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### Interview with Kim Johnson

Kim Johnson

Kate Hitchcock

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## ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

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Researcher's name: Kate Hitchcock  
Event: Interview with Kim Johnson  
Place: Coshocton, Ohio  
Date: March 27, 2000

Every time he went there there was a problem.

He didn't learn anything. I was even going to East Knox school and getting his homework and stuff and they'd be like we'll send it up there and they never did. And he just got so far behind that there was no way for him to ever catch up.  
(probation department rude and dismissive to her and picked on her son)

He was there for like three years and he got no grades at all.  
Dane is one that needs more one on one individual attention and I tried to tell them that.  
But nobody cared about that.  
(missed football)

(picked up more bad habits and an attitude)

It was like they were out to get him before he even started. That's just how I feel about it.  
And he's never gonna have a chance around here – he's just not.

(they didn't tell me and Dane didn't tell me) I got a letter in the mail that said I had to go to court.

Intake conference: Yeah you just go up there and tell them where you work so they can call you I don't know how many times a day and tell you this has happened that's happened.

(son not allowed to walk to father's in Mount Vernon because he could get in trouble – make him sit in Podville until mom got off work to pick him up.) That is not fair to make him sit there like that because I was working – that was wrong, but there was nothing I could do about it.

They ended up kicking him out of school completely and that's when he ended up getting in trouble.

If he's not gonna be treated with respect he's probably not gonna give any back.  
(reference to how her son treats mom well at home but disrespectful to POs)

He never disrespected me – he's not that bad of a kid. He's just not ever going to have a chance around here.

They took him to court so many times. They made me sign papers that said that if he did one more thing wrong, I was going to jail. (first fine – then jail)



And of course it makes you get to the point where you're afraid to say anything to anybody or speak how you feel because you don't want to go to jail. I didn't want to go to jail.

Oh yeah, he's always against the system. (mom went to jail when he was little – feels may have been an influence – and her reputation may have influenced her son's reputation in the community)

Mentor program helped, but when stopped he started to get into trouble again. POs told her that she had to keep him in her sight 24/7 regardless of the situation – impossible for her to do.

In a lot of ways I felt that some of it was because of what happened to me, and they all knew what happened to me. Which wasn't fair to Dane – it wasn't his fault.

He didn't even go to court, they just kicked him out of the school.

Got a year for receiving stolen property. (because he wouldn't tell)

They could have at least talked to me about it – explain what was going on. (blamed on such a terrible home life – but it wasn't – but made her feel guilty or as if it was)

It's not a school – that is not a school. They sit those kids in those cubicles they're not allowed to ask questions about their homework, they're not allowed to ask – because their homework comes from their home school, they're not allowed to ask any questions. They're not allowed to talk. If they don't know anything, they're not going to learn anything – if they don't ask questions, they're not going to learn anything unless they ask.

(work didn't get there most of the time)

(principal didn't like Dane – was hard on him – knew mom reputation)

He's never had a fair chance and he's never going to get one.

I'm not saying he always was an angel, I mean he's a teenager.

(Dane relayed feeling treated differently by teachers when went back)

I never once seen a grade card (when went to the Alternative Center) From the time he went there, I never got a grade card.

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(no way of getting him job/transportation etc... not allowed in Mount Vernon where she works – only option for work)

(doesn't know where to turn with visitation for terminally ill father)

If they would just give him a chance – Give him a chance.



X It's like nobody will tell me where it came from. (extension in jail time)

X (no means to hire a lawyer to defend her son)  
X (son shoved before court date when handcuffed)

X (hadn't had any detentions – sent to AC on first offense – cigarettes)

✓ As soon as they go there and then they go back to school and then they are so far behind on everything that they should have had up there, and they didn't so they get back to school and they're far behind. It's just never ending.

(felt like often she was punished for her son)

(learned new bad behaviors from people at Alternative Center)

✓ (felt they talked to her like some god-awful parent – degraded her, but she felt she did everything she could)

X (after jail – diagnosed with behavioral problem – never recognized sooner and she had tried to tell them but they didn't listen) (thinks school should have adjusted to his individual needs sooner rather than allow him to misbehave in group)

✓ I do feel they need something like that (AC program), but they need to be taught while they were there. They don't need to be sat in a cubicle and here this is what your home school sent in – do it. And if they don't know something, there're not gonna get anywhere.