

Christy's Story

Christy is young woman with many successes. In 2003 she chose to utilize Self-Directed Services over Residential Services for her care and continues to has make great strides in self determination, building independent living skills, and improving her quality of life. Christy and her husband Charles lived in a small duplex in Bolivar for many years with limited space that did not meet their needs. Even so, they made the best of it and were resourceful and creative to make it work for them. Christy planted tub gardens on the front porch as she did not have the space to have a real garden. The home was too small for their needs and took away from their disposable income each month. She stays very busy with arts and crafts, plus she has a doll collection she is very proud of and the size of the duplex was prohibitive of space she really needed for these activities that are very important to her.

Karen Burnell, the Springfield Regional Office Community Living Coordinator (CLC) and the Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation (Mousing) identified homes that had been built using Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) funds. An open house was held for individuals with developmental disabilities to introduce them to quality, affordable housing available in their neighborhoods of choice. Christy's Support Coordinator, Elaine Platz learned of homes available in Bolivar through this program. She shared the information with Mr. Dixon, Christy's father as an opportunity to improve the quality of their life and home. Mr. Dixon was not aware of these homes, but was delighted to learn of them. Her father is very involved, a natural support in his daughter's care. He completed the application process and Christy and Charles moved into their new home in town, close to the grocery store and places they do business. Mr. Dixon cannot be happier for his daughter and son-in-law.

When CLC, Karen Burnell visited Christy and her family in her new home and asked what she loved most about her new home, Christy reported that she loves her garden and her art room. She was excited to show CLC the compost pile that she is developing in the garage to prepare for her garden. Her husband, Charles, a volunteer fire fighter for the city reported to CLC that his favorite features are the exits and the increased amount of space to move and access their home comfortably. He further stated that the fact that there are two roads going into their subdivision is an important feature to him as well. Keeping his family safe is important to him and they feel safe in this neighborhood.

Mr. Dixon reports that this move has changed their lives and was a catalyst to develop greater independent living skills for his daughter. He reports she is cooking and baking in the kitchen more. She learned how to operate the new washer/dryer and is more involved in completing household chores. Her father states that even though she will always require some assistance this has increased her level of independence. He sees Christy taking pride in her home and acting with greater responsibility. Mr. Dixon reports that he needed it for her as much as she needed it for herself. He has greater peace of mind knowing that her needs are met and the quality of life is improved. What every father would wish for his daughter.

The home is certainly beautiful and more spacious. The amenities do make daily living easier and pleasant. However, the fact that this was available for \$110 less per month than they were paying before has a huge impact on the life of this young couple. A savings of \$1320 per year will give them opportunity to plan and save for their future. In addition, with this program this home will be available for Christy and Charles to purchase if they choose. They moved into their new home on February 22, 2013 and the course of their life has been dramatically changed for the better.