

Michelle works her way to independence!
Submitted by CATCH, Inc. Employment Service

Michelle Pickett, a single parent with three children, was referred to CATCH's Employment Service by her supports coordinator. Michelle has a co-occurring debilitating condition. Following successful treatment for depression by CATCH's Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinic, Michelle began to discuss her future desires with her supports coordinator. Paramount in Michelle's goal planning discussion was finding a job in the community. Michelle had discussed her ideas about employment with her doctor, who strongly encouraged her to pursue her interest of becoming independent – and to Michelle that meant financially independent! During the initial referral meeting Michelle explained to her supports coordinator and the Employment Director that she wanted to “get outta the (welfare) system” – she wanted a better life for herself and her three daughters.

Following the remission of her depression, Michelle knew what she needed to do to stay healthy – get a job and become independent. Michelle is an orderly individual, just a tad on the compulsive side; she actually “enjoys” cleaning and organizing her house. It seemed that housekeeping would be the ideal job match for this highly motivated person! Several months later, the Job Development Specialist found the ideal housekeeping job, that included a good salary and benefits following the probation period. However, travel concerns became the new challenge! Michelle lives in Southwest Philadelphia and the job with the subcontractor to the Federal Government was in Northeast Philadelphia. Michelle was both excited and apprehensive. “Way up there, more than an hour from home – how will I ever get there?” she wondered. After a few weeks of travel training, Michelle's fears disappeared, as she became SEPTA regular!

Four years later, Michelle's desire to “get outta the system” and become a model of independence for her three daughters has been realized. She's working 40 hours per week, earning just under \$12.00 per hour, with benefits! Congratulations, Michelle - you're doing it every single day!