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FOSTER CARE YOUTH UNITED

On the Inside, Looking Out

March/April, 1995

A PUBLICATION OF YOUTH COMMUNICATION/NEW YORK CENTER, INC.

I Won't Abuse My Kids

By Saretta Andrea Burkett

It's a weekday evening. I'm sitting on top of my bed, sobbing profusely. Just received a beating from mother. What did I do to deserve it? I can't really remember.

Sometimes I'd get beat if I talked back to grandma. Other times, for touching something in the house that didn't belong to me. Or for forgetting to clean out the tub after I'd used it.

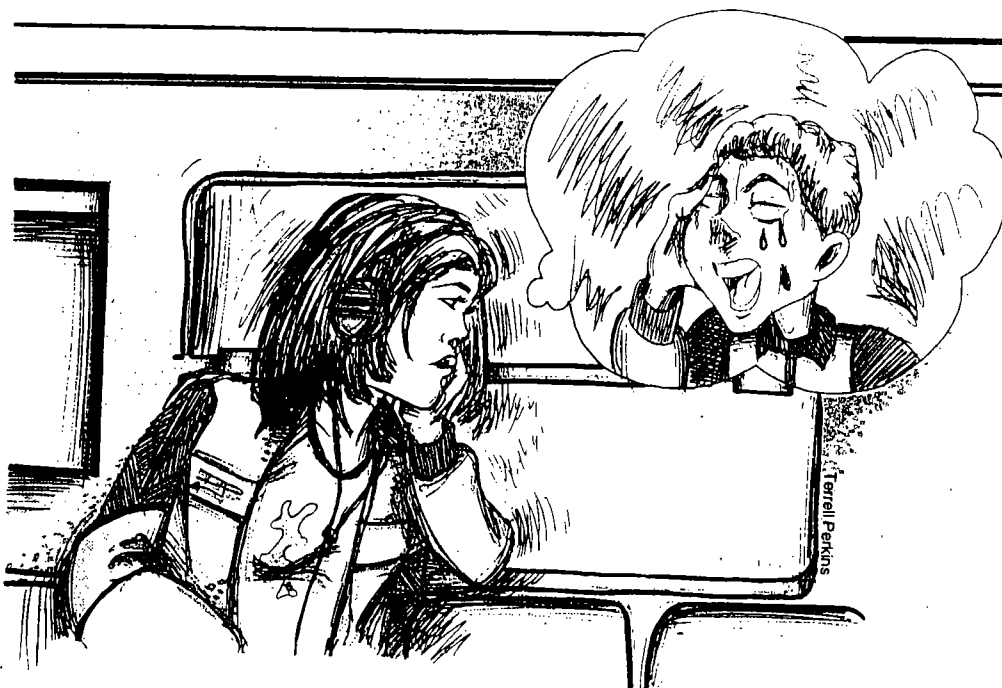
Really didn't matter what I'd get beat for. At the end of some whippings, I'd sit on my bed and say to myself, *When I have kids, I'm*

never gonna beat them.

Mother demanded that I take my punishment in dignity and silence, "like a woman," she would sneer. Any yelping or whimpering from me would cause her to strike again. Beatings were endless, until I choked, literally, to hold down the screams.

You will read this, I'm sure, and conclude that I was a victim of abuse. But at the time, it wasn't obvious to either mother or me.

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HAWAII FAMILY STRESS CENTER

A Program to Promote Healthy Families

Kapiolani Medical Center For Women And Children

1833 Kalakaua Ave., Suite 1007, Honolulu, Hawaii 96815 Phone (808) 947-5700 FAX (808) 944-2751

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August 26, 1996

Sujata Barai, Executive Secretary
The White House
Old Executive Offices, Room 213
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Ms. Barai:

We are pleased to forward information on the Hawaii Healthy Start program and Healthy Families America. I hope we have included everything to replace the previous packet!

Also enclosed are articles and studies on the effects and costs of abuse, neglect and dysfunctional parent/infant attachment. While we have known for a long time about the links with delinquency, crime, school failure, mental health problems and teen pregnancy, there is a new study which links lack of nurturing with poor health later in life!

A universal family support program for new parents is the best investment in children that this country could make, at a tiny fraction of the cost of current consequences of abuse and neglect.

Best regards to Carol Rasco.

Sincerely,

Gail Breakey, R.N., M.P.H.
Director

Enclosures