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**LOCAL NEWS**



Tammy Weatherspoon

**A son's problems in school changes mother's parenting**

By Carmen M. Woodson-Wray  
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When Tammy Weatherspoon's son Elijah got in trouble for missing 13 days of school she had to either accept the fine and consequences for his truancy or become a part of the Indiana Parenting Institute Program. She chose the latter and it made a difference in her life and her priorities as a parent.

Weatherspoon said, "the program was nothing that I thought it would be. I thought it would be somebody constantly putting me down and that it would not benefit me at all. As a parent I thought I was doing all that I could."

A mother of eight children, Weatherspoon said she has had a traumatic year with the passing of her son's father from kidney failure. She said, "that was part of him missing school, but there were days he missed that were unacceptable. I kept him out some days because he wasn't ready to get back into society because he was dealing with the death. He was skipping on some of those days though."

When she had to enroll in the Indiana Parenting Institute under the Gary City Court's Project Rebuild to fulfill her requirements from her son's truancy she said it was totally different. "It was not only positive for me, but also for the family as well. It taught me things I should know as a parent. It taught me how to love myself more, be confident in knowing I was a good parent, that I can succeed as a single mother and make it through any situation," she said.

Weatherspoon said by going through the program it helped her and her son. She said, "I don't have to be in poverty. I don't have to be fearful of being a single mother. The program helped me and my son's self-esteem. Now he's in school taking college courses and catching up on the things he missed from last year. He's in a healthy state of being and because I succeeded it gave him the inspiration to succeed as well."

The program has also inspired her to find employment. She said, "I'm a salesperson and I love it. I'm not afraid to live a productive life. I don't get the public assistance I use to get. I thank God for that program because it was what I needed to raise my son."

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