

**I was in the Workhouse** when I found out about this program. I was in there because I took off from [court-ordered] treatment. I seen Kristin [St. Stephen's Program Director] there and she told me I got picked to be on a list for housing.

I've been homeless since I was a teenager. Basically, my mom wasn't...a good mom. Me and my sister ran away from group homes, grew up in foster care. I went through a program for homeless youth, but I drink, and the stipulation was 'stop drinking and you'll get housing' and I had trouble with that.

I used to cut myself—self-mutilation. I have a million-and-one things going in my mind and I think I drink to calm down.

It took awhile to get used to having my own place. The first two weeks of my apartment I was never here; I was so used to sleeping outside. One of the workers found me sleeping outside and she was like, "Sarah, go home." I said, "I am home. Get off my cardboard." And I rolled over and went back to sleep.

My skin has cleared up since I've been here. I don't have bruises and cuts anymore. I can take a shower whenever I want to, I can cook, do beadwork. I like to cook when I'm sober.

I want to start working to keep my time occupied. When I work, I get good paying jobs as a prep cook or cashier. I'm studying for my GED. Hopefully I can go to college like my sister. I'm smart enough; I just can't drink.

This is the first time I've been sober—I'm going to see my probation officer today—and I'm really shaky. I've been throwing up all day.

I want to live a prosperous life, you know what I mean? I'm tired of programs and living off general assistance so I'm gonna change. It's not easy. One thing being outside showed me is that I'm a strong person, I can survive anything.

# Sarah



*St. Stephen's **Programs to End Long Term Homelessness** work with people who have been cycling—often for decades—through shelters, jail, detox, and living outside. Helping them access housing with intensive support stabilizes their lives and saves hundreds of thousands of public dollars. A list of the most “frequent users” of these public services was created in order to engage those people most in need of intervention.*



Sarah in the first permanent place she's lived as an adult; Sarah with her sister.