

Life in Carlos' Eyes

My name is Carlos Paiz. I came here to tell you about my life and how I was growing up. It was hard for me because people used to pick on me because I didn't know how to read and write. About third grade my teacher didn't explain to me my reading problem. Because I was only 8 years old, they didn't think that I had a reading problem. But when I hit my head it caused me to forget a lot of things that I needed to learn in school. But I just went along and a few years passed by. I did ask for help but I didn't want to feel left out. I was trying to be cool. I wanted to just fit in with everyone. I did weed to make me feel better, but instead it made me lose respect for myself and others in school. I wasn't into it like everyone else. It was so hard for me because I had a hard time reading. I was trying to be the trouble maker, but when I went to treatment for weed and alcohol, I was asking for help a lot. I passed the treatment, but it was still hard for me because school wasn't for me.

When I was in treatment, I made a decision to live my life differently. If I didn't do it now I would end up dead or in jail. I was street smart. I was good with my hands. I know how to do landscaping and home framing. I can fix holes in homes and do carpentry and tile work and do things that I didn't learn in school.

But, I wished I had gone back to school because now I don't know anything about reading and writing or how to read a newspaper. Because I wanted to fit in with everyone that was bad, I didn't want anyone to know that I didn't know how to read. Then when I went back with my family they didn't want me because they said you still need help. You didn't change one bit. But I was so sad because I was trying for once. I didn't know how to react to what my step mom said to me. I felt like giving up, but I said to myself "I can do it. I am only 19 years old. I better do it now because when I am 30 years old I don't want to be the same not knowing how to read. I need reading in my life."

Now I am here at UNM. I am in Valencia County Literacy Council to learn how to read and write and make myself better. Everyone in Valencia County Literacy Council has been so kind to me and will help me be a better man in life. I hope you like what I have to say.

