Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

A Financial and Personal Lifeline

Theresa G. - Helena, Montana

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.*

When **Theresa**'s foster parents began caring for her shortly after birth the doctors said she was a healthy baby girl. But when she was a toddler, they began noticing a lack of normal movement for someone her age, and Theresa was eventually diagnosed with Spastic Quadriplegia Cerebral Palsy, a disorder that affects a person's ability to maintain balance, posture, and motor skills.

Soon after she was approved for Medicaid and eventually fully adopted by her parents.

Now in her 40s, Medicaid allows her to work and live independently, and do activities she enjoys such as swimming. It also provides her with speech, physical and occupational therapies, a wheelchair and the help of personal care attendants who assist with basic needs such as meal preparation, cleaning, dressing, and laundry. The attendants also ensure the required support needed to travel locally and outside of the state.

The backing of Medicaid is a financial and personal lifeline for Theresa.

"Without Medicaid I would be broke," she says. "I am grateful for it because I can live on my own."