

JUST WORDS

The Stories of Working People In Our Community

Episode 3: Lucille Robinson

Welcome to Just Words-the stories of working people in our community.

Last week, Lucille Robinson told us how she manages to support her family on \$700 a month. Today, we conclude her story as a witness to the world in which she is raising her grandchildren, and hear the small change in policy that could lighten her burden.

I didn't want to move here, I wanted to move in a place with woods and trees and things. When I moved here I hated this place, I really was upset, but we had to come here.

One or two things, death of dope, that's all I find with grandparents taking care of their grandkids, their daughter or son...I think it's basically dope in Baltimore City. And I have a grandkid out there with it. The state needs to make sure these kids have....To go to school they say feed them, so in school they feed them breakfast, so they can be alert. The same things apply to the things they need. Do you know there wouldn't be as many children on the street if their parents could afford to buy them the things they want? And that's easy. Dope dealers spot them, like that. Before you know it your grandson is slipping and sliding don't want this, don't want to do that. ...why? Because he saw someone at school who has little bit more than he did...and he want it...so he figured if he hang out on the street, he'll get it. And we don't want that. I am not trying to put my grandchildren on nobody, I am trying to make sure they get food stamps, little bit of money, and some insurance. Why should you push a button on me and cut my welfare stamps off? That means for last 2-3 months they don't have food stamps, I have to make a way for them to eat. They are not caring. Not everybody needs help. But the ones that need help, when we go ask for it, we are not asking you to empty your pocketbooks out to use because we have our grandchildren, but make it so they can live. So this Christmas I can go buy that boy a pair of tennis shoes...what is a pair of tennis shoes, \$125? That's a lot of money! I should be able to do that, but I can't. That's what welfare gave him to live on for a whole month. They have laws and things in DC, where they could say, Okay, this lady is a grandmother. Let's make sure that these relatives are living in a decent place. The people down in DC, said this is grandparents, we gonna pass a law that's X amount of dollars. I went to a meeting; they said they were going to raise money for grandparents or relatives. If they raised it they must have kept it 'cause I didn't see it. This is a meeting! I go to every meeting in Baltimore City that they send a letter. I think they should recognize it. You don't have to be me any awards. Just make sure my grandchildren aren't on corner because they can't afford \$125 shoes.

Music: Nina Simone, *Backlash Blues*

Ruth Brown, *Good Day for the Blues*

Produced by Jessica Phillips. Hosted by Marc Steiner.

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