

It's All Relative: Supporting Kinship Connections

Facing the Challenge

When a baby boy named Rayden came into the custody of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services in 2016, the department contacted his relatives Leo and Jennifer, who agreed to welcome the child.

This was not the first time Leo and Jennifer had fostered a child. They had been foster parents 5 years prior and worked tirelessly to provide not only a home but a better future for that child.

Providing for all of Rayden's needs has been challenging. He has a chronic lung disease that will require ongoing treatment throughout his life. The family has made many sacrifices to provide for Rayden, and yet they always have a smile on their faces when they talk about him.

Rayden's adoption is expected to be finalized in the next couple of months, and the family is looking forward to making Rayden a permanent part of their family, and in the very near future Rayden will be able to refer to them as his "mom and dad."

If you would like to learn more about being a relative caregiver in Tennessee, please visit <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/topic/relative-caregiver>.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
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Administration on Children, Youth and Families
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