

Firstname Lastname

Dr. Williams

English 101

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In the sixth grade, I transferred from Berea Middle to Hughes Academy. Hughes Academy is located in a pretty rough neighborhood so the school was not the best. On some days, I would be bullied and followed as I walked home from school. I was the new kid on the block in a neighborhood where there was nothing to do but get into trouble. Almost every day, I was bullied until I was tired of being picked on and decided to stand up for myself. My life changed when I realized I could actually fight, I began fighting all the time for petty reasons. When everyone else saw I could fight, the bullying ceased, but I became the trouble maker just like the majority of the students. I went from being bullied every day to disrupting class every day. There was never a week that I wasn't kicked out of class. Suspension knew me very well, and I was out of school more than I was in school. After too many fights and disruptions, I was placed on probation.

Probation was my turning point. I had no idea that my behavior would result in a five hundred dollar fine, community service, and alternative schooling. I soon realized this life was not meant for me. I was required to sit in on a court hearing involving a teenager who couldn't have been more than two years older than me. After seeing her in handcuffs, I knew I could be in a lot of trouble, and I had to make a change. While on probation, I was ordered to see a therapist and was assigned a mentor. With the help of my probation officer and my mentor, I turned my life around. I finally began to reflect on my life and realized I didn't want to run into the wrong

person, end up dead over petty fights, and I definitely didn't want to go to Department of Juvenile Justice Center.

After going through the legal process and being assigned supervision, I realized that all I needed was attention because I didn't receive much at home. My mother worked fourteen-hour shifts every day, and my father was in the military. I saw a transformation in my behavior when my mentor started picking me up from school every day and spending time with me. Knowing someone cared about my future gave me motivation to change. My mentor would sit with me in classes, take me out for a girl's day and even taught me new ways to deal with my anger.

Anger used to always get the best of me until I started writing. Writing in my journal became my outlet and allowed me to say whatever I wanted without getting into trouble. I never paid much attention to grammar or sentence structure. I just wrote freely. English had been the class I was most disruptive in, and I never paid attention. Now I know writing is important. Although I enjoy writing, I'm not the best at it, but when I'm able to write freely I notice that I am relieved.

Looking back, I see that everyone just needs a little guidance at some point in their lives. Mine just came a little early. I'm a much better person today because I learned that I don't have to fight to get my point across and that school is actually important if I want to be anything in life. Probation and mentoring became my new set of eyeglasses because it gave me a new perspective on life.