

This is the story of Parker, a 15-year-old boy who needs support. The story is a compilation of circumstances and events that effect many youth in our community.

Parker awakens to a still house. It is mid-week and his parents are still asleep because neither has a job at the moment.

He arrived home at 2 a.m. and has slept in his clothes, as there have been no clean clothes available for many days. The washing machine is not working in the house and he is not sure when the laundry will be done.

He goes to the kitchen and looks through the cupboards but there is nothing to eat. Parker heads for his parents bedroom and looks through his Dad's jeans pocket hoping for a few dollars to get breakfast, but no luck there either.

He arrives late at school and, not seeing any of his buddies in the hall, he slips out the side door and heads downtown. No point in walking into class halfway through. The teacher gets riled and kids make fun of him.

He decides to go to the house of this older guy he has been hanging with lately. The guy is cool and he may have some coffee or something to eat. When he arrives at the house, the guy is there with a few of his friends. There is no coffee but he is told there is plenty of beer in the fridge. On this day he passes on the beer but helps himself to the cigarettes.

Parker spends most of the day at this house, watching TV and listening to the talk about partying, girls and money schemes. What eventually gets him off the couch is hunger. It is 4 p.m. and Parker has not eaten yet today. He decides to take a chance that his parents are up by now. Maybe they will order something in and he can get some supper.

When he arrives home, his mother has left for the day but his dad is just heading out to get

pizza. He jumps in the car. He is finally on his way to the first meal of the day. Later he will connect with his friends and play a little street hockey. After that he may walk down to the beach. The summer is the best because it is easy to hang around outside. It is warm and there are more things to do to pass the time.

Sometimes he thinks of getting a job but, when he tried going around to local businesses, they didn't even give him a second look. Parker feels trapped in a life that isn't going anywhere.

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Parker needs nutritious food every day, he needs to learn how to wash his clothes, he needs to get connected at school to complete his education and he needs help getting a part-time job. He needs support and guidance.

Parker is at risk but he has the same potential as every other 15-year-old if he is given a helping hand. You can contribute food and clothes for youth to FRA. We appreciate your donations.