

NAME:
Sandie Richard

RESIDENCE:
Harvard House
Apartments

North Miami Beach, FL
56 Apartments

AFFORDABILITY:
- 100% Project-Based
Secton 8 contract
- Low-Income Housing
Tax Credit (Income
Restricted)

*Last updated in 2018

VOICES OUT LOUD

Sandie



Only my husband is working and I have to stay with the kids...it's really hard, when you have low income, to find something good for your family. So when we came here, it was the best. The best thing ever.

In 2013, a pregnant Sandie Richard, along with her husband and two children, came to the United States from her home country of Haiti. They moved directly into Harvard House Apartments located in North Miami Beach Florida. Just one short week after their

arrival, Sandie's son was admitted to the hospital. After a three-week stay full of expensive tests, he was diagnosed with Sickle Cell Disease.

"I remember I came here on March 3, 2013. On March 12, [my son] went to the hospital in a crisis... They tried to give him blood. They tried to make him better. And he had pneumonia. You know when you got sickle cell you are very, very fragile..."

Just three months after the hospital first released Sandie's son, he fell ill again and was re-admitted.

"The last time [he went]," Sandie recalls, "...he was on life support. [It was] very, very hard..."

But her son's diagnosis and treatment wasn't the only thing Sandie was dealing with. By this point, Sandie had given birth to her third child. Not only was Sandie in a new country and community with no friends or family, she now had to juggle the demands of her newborn daughter, the illness of her young son, and managing her own health.

"I just had my baby one month and thirteen days [before he went back to the hospital]... For C-section, nobody help you, who doesn't speak English very well..."

Despite the difficulties Sandie and her family faced, by a stroke of luck, her older son tested as a perfect match for a bone marrow transplant to her younger son. After a successful transplant surgery, Sandie is grateful to share that her son is now Sickle Cell free.

"I remember, the same year when my son had a bone marrow transplant, the manager [of the Harvard House] said, 'You are a Fighter Mom.'"

Without the Harvard House Community, Sandie says she could not imagine what life would have been like during her struggles. She counts her time there as a true blessing.

In Harvard house, we're living like a family... The manager, she's so sweet with us. It's a great family.