

To Whom in May Concern,

My name is Lauren Mitchell, and I am writing on behalf of the Whole Families Program.

I've been working with Whole Families since Winter of 2022. I am a Maine transplant who moved here to escape domestic violence. When I came to Maine, I was lost, had no money, no income, and a child under the age of two. Whole Families was able to connect me to local resources, help me cover my rent, obtain winter clothes and essential items I could not afford, and provided me with all the support I needed as a single mother in a new state. They helped me with getting to doctors' appointments, getting groceries and doing laundry.

Erica Sherman (Whole Family Coach) has been such a big help even with her huge case load. When she had to take medical leave, there was no replacement for her and I fell into the cracks. I was able to rely on my local community for resources during this time, but her absence hugely affected me and the lack of support made things very difficult. Seeing her come back from leave gave me such a huge relief, to know that I had someone back in my corner.

Since arriving to Maine, I have enrolled in the ASPIRE program by FedCap and have been working on obtaining my Bachelors degree. I will be finishing the associates program this summer and then moving on to enroll in university to major in English. I am expecting to rely on Whole Families throughout my time in college, so it is especially important for me to write this letter to you as it is in my best interests as well as theirs. Working with Whole Families is essential for my success as a parent and citizen of Maine.

Please increase the funding for this program. There are many single mothers out there like me who need support, especially if they're trying to flee domestic violence. I think everyone deserves the opportunity to have a Whole Families Coach...it made a huge difference in my transition to being a single mother in a

new state. Many transplants come here all the time, and they feel alone. Whole Families is a perfect program for them.

Thank you for reading and Warm Regards,

Lauren Mitchell