

# **Rap tells story of foster child's forgiveness of mother**

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Marla  
Rushing,  
director of  
corporate  
training for  
Baptist  
Child &  
Family  
Services,  
talks with  
Jacob  
Favela, who  
led a  
workshop at  
the National  
Independent  
Conference  
in Denver  
on using  
music to  
help in the  
process of  
forgiveness.  
(BCFS  
photo by  
Martin  
Olivares)

## **Rap tells story of foster**

# child's forgiveness of mother

**By Haley Smith**

*Baptist Child & Family Services*

KERRVILLE—Jacob Favela vividly remembers standing outside a bar in the middle of the night with two trash bags full of toys in hand, watching his mother drive away. He was five years old.

Neither will he ever forget, years later, an elderly woman beckoning him to her porch. “Jesus loves you, young man” was the sum of the conversation.

The first incident ushered him into the world of state care, a series of emergency shelters, foster homes and group homes that finds him—at age 18—involved with Preparation for Living program, a [Baptist Child & Family Services](#) program in Kerrville.



The second changed his life—and has led him to help others.

Professionals who work with children from similar circumstances insist Favela's his story is all too common, but how he has redirected the avalanche of his emotions is definitely uncommon.

A rap called “Forgiven” serves as his musical message to his mother: “Hey mom, it’s your older son talking to you. I want to do what’s right, mom. I’m trying to reach out to you. I love you mom, but your love hurts. Said you’d give me the best, but you put me through the worst...”

The rap achingly reflects how Favela’s mother made decisions that hurt him and his siblings, leaving them to face the world alone while she ricocheted in and out of drug and alcohol rehab. Though filled with turmoil and anger, the message is ultimately one of forgiveness and Favela’s testimony of finding the Lord.

Favela recently performed the song—already viewed by almost 8,000 people on YouTube—and shared his Christian testimony at the National Independent Living Conference in Denver.

“I’m not a troublemaker, even though many view me that way because I am a foster kid,” Favela said. “But I am a troubled child because of my background and the things that had happened to me—the very things which inspired to me to begin writing” as a 14-year-old.

“I used to feel animosity and blame towards my mom which made me constantly angry and disappointed. As I started writing, my emotions went from anger and sadness to finding peace in my situation,” Favela explained.

“It was as if my heart was changed as my words changed on the paper. I love my mom. She’s going to be my mother no matter what. All I can do is forgive her, have faith and pray. But I also forgive her for me. I don’t want that weighing me down.”

When Favela joined Preparation for Living, which works with youth aging out of foster/group home care, his music became not only a personal therapeutic tool for forgiveness, but also a way to share his insights with others.

He wants to encourage young people in similar situations and give them hope—the way a stranger encouraged him with her brief reminder of his value.

As a young teenager, eight months after running away from his latest foster home, he was walking up and down streets looking for work. Passing through a residential area, he saw a woman sitting on her porch who motioned for him. As he approached the woman, she looked into his eyes and whispered, “Jesus loves you, young man.”

That was the sum total of the conversation. Favela didn’t say anything. But, after pondering the thought for several days he picked up the phone and called Texas Child Protective Services and put himself back into state care.

He hopes that the words in his songs will provide the same inspiration for others.

“When I get to talk with someone going through something like I went through, I always tell them to keep their head up,” Favela said. “Don’t let circumstances change you and expect yourself to do great things and you will.

“Every time I sing the song or read the words, I feel like I’m able to overcome and let go of the bitterness and hurt a little bit more, and I want others to experience that too.”

Favela hopes that his music will someday lead to reconciliation with his mom, the original intention of the song.

“As of now, I don’t think my Mom has heard my song. I don’t even know where she is,” he said. “But it’s my hope that someday I can give a special performance specifically for her and that she would understand how I feel.”

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