

Meet Anna...

In 1997, I found out I was pregnant with my first child at 15 years old. The father of my child was not involved, and I had a very small support system. Luckily, my mother worked for a local nonprofit and had many connections to resources in the Sioux City area. She referred me to Crittenton Center for my prenatal care. It was there that I learned not only what this meant for me physically, but also about the life-long changes I would face in just a few months' time.

This was a particularly rough time for me being that I was so young and of course the only student in my junior high school facing teenage pregnancy. I was no doubt an outcast and was treated as such by my peers and most faculty. Crittenton Center however, treated me as a woman, a mother-to-be. They gave the confidence I knew I was going to need to face the judgements of the world- by simply doing what they do, caring for my medical needs with compassion.

During the time I was a client, I was introduced to other programs within Crittenton Center. I was paired with a case worker who took time to make sure I knew what to expect as a new mom. They provided me with the knowledge and support I needed to be successful in my journey. I was offered classes on a variety of topics such as breastfeeding and earned points for attending. Points were also rewarded for regular prenatal appointments and healthy habits such as avoiding smoking. It was through this system that I was able to earn the items that I needed to prepare for my sons' arrival. I am very grateful for the assistance that was given to me in my time of need, and I am proud to now work for Crittenton Center and support the agency's mission to empower families like mine." - **Anna Salas, former client and current Crittenton Employee**