

February 20, 2013

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services, 2013 Legislative Session
Attention: Senator Alan Bates, Co-Chair and Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair

My name is Patty Nobles and I am writing you this letter to provide an insight into my life before and after taking the Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) parenting classes.

I am a mother of two children with mental health issues, and I have been involved in mental health services for these children for a long time. During the course of my involvement I have participated in numerous parenting classes each one offered its own unique idea on how to parent a child with mental health issues. I honestly can say that none of them seemed to work, until I took my first CPS class from the Oregon Family Support Network in Corvallis.

The class was suggested by a therapist at The Old Mill Center for Children and Families, and I did not willingly want to participate, but when she asked the simple question of "How is life working for you now, and what do you have to lose?" The only response I could offer was that life was not working well, and I had nothing to lose.

Life in my house before CPS was miserable, and often times I felt as if I was fighting a losing battle with helping my children to be healthy. I attended the first class with slight trepidation, but luckily the class was being taught by someone I knew and respected. After the first class, I thought to myself Hilary (the instructor) is crazy, and there is no way this parenting style could work in my chaotic household. I was wrong. The more classes I attended I realized that CPS was not just a parenting class, but a lifestyle change in active listening. I realized, even though I thought I was this super parent, I was not really listening to my children, and making them an active participant in our home life.

I will not tell you that the transformation was easy, and I am far from proficient in the CPS ways, but life is better because of the classes I have taken. CPS is all about reacting, listening and solving in ways that are foreign to most people. It is a way of life that leaves participants feeling as if both sides gained something without anyone feeling like they lost an argument.

I believe that there should be no question that funding for these classes need to continue. These classes not only have life changing value, but are a place where parents come together and find out they are not alone. Please fund these classes, and continue to make a difference in the lives of parents and children who live in the State of Oregon.

Thank you
Patty Nobles
Corvallis, Oregon