

Dare to Make a Choice by Travis Brown

Hey. I'm Travis Brown. I'm 17 years old. I'm a senior at Fond du Lac High School. I have lived on the Fond du Lac reservation for 4 years now. Before then I lived in Minneapolis as a young boy. I didn't know where to turn or where to go, but down that road of being a gangster. That's all I saw; gangs and nothing more. One summer, my uncle asked me to move to Fond du Lac where I could go to school and play basketball. I thought about it but gang life kept my attention. One night, I decided to go chill with some of the big guys from school and we went to a party where there was alcohol and drugs. We were all having a good time. As we were leaving a car drove by real slow. We all took off running. Luckily no one was hurt. I took it as a hint that gang life wasn't for me. I had a fight with my brother and my mom came home, it just didn't get better. My mom asked me, "Is this the life you really want?" I had no answer I just kept thinking a lot about the shooting. And she said, "If that's the life you want, get out; because you're not only putting yourself in harm, you're putting our whole family in harm's way." I was mad at my mom because she didn't know what happened the night before and here she was sending me back out there. I left and she called my uncle. He told me to stay safe and said, "I'm on my way to come get you."

All that road led to was death or ending up in prison as a young man. I had a choice to live a better life and I enrolled at Fond du Lac High School and met wonderful people. They had a big influence on my life and helped me decide that I wanted to go to college. They kept pushing me to do good when times were tough and I thank them because now I am a strong and independent person. Basketball had a big part to do with helping me through tough times. It kept me focused on doing good, I'm good at it, and I love to do it.

All it takes is one choice and a little hard work. You can turn your life around too, I did.