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1800 825 955



‘I thought my kids could be taken off me if I couldn’t pay my rent’ – Melissa

August 2018

“I used to be scared that if I couldn’t afford rent and ended up homeless, my kids would be taken off me. That’s frightening and stops you from seeking help. I know it’s not the case now, but some families still think it is.”

That’s part of Melissa’s story. Melissa is mum to three children under 11 and after four years of seeking secure housing for her family, last month found out they can stay in their home long term.

“It’s amazing to finally be able to call this place home. We have been here for two years but last week we got the call that it’s long-term. There were lots of tears and laughter from me and the kids.

“It feels like one minute you can’t breathe – it’s such a burden, always on your mind and weighing you down, all tight in the chest. And when we got the call it was just such a relief,” Melissa said.

Melissa first came to BeyondHousing in 2014 when the owners of her rental property advised they were selling it and she needed to find a new rental.

“Not only were rental prices too high and I found I couldn’t afford anything, but it was traumatic for the kids because we all thought it was going to be our forever home.

“They helped with all sorts of services from practical things like learning how to budget but also emotional support – that’s been really important.”

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Melissa said the kids, all with learning disabilities, became scared and stressed by not knowing where they were going to live and then with the move to a new environment and new school. The stress also affected Melissa's mental health.

"I suggest people seek help. Get support from someone; a mental health worker or doctor. Be honest. It's amazing how much people actually want to help you. My mental health worker put me in touch with BeyondHousing. They helped with all sorts of services from practical things like learning how to budget but also emotional support – that's been really important.

"They also know your rights, like that your kids won't be taken off you."

Melissa's long-term home and the benefits for her family are due to her drive to improve her family's circumstances and the willingness to engage with BeyondHousing.