

From Mum to Mom

JUSTICE
FOR ALL

Impact
Report

August 2012

Training thousands to make abortion unthinkable for millions...

From the time of Justice For All's modest beginnings, our work has focused in part on supporting women and men considering abortion so that they can see clearly that loving their unborn children is a viable option. That support comes in many different forms, as you'll see in this report from John Michener. In it he shares the story of two young parents we met in Colorado—parents considering whether or not to continue parenting...and whether or not to tell anyone. Thank you for helping us help these parents!

Rebecca J. Haschke

Rebecca Haschke, JFA

...one person at a time.

Mum was the word. She was too scared to tell even her mom.

It was a sunny afternoon in April on the first day of our outreach at Metro State in Denver, Colorado. A petite, dark-eyed, raven-haired, Hispanic girl stood staring at the Justice For All Exhibit. "Gloria" had recently learned that she was eight weeks pregnant. She shared that she was trying to decide what to do and felt that God had been sending her signs not to abort. She said that she never walked through the area where the exhibit was stationed. Gloria thought our 18-foot-tall exhibit was definitely the biggest sign that God would send her way.

She had not yet told her parents and was afraid to do so. My good friend and fellow missionary, Bubba, put one hand on her shoulder and one hand on mine. In a holy triangle, he prayed one of the most touching prayers I have ever heard, asking for God's grace and courage to be upon Gloria. The next day Gloria sought me out and introduced her boyfriend "Josh." They had stayed up all night excitedly talking about their future. After encouraging them further and exchanging contact information, they left to go visit Alternatives Pregnancy Center to get free help and support.

On Cinco de Mayo I sent Gloria an email to see how she was doing, and I asked if she had talked to her Mom. She wrote back:

Some days I'm more worried than others, and this stresses me out almost daily... I can't stop thinking about the pregnancy and how it is going to change my life... I haven't told my mom yet. I really don't know when or how I'm going to tell her. I'm very worried she'll be disappointed and upset...but frankly this is something that I can't keep postponing... Josh and I are doing great. He is very supportive (just as he always has been), and I am very thankful for him...

Anyways, thank you for writing to me; it's nice to...know that there is somebody there willing to listen, or in this case read my thoughts, so thank you.

God did not mean for people to handle the pressure of major life events, like having a baby, alone. They need support. At this point, Josh was Gloria's only support. I advised her to talk to her mom soon.

How did we know Gloria was in need? How did we know she was struggling with fear and indecision? As Christians we cannot wait in our church buildings and homes for people in need to stumble across our paths or announce to the world that they are trying to make a life-and-death decision. At a minimum,



Gloria & Josh at Metro State
Denver, CO (April 2011)

we must be willing to ask questions and start a conversation. At Justice For All, that is our mission. We will teach you the questions to ask. We will model for you how to start a conversation. Then, we will go with you to find the next Gloria who needs you to be an ambassador for Christ (II Cor. 5:20).

Just after Independence Day I was sorting some pictures from the spring when I came across one of Gloria and Josh. I sent it to them immediately and asked Gloria if she had talked to her mom. She responded:

Oh wow...thank you so much for that picture! It's great! I can't wait to show Josh...it just showcases one of the many steps we have taken throughout my pregnancy...

Concerning my mom, you're not going to believe me, but I actually still haven't told her. My absolute deadline is next week because I'm having a 21-week ultrasound... I would like for my mom to be there for that...

She finally talked to her mom. Just after Thanksgiving I sat by the fireplace basking in the radiance of our freshly adorned Christmas tree when I heard the familiar *ping!* from my computer. I only *thought* I was feeling the Christmas spirit before, but then I read Gloria's email:

I am happy to announce that...our son was born on Monday...weighing in at almost nine pounds! ... He is beautiful and healthy and vivacious. Josh and I are very proud and very much in love with our son... My mom has also been an incredible support and was by my side every step of the way...

I wanted to let you know that...you and your team made a huge contribution to the quality of my life: You indirectly helped birth my son, and...this one life you did touch is breathing today because of the selflessness, love, and devotion your team has for the beauty of LIFE.

Your efforts are never in vain.

The people surrounding Gloria with encouragement may have made her choice easier. Beginning with Josh and the immediate pro-life community, then expanding to her mom and whole family, they were all there for her, encouraging her, throwing baby showers, and loving her baby. Still, she had struggled with what to do, and she had even waited through over half the pregnancy to tell her mom. Imagine how hard it must be to have no support, and on top of that, to have your peers and culture tell you that you have a fundamental "right" to kill your child.

Once we as Christians have been brave enough to ask a question and have a conversation, we can't stop there. After all, who is my neighbor? It is not enough to simply speak up for the unborn. We must surround women with strong support, emotionally and in practical ways. Fathers, families, churches, and resource centers must be more than passively poised for action—they must proactively find, encourage, and equip women to recognize the lies of our culture and to embrace the truth, knowing that they will be doing the right thing and knowing that they will be supported.

Gloria now looks back with clarity and confidence that she did the right thing. She wants other moms to know that they can get to the other side, too. They don't have to remain mum; they can go to mom, or to other sources of support to help them do the right thing. Here is Gloria's note from New Year's:

Happy New year! I hope 2012 brings you infinite joy, success, love, and many good, deep belly laughs.

My son is five weeks old today and beautiful and healthy as ever. I wanted to thank you for sharing our story. If William's life could save others, and provide hope and inspiration to other young moms who are confused and scared just like I was, then by all means, share our story with whomever you think may benefit from hearing about William...



**Gloria & Josh's son, William,
at five weeks**

—John Michener, for the JFA Team