Lisa Q.

Lisa was a stay-at-home mom in Milwaukie, Ore., living a quiet, peaceful life caring for her child and husband, who had a chronic illness. It wasn’t much different from her childhood growing up in Estacada. But in 2010, she started taking her husband’s prescribed pain medication; it helped lessen her depression and anxiety. She tapered off a bit when she became pregnant with her second child, but she and her husband both continued using pain pills until they lost everything and had to move in with his parents. They eventually got public housing in the Rockwood area, and that was when Lisa met methamphetamine.

“It made me feel like I was doing something, getting things done,” Lisa says. She began stealing and shoplifting to get money for drugs, and was eventually arrested.

“I started my downward spiral,” she says. She and her husband lost their kids and became homeless, living in cars diving deeply into their addictions. After about a year, Lisa was arrested again. She spent six weeks in jail, which she says cleared her head, and then Multnomah County’s Success through Accountability, Restitution and Treatment (START) Court program moved Lisa to inpatient recovery treatment. “It took me about three days to figure out I needed to stay.” Lisa stuck it out and started seeing her kids again, who were being cared for by her sister. “My sister was always there for me. She put up with a lot of anger and attitude,” Lisa says.

Lisa finished eight months of inpatient treatment and moved to transitional housing with her kids. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]
She moved into CCC family housing, where she found support among a community of other families in recovery working to create healthy, stable futures for themselves with the help of peers and mentors. Her husband joined her in her apartment when he finished his recovery treatment. The family was back together again.

Lisa is now a permanent employment specialist at CCC, working with clients who are in outpatient treatment and early in their recovery. “My favorite part of my job is seeing people understand that addiction isn’t the end of the world. I love it when they realize there’s a brighter future and more opportunities out there.”

Lisa is back to living a quiet, peaceful home life that revolves around kids, school and shopping. But it’s even better now. “Life’s not a strain. I don’t worry so much anymore. I can just do regular mom stuff.”