

## HONORING, UNITING, AND CELEBRATING FAMILIES

### A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

#### A Case Manager's Story

This Christmas was the first Christmas that Macayla 10, Christopher 9, and Jayden 8 celebrated with their mother. The children had lived with their father, and while the children were in their father's care, he informed them that their mother was dead. When Macayla, Christopher, and Jayden were removed from their father, he quickly disappeared and his whereabouts remain unknown to the Department.

The children's mother, Kylie, struggled with addiction and had not seen her children for more than 3 years. The Department initiated a parent search to locate the absent mother and found her in the county jail. At that time, Kylie was 8 months pregnant. Soon after, she was released from jail and connected to family reunification services and visitation. When the children began to visit their mother, their behavior began to decline. The children also made comments about Kylie not being their mother because their mother was dead. At that time, Christopher was placed in a group home due to the severe behaviors he was exhibiting in care. Macayla and Jayden began to exhibit behavior problems, as well. The children were affected emotionally, so the Department suspended visitation with their mother until therapeutically advised.



After participating in therapy at the California Psychological Institute (CPI) for several months, the children had the supports in place to begin visitation planning. At this point, Kylie had been clean for several months and was on the road to completing her court-ordered services. She wanted nothing more than to reunite with her children. The Department began teaming with the mother, the WRAP team, CPI, and relatives in order to develop a visitation plan to progress the children into Kylie's care. A plan for visitation progression was developed and supported by the team, and the children were able to safely progress into their mother's care. Kylie was able to overcome her struggles with addiction, repair her relationship with her children in therapy, obtain stable housing, develop her natural circle of support with relatives and friends, and maintain her children safely in her care all while caring for a newborn child. Currently, the family resides together in a three-bedroom home and, as a single mother, Kylie continues to work very hard to meet her children's needs. This Christmas was the first that Macayla, Christopher, and Jayden celebrated with their mother and their baby sister. The children described this Christmas as the best Christmas they ever had.

To learn about more programs that support the reunification of children and families, visit [California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare](#).



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