

## HONORING, UNITING, AND CELEBRATING FAMILIES

### FINDING PERMANENCE

#### A Foster Care Alumni's Story

There is nothing lonelier than a child who has been loved, at least for a little while, and then abandoned. Children, however, are notoriously love seeking, especially for a family. My moment of parent love seeking sets off a chain of events that spans more than 13 different foster homes. My abandonment made me an unlikely (pair), about to become an unlikely new family member. In spite of that, I was first introduced to the foster care system in San Diego, CA, at the age of 9. I had an awesome team of social workers who assisted my sister and me from the first ChildLine call by my school counselor upon hearing about my biological mother's drug use and her attempt to break my legs with a police "billy club" until the day my sister and I were reunited 5 years later. In fact, my social worker even took a plane ride with my sister and me from California to Florida to ensure that we were specially delivered to my grandmother's care.



Unfortunately for me, my permanent placement would be short lived. As my sister made plans to graduate from high school, I was transitioned to Philadelphia, PA, to live with my mother and stepfather. To my surprise, I never thought I would see the day when I would return home only to find my family had relocated to another State without me. The 7 hours I spent crying on the steps of my home trying to pickup all of the pieces left behind in order to make sense of such a mystery will always be an undying traumatic memory which I will never forget. Not to mention the thought of being unluckily placed in foster care again at the age of 15.

The next 3 years of my life were spent trying to survive while transitioning from one foster home to the next. Nevertheless, who ever thought foster care placement number 13 would be the lucky one. As my lucky number was called, I was introduced to a foster mother who was not afraid to take on a teenage girl who was smart, sassy, and independent. Instead, she welcomed me into her family with open arms. I knew I was loved and no one from the outside looking in could tell the difference between her biological children and the children given to her to care for by God because she loved all of us the same. I miss the days I would sit and talk with her for hours as she challenged my premature teenage knowledge with her years of life experience in an effort to guide me and mold me into the woman that I have become today. I would hardly listen to her at times, and I still remember her telling me that I was as "stubborn as a goat." She

never gave up trying to instill age-old wisdom into my life. I promised her that I would not let her down. It wasn't long before she would be my guest of honor, along with my biological mother and birth family members, at my graduations from high school to graduate school, and again at a book signing as I featured my first book *Truth Be Told: A Foster Child's Recollection*. Although my guardian angel would later be called home after receiving her wings for the service she rendered to children from all walks of life, I will never forget the impact and the impartation she had on my life.

To learn more about parenting a child who has experienced trauma, read [Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma](#), a factsheet for families offered by Child Welfare Information Gateway.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau

