



Create Now Success Story: Christine Schmidt

Christine had it very hard all of her life. Her mother died of a heroin overdose when she was five years old. Her father was in prison. She lived in the foster care system, suffering from all kinds of horrendous experiences, like many other foster youth.

She connected with **Create Now** during one of our Sound Off music programs. It was a Drumming and Rap Music Workshop held at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey, where hundreds of incarcerated youth are locked up until their trials. Drummer Mark Schulman (Pink, Cher) gave his motivational workshop, "Find Your Own Rhythm."

Several of our "graduates" from different detention camps and shelters were eager to give back, while also enhancing their own music skills. They called themselves the "**Create Now All Stars**" and performed a few inspirational rap songs for the other kids. They invited anyone in the audience that wanted to perform to come to the mic.

Christine immediately jumped up and recited a poem that she had written about how bad gangs were. It was so powerful that we asked her to share it again. It really helped to build her self-esteem. We gave all the kids there our contact information so that when they were released, we could continue to help them pursue their music.

Christine stayed in close touch with us and gained more confidence. She had run away frequently from many group homes and different foster families, preferring to live on the streets, doing hard drugs and alcohol. Through our encouragement, she stabilized.

We arranged for her to perform the **Create Now** theme song at The Improv comedy club and also at the Laugh Factory. Christine's voice soared, with an angelic quality and evident talent.

Christine is now supporting herself in sales while pursuing her other dreams.

Media Contact:
Jill Gurr, Executive Director
jill@createnow.org
c: 323.467.9039

