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Epworth's Monthly CARE Story –October 2013

On the first of October, Kelly and her 11-month-old daughter Janie moved into the new Midlands Family Care Center located on the campus of Epworth Children's Home. Kelly and Janie were referred to Epworth's new program by the SC Department of Social Services and LRADAC (a drug and alcohol treatment provider). Kelly was at risk of losing custody and visitation with her daughter because her abuse of drugs and alcohol was creating an environment of neglect.

Kelly, who had already been in and out of several treatment facilities, was truly embarrassed and ashamed that Janie may someday learn that she spent a portion of her life in a recovery center. Kelly came to Epworth so she would not have to leave Jessica in order to free herself from alcohol and other drugs. Prior to Epworth, they had always been separated when Kelly went to a facility, but for Kelly, her embarrassment was, at that point, the lesser of two evils.

Just before arriving at Epworth, Kim Beverly, Case Manager for Epworth's MFCC, began a conversation with Kelly about Janie's upcoming birthday. "We can help you plan a party for Janie and make it special," she told Kelly.

Kelly was upset. "No way! I don't want pictures of that place and I really don't want to celebrate her first birthday where there would be pictures of her in a treatment facility. Absolutely not!" she insisted.

Ms. Beverly was taken aback. She dropped the topic and helped Kelly and Janie move into their new room on campus. After two weeks in care, Ms. Beverly tried again. "You know Kelly, next week is Janie's birthday. Would you like to have a little party for her? We can host it off campus if you'd like."

This time Kelly's response was very different. "Yes, I think I would." In just two weeks Kelly had learned that "treatment facility" at Epworth meant something very different. It meant a place she and Janie could feel at home. Kelly not only was comfortable with the idea, she was free from drugs and alcohol, and was able to help plan the party herself. Ms. Beverly showed Kelly a newly renovated party room at Epworth (thanks to volunteers at First UMC, Isle of Palms). Kelly loved the new space and started making plans.

One week later, Janie opened presents, blew out a candle and giggled as she hugged her mother around the neck as the staff sang, "Happy Birthday to you!"