaks from experience and when she tells me something that she thinks I need to be told, I may act like I'm not listening and like I don't care, but the truth is, I want to hear every word of it. Keep in mind, this doesn't mean that I will do everything that she says, but chances are I will consider it.

Christie and I don't always see eye to eye, but that's how it's supposed to be growing up. The kid is supposed to be able to talk to their parent; even it's a really big secret they have been keeping, or something that the kid thinks they will get into trouble over. I have found that nine times out of ten, the kid underestimates exactly how understanding their parent can be. I know I have experienced this for myself a couple of times while living in Ms. Glover's home. I finally got up the courage to tell Christie something that I had wanted to tell her for a long time, and now that I have seen her reaction to the matter I feel like I can tell her anything in the world, no matter how bad or surprising it could possibly be.

What I am trying to say is, Ms. Christie Glover does a lot of things for a lot of people and never expects anything in return. She is the most inspirational woman I have ever met, and I wish that people could be more like her. She took my life and helped me turn it back around, the way it is supposed to be, the way I have longed for it to be for a while. She took me from looking at everything negative in life and taught me

that it's not bad to trust somebody, and that it is okay to let people care about me. She is patient and took the time to try to get to know me. She is kind and took me in when they couldn't find anyone else. She is everything that you have read and so much more. I wish I could find a way to show the gratitude I have for her, and thank her for all the hope and joy she has distilled in me since I first met her. If you ever get the chance to meet Ms. Christie Glover, you will never forget it, and if you already know her then you should feel lucky to know such an extravagant, extraordinary person.



Christie Glover and Stephanie Shaffer