

I am writing this letter with gratitude to the Hope House in such a dark season of my life.

My name is Nicole. I am a single mother of five. Boy -17, Boy -12, Boy -8, Girl -5 and Girl -16 months.

The past year has been rough. I was in a car accident in September of 2017. I broke my right hand & had a concussion. I did not get to work because of my hand. However, I still had to be a mom. So dealing with changing my baby's diapers, bathing my children, getting them ready for school, and cooking was difficult. I still had to do it. I had to clean people's houses to make money to pay my rent and utilities. My utilities got shut off in November, due to my landlord. I gave cash for my rent and utilities to find out he had not paid the mortgage payment the last 5 months. So all the money I gave him, he spent without paying.

So I moved into my son's father's house until I could get back on my feet. I was pregnant again. I was pregnant at the time of my accident & did not know it. However, while at my son's dad's house my girls and I got sick a lot. I ended up losing the baby in December. When I got home New Year's Eve, I was so hurt. Things just did not seem right. In January 2018, the heat stopped working. We called a company out to fix it, and found out that it had to be shut off due to carbon monoxide poisoning. My children and I could have died, and that could have been why I miscarried the baby.

My baby sitter told me that kids and I could go to her apartment and stay there. I packed the kids up and we went there. Everything was finally getting better.

On Sunday February 4, 2018 after church, the kids and I went home. My 12-year-old son said, "Mom I smell fire". I opened up my front door only to see fire all the way up. I told them, "GET OUT, it is a FIRE". None of had coats on. The baby did not have diapers nor a bottle. We left with nothing.

Not knowing what to do we sat and watched the fire burn everything we had. My pastor and people from church paid for a hotel. After a couple of weeks, I said we could not do this anymore. I felt like we were taking advantage of them.

My 8 year old's teacher had called the Hope House. I spoke with them and told my children we are going to go there.

This is one of the best decisions I could have made. The second I got there I felt so much peace. The staff there are all amazing and understanding. My children liked it there. They gave me resources I needed, and necessities. The shelter is such a blessing in so many ways. To be able to cook dinner for my children and for us to be able to sit together as if we are in our own home makes my heart happy. I will never be able to express the gratitude for what they have done for us. This is "The Hope House". It is perfect because there is hope for tomorrow after picking up the pieces and starting over. Our lives are going to get better and I just want to say thank you so much.

Nicole