

Nicholas Carter

Whole Life

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Hello. My name is Nicholas Carter and I am here to comment on the DDS budget. I am 22 years old. When I was 13 I got hit by a car. I had a brain injury. I was in a coma for 5 months. When I came out of the coma, I didn't know what happened to me and the doctors told me about the accident. I was in the hospital for awhile until I went home with my Mom. My mother and my sister cared for me. I couldn't do much to help them. In 2008, my Mom couldn't do it anymore. I had grown a lot and was too big and heavy for her to care for me. I was acting up a lot and getting into trouble. My Mom didn't have a car at the time and it was hard to find someone to help her.

I moved to the Whole Life group home in Ledyard in 2008. I was very nervous and scared at first; I didn't know anybody, I felt lost and I missed my Mom. The house was easy to move around in and I could get in and out easier. The staff were there to help me and there was transportation to go places. Adjusting to my new home was a little rough at first, but it got easier. I got used to it being my home and now we're like family.

Since I've been at the group home, I do things like play Frisbee, basketball and Wii. I can go anywhere in an accessible van. I work out at the gym. If I'm having a bad day, I can talk to the staff and they help me to feel better. I go to stores and I am on the Special Olympics basketball and bowling teams. I go to Teen Social and I am in a karate class. I like to go to movies. I have a job at the Arc, and I'm learning to cook there.

The staff help me to use a walker and a stander to make me stronger so that I can stand and walk.

Last year I graduated high school. I walked across the stage to accept my diploma. That was one of my top goals. Everyone in the audience was cheering. After graduation, everyone came to my house and we had a big party.

Last summer I received a scholarship to go to camp. I went rope climbing, canoeing, rock climbing and fishing. I met 2 amazing friends and I still talk to them on the phone. I hope that I can go to camp for 2 weeks this year.

Two years ago I went to Florida with Bryan. Everyone in the house helped me to do fundraising and raise the money so that I could go on a vacation. I went to Disney World.

Staff helped me learn ways to put on my own coat, my own shirt, my pants, socks and shoes. I am more independent because they help me learn ways to do things. I still need help with a lot of things. I am on the Safety Committee and we talk about safety issues so that people don't get hurt. I am on the Fundraising Committee. I brought an idea that we should have an art show, so everyone can draw or paint something and we can have a contest and everyone can vote.

I have a lot of dreams and goals for the future. I want to walk and I want to go to college. I want to get a good job, maybe work in a shoe store or clothes store or a job where I can talk to people. I want to go horseback riding. I love to talk to people and I like to talk on the phone. I want to get my own house. I am a good person.