

Mother finding right path

*Woman's mother
died a year ago*

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Mother's Day is bittersweet for Nicole Rogers this year.

While she was blessed last month with the birth of her second daughter, Abbigayle, this is the first Mother's Day since Rogers' mother died.

Rogers said her mother, Pamela Moses, lost her battle with breast cancer on July 2, 2003. Just a few weeks after her death, Rogers found out she was pregnant.

Since then, Rogers has suffered through a bad relationship and a lot of bad luck. She and Abbigayle don't have a home to call their own. But they're getting by with the help of some generous people at The Path, a rescue shelter in Beverly Hills.

"I don't know where we'd be without them," Rogers said as she rocked Abbigayle in her arms at the shelter's kitchen table. "I was really nervous. I was scared. I felt so alone. But since I've been here, so many good things have happened."

As she talks about the future,

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SUNDAY



HIGH 88 **FORECAST:** Partly cloudy with light winds.
LOW 57 Partly cloudy at night

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Although she's had some tough times lately and is living in a homeless shelter, Nicole Rogers (shown here with her newborn daughter, Abbigayle) said she's excited about the future. This is the first Mother's Day since her own mother, Pamela Moses, died of breast cancer. Rogers cherishes a picture of Moses (right) that is in a talking picture frame that plays a recorded message from her mother.

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MOTHER

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brunette curls of hair surround Rogers' youthful face. She's 28, but is often mistaken for younger. She's been married once before and has a 5-year-old daughter, Jennasue, who lives with her father most of the time.

Rogers said she didn't want to talk about Abbigayle's father or what caused her to be homeless. She would only say that she just got out of a bad relationship and had nowhere to go. She heard about The Path from her doctor and went there on Good Friday, April 9. At the time, she was overdue and anxious to give birth. Abbigayle was born at 10:10 p.m. at Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center. She weighed 6 pounds, 7 ounces.

Rogers said The Path soon became their home and they settled in. The Path is a faith-based, non-denominational shelter for both men and women. It is the only local shelter to take children. The Path operates on donations. It receives no state or federal funding. Counselors there teach women life skills like cooking, managing money,

sewing and parenting skills, according to The Path counselor Tracey Duncan.

Duncan said she's seen such a transformation in Rogers and is confident she'll be back on track soon.

"I have faith in her," she said.

Rogers said she doesn't dwell on her bad luck, focusing instead on the future. She recently got a job at a sandwich shop in Homosassa and hopes to go to school soon to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. She plans to apply soon for help from Habitat for Humanity.

"I want to at least check it out," she said. "Maybe they can help us with a home of our own."

After work each day, Rogers returns to the shelter and does assigned household chores before nightly life skills classes begin.

"And we all sit down as a family and eat dinner together," she said. "This has become my family."

But thoughts of her real family are never far from Roger's mind.

She said she's sad her mother can't share in her dreams for the future or joy at the birth of



DAVE SIGLER/Chronicle

Nicole Rogers cradles her newborn daughter Abbigayle at The Path, the only homeless shelter in Citrus County that accepts children.

Abbigayle, but she'll be with them always in spirit. She said that today after church, where Abbigayle will be christened, they'll go to the Homosassa cemetery where Moses is buried.

"This is going to be a rough Mother's Day for me," Rogers said. "I miss her so much. She was everything to me. And she would have loved Abbigayle."