

GENESIS

Opening doors and
supporting new families.

Elia's Story

Elia comes from a family of nine; three of her sisters were teen parents. Elia dropped out of high school and got married at an early age. She was 18 years old when she found out she was pregnant. "It wasn't necessarily planned, but we felt that if it happened, it happened." She had the support of her husband and family, so she thought she didn't have anything to worry about. Elia worked full time at a local clinic and was busy being a mom.

Sadly, Elia's husband passed away suddenly and she unexpectedly became a single parent to a 30-month-old. At this point, Elia became the main provider for herself and her child. Elia said that GENESIS was there for her and her daughter during that difficult time; they helped her get resources she was not aware of. "It was a crucial time in my life where I needed more services and support, so they were very helpful." Elia still recalls the times Jody Scanlon, then the Program Manager, would check in with her.

Elia knew she wanted to be a good role model for her daughter and give her a better life. GENESIS encouraged and supporter her to get her GED. She then continued in school to get an Associate Degree of Arts from Front Range Community College. After that, she enrolled at Metropolitan State University, where she received her bachelor's degree in Sociology and Criminal Justice. "There were times my daughter would sit in lecture with me because I didn't have child care and needed to be in class." Elia recalls the sacrifices she made and the time away from her daughter. "I did it in order to be a good role model and for us to have a better life," Elia said.

Elia remained in contact with Jody, and after she graduated from GENESIS, Jody told her about a job with the program. "At the time I was happy with my job, but Jody and my sister kept pushing me to apply, and I've been here for 18 years now." Elia is a caseworker with GENESIS where she's been able to work with the program that encouraged her to achieve her goals and be the role model that she desired to be – not only for her daughter, but for other GENESIS participants. Elia is now a proud mother of three children. She is working to receive her master's degree one day and is delighted to be working at GENESIS.



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