



**Transcript of Charlotte Sanders' testimony at the
GU Congressional Briefing on Meth and Child Welfare: Promising Solutions for
Children, Their Parents and Grandparents**

Charlotte Sanders is a mother of two and a former meth user

I'm actually from Cookeville, Tennessee. I'm from where Betsy [Dunn] is from. My name is Charlotte Sanders and I'm from Cookeville. I have 2 daughters named Ashley and April Greenly. I used meth for the first time [when] I was at a wedding reception. My daughters were very young at the time. Meth made me feel like a super-mom. I felt like I could do anything. I first started smoking, snorting... that led me to cooking the methamphetamine.

I was on methamphetamine for over 10 years. During my 13 years of meth use I was incarcerated over 20 times. I was on probation for over 13 years. One night while I was in jail the police came over to my house. I was in jail at the time. My ex-husband was arrested for manufacturing and attempt to manufacture. My children were taken from me. Betsy was there. My mother came in the middle of the night to get my children. She's on a fixed income and all of a sudden she had 2 young children to take care of. At the very last minute, when children are taken out of methamphetamine homes they have to leave everything. They have to leave their clothes, toys, their books, school stuff, whatever is there. They're taken to a hospital and decontaminated. My kids lost everything. My oldest daughter Ashley was tested for different methamphetamines, it has seeped into the cabinets or somewhere and she had been infected with it.

I thank God that my mother got assistance from some kind of caregivers that helped her, that helped her situation because she was unable to help feed, clothe, and help my children. My mother had custody of my children for the next 3 years and during that time she became a foster parent. My mother now has 5 foster kids of her own; she's adopted 2 of them. I was in various rehabs throughout the 10 years and none seemed to work for me. But I found one, I found God. I have been clean now for 3 years. And 2 years ago I got

my daughters back. Today we're a happy family. It's not easy raising teenagers, I'm just warning you, but we're a happy Christian family. We're living a Christian life. I'm involved in a program called Act, I brought a pamphlet. It's a drug treatment series. I've also traveled across the country and I talk to different youth groups, or different schools, or whoever asks me to come and tell my testimony and my story about [how meth has touched my life] and letting people know the dangers of it. And how [there is hope] after meth. I'm also involved in jail and prison ministry and I'm in that weekly. I have a letter from my daughter Ashley, 16 years old. It says: (letter separate).