

# AMERICA'S YOUNGEST OUTCASTS



## CASE STUDY: Health

Yaranda is a 19 year old mother living in a shelter with her daughter, Tangi, age 2, and son, Tay, age 4 months. Before experiencing homelessness, she lived with her fiancé in a small room they rented from a friend. Yaranda and her friend argued constantly about the living arrangements. Finally, Yaranda's fiancé moved back to his father's house, telling her that she would have to find somewhere else to live with the kids. Yaranda moved in with a cousin, who asked Yaranda to leave after a few weeks because she was afraid that the landlord would find out about the extra residents. The nearest shelter was 50 miles away from her home community, but Yaranda had nowhere else to go.

Yaranda has various physical ailments including chronic back pain and an untreated knee injury that make it difficult to care for her young children. She has no friends nearby to support her and has become depressed since she lost her home. When she moved into the shelter someone told her that she could put her kids into temporary custody with the Department of Children's Services, but the very idea of losing them – even temporarily – is too painful. Yaranda does not know what to do.

## CASE STUDY: Health Insurance

Nikkita is three years old, and lives with her father, Jason, in a shelter. Jason recently received full custody of his daughter. This is the first time he is taking full-time care of a child on his own. Since arriving at the shelter, Nikkita developed an ear infection and constant cough. With the help of his case manager, Jason applied for health insurance, but the application will take at least a month to process. In the meantime, he has made several trips with to the emergency room with Nikkita. He cannot afford to fill his daughter's prescriptions without health insurance. After one week, Nikkita is still sick, and Jason is barely sleeping. He works all day, and stays up all night to care for her. Jason finally scrapes together enough money to pay for his daughter's medications out-of-pocket. Even with the medication, Nikkita continues to run a fever and has lost weight. The two of them spent another night in the emergency room, waiting for treatment and wondering when Nikkita will finally receive health insurance.