

# Teen's life saved by Canadian television intervention

**CHRIS DOUCETTE**  
QMI Agency

Ontario's health-care system failed Cassandra Genovy miserably.

It's only thanks to her relentless mother and a reality television show that the once troubled teen has clawed her way back from the brink of death to overcome her eating disorder, drug addiction and severe depression.

"Had I waited for treatment in Ontario I'd be dead," Cassandra, 18, said after returning home

recently from treatment in the U.S. courtesy of the television show *Intervention Canada*.

When Cassandra's story first appeared in July, 2010, she was taking drugs, swallowing handfuls of laxatives and stuffing herself with food and then throwing it up.

She was also cutting herself and had attempted suicide numerous times.

Terrified she'd lose her youngest child, the teen's mom reached out to anyone who would listen.

"I tried everything," Joanne Genovy recalled. "I just wanted somebody to say, 'We're going to take care of her ... she's going to be OK.'"

Out-patient programs, each with lengthy wait periods, didn't work and Cassandra's life spiralled further out of control.

In March, out of sheer desperation, her mom e-mailed the A&E show *Intervention*. It turned out a Canadian version was in the works and Cassandra's story piqued the producers' interest.

The day after she turned 18, Cassandra walked

into a room filled with family members and she was given an ultimatum, "accept this help" or "go die somewhere else."

She was angry but agreed to go into treatment knowing her life was on the line.

Cassandra spent three months at Rosewood Ranch, an eating disorder centre in Arizona. The TV show paid the bill, about \$30,000 a week.

But she now has her life back.

"I'm so thankful," Cassandra said. "I'm here, I'm alive and I just want to keep getting better."