

HUTTO FAMILY STORY



Photo by: Brittany Sloan

Michelle Hutto has undergone the impossible after surviving a shooting in Chattanooga, breaking the cycle of addiction in her family, and advocating a better future for her children.

Nearly 13 years ago, Michelle was shot while driving through Chattanooga. A myriad of bullets surrounded her, 32 bullet casings were found in Michelle's car and she was hit seven times.

She was told she would not be able to walk or care for her children. Although, Michelle is still recovering from the incident she has fought hard for her life and the ability to take care of Kannyah and Kendall.

Defying the odds each day, Michelle is walking, working, and doing what she loves, serving her community.

Michelle, was born in Cleveland TN, however Michelle and her family moved away at a young age. She was raised in Bath, South Carolina. Her best memories were made in that small town where she learned life lessons from her grandparents, ran through the corn fields and swam at the many water holes. She has been back in Cleveland 4 years now at the request of her mother, to help with family.

Michelle and her children currently live in an unsafe neighborhood in a three-bedroom apartment where they have witnessed violence and experience bullying because of their race.

"Many of our neighbors have called my children racial slurs," shared Michelle. "It can be scary because you do not know what people are capable of."

For Michelle and her kids, a new home would mean security and peace of mind. She has looked into different housing options but they're too expensive for a single mother. One of her friends told her to look into Habitat's program but Michelle was not sure she would be accepted.

"It is hard convincing myself I deserve it," said Michelle. "I'd do anything for my kids and I am so excited to do more for them." Through all the challenges they have faced together, the Hutto family remains close and excited for a new chapter of their lives. Faith has been the defining foundation for Michelle, getting her through everything she has experienced.

Many people do not have the chance to walk away from what happened to me but I did," shared Michelle. "I praise God for that." She is looking forward to sharing her testimony throughout the process of the Habitat Homeownership program and building her family a better future.

