

## **Sheena Alvarez**

Sheena Alvarez has an extensive history of illicit drug use. She started using drugs when she was 16-years-old, shortly after her stepfather passed away. Sheena had attempted to live a sober lifestyle on her own many times, but she couldn't maintain it for more than a year. Relapses were prompted whenever she came in contact with old acquaintances.

Sheena has four children. Her oldest was raised by Sheena's mother under a legal guardianship. Her two middle children are being raised by their father and step-mother. Sheena voluntarily left these children with their father because he had a stable marriage, job and home—things she could not provide for them. Mother's youngest child, Shane, was placed in foster care after Sheena tested positive for methamphetamines at Shane's birth and DCFS became involved.

Sheena quickly became involved in Department 410's Drug Court Program. She made the commitment to participate in the very intensive demanding Drug Court Program. Sheena volunteered to participate, stating she had grown tired of the drug lifestyle and wanted to become sober for herself and for her children. The rigors of drug court, including having to face Commissioner Marpet, the lawyers, the drug court team and other similarly-situated parents, bi-monthly, testing on a daily basis and finally being accountable for her actions, eventually led to her success.

Sheena complied with all court orders. She completed an outpatient drug treatment program which included obtaining a 12-step sponsor, attending NA meetings, weekly drug/alcohol education classes, relapse prevention groups, weekly individual counseling and submitting to random drug tests on a regular basis.

Today Sheena is leading a very productive life. She is actively involved in raising her son Shane. And she is now involved in all of her kids' upbringing. She works full-time and has already earned numerous promotions. She has a very positive attitude. Most of all, Sheena takes responsibility for her actions and no longer blames those around her. She has gained great insight into her addiction and how it affected her daily life and all of those around her. She is very proud of her accomplishments. Further, she is anxious to mentor other parents that are living a life of drugs and addiction. She hopes she can inspire others to follow in her footsteps and learn to live in a clean and sober life.