

On **TARGET**...to make it through the tough times

*“My mom worried about me when some crazy things were happening at school. Then, **she trusted me** more because **TARGET** showed me **how to handle my own emotions.**”*

– Travis, 14

Travis* had seen the bullying that had become a regular part of eighth grade. He mostly followed his mom’s advice to steer clear of the ones who started drama or kept it going. But, the whole school was shocked when a classmate committed suicide in the spring.

“My mom didn’t want me to go to the funeral. I think she was scared that I might not be able to handle it,” he said.

TARGET focuses on stress, including the extreme stresses like illness, moving or a loss. Travis was doing TARGET sessions when the crisis hit.

“What happened to my friend changed my life. The whole TARGET program helped me grow from it,” he said.

* Quotes from actual TARGET participants with names changed for privacy

TARGET (Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education and Therapy) is a free program that is being offered to Illinois adoptive and guardianship families. The 7 **FREEDOM** steps are shared in a series of in-home sessions so youth and their families can understand and control trauma-related reactions to everyday life stresses.



Learn more about how TARGET helps families stay on track after adoption or guardianship

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Travis found the step-by-step approach, with Jonathan coaching them, made

TARGET different from other services. “It teaches you *how* to control yourself and to calm down.”

Now that Travis is in high school, his mom is surprised by how “mature” he has become. He gets to go places and do more because she trusts him—based on how he responds to situations.

“TARGET has brought all of us closer,” he said. That includes his younger brother and their older sibling who was not adopted with them. Travis even helped them talk through the emotions of what it was like to have that gap and then to reconnect.

Travis’ **FREEDOM** steps to handling tough times

