Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

When a Child Needs Care

Sheila A. - Durham, North Carolina

That's Medicaid *shares stories of people covered by Medicaid at critical points in their lives, underscoring the importance of stable health insurance coverage in building a Culture of Health.*

Sheila knew life would be difficult for her newborn daughter. Born with a birth defect, her daughter needed six to seven specialist appointments every week. As a single mom, Sheila couldn't take her daughter to every appointment while working a traditional 9-5 job, so she juggled several part-time jobs that didn't provide benefits.

Sheila was initially unaware of Medicaid and paid for private insurance with the help of her family, but the costs were unsustainable. Learning she qualified for Medicaid changed her life. Medicaid covered her daughter's care, including surgeries, medications, and therapies, as well as Sheila's own medical treatment. Without it, Sheila would be bankrupt.

Sheila's daughter is now 10, and with reconstruction surgeries she is in school and only has a few appointments each week. As her daughter's health improves, Sheila is confident she'll soon be able to return to a full-time position.

"Medicaid saved my kid's life," Sheila said. "Any parent would do what it takes for their child to be well."