

## HONORING, UNITING, AND CELEBRATING FAMILIES

### PROVIDING PERMANENCE TO CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

#### An Adoptive Family's Story

On October 10, 2012, we got the call for a 3-month-old baby boy who was in need of a foster care placement. We picked up Mason that day and learned he had come into care because his mom, Kayla, had overdosed on drugs. We started another journey that continues today. We fostered Mason for the next 18 months, doing everything we could to encourage his mother and help her toward recovery. Sadly, she relapsed a few weeks before our first terminating parental rights (TPR) hearing and, at that point, Kayla realized she was not the best for him. On that day, she asked the courts to allow Mason to be adopted by us. There was an amazing peace that came over the courtroom that day and, at the same time, we were all in tears.



Our relationship with Mason's birth mom did not end that day. In fact, the role we had to play in her life became clearer to us. We told her that she did not need to worry that she was not losing her son, she was gaining a family. We continued to encourage her, walk with her, and push her toward recovery. We realized she had never really had stable people in her life, people who stood by her through the ups and downs of addiction. We fought for her life. We wanted Mason to one day know his birth mom as a healthy woman who won the battle of addiction. It is our joy and delight that we speak to his mom almost daily, she has become a regular part of our family, and she has been in full recovery for more than a year now! Every day, she works hard on her recovery in order to have a normal, full life. We have learned a lot from her and have been blessed to be the family that she never really had (her mother is no longer living and she never knew her father). Mason is now 3 years old and, although he does not know exactly who Kayla is yet, they have a wonderful relationship. When the time is right, we look forward to helping him understand who she is and know his story and the blessing it has all been for us. To this day, we all call her Mama Kayla.

For more information about the potential benefits of allowing an adopted child or youth to establish or maintain connections with his or her birth family, read [\*Openness in Adoption: Building Relationships Between Adoptive and Birth Families\*](#), a bulletin for professionals from Child Welfare Information Gateway.



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