

I am a Foster Mom and this is My Story

I went to class, I readied my home, I passed the background check. I rallied family and friends to help as I would be a single foster parent, and then I anxiously awaited the first placement call.

It came sooner than expected, just two days after I was certified. A little girl needed to change placements – for the 10th time – she had some behavior issues, she was 3. *I'm thinking, who wouldn't have issues after being moved 10 times.* The caseworker continued, "She has no health issues and is generally happy." "Bio Mom is working on reunification so she may be there a short time or a while. We really need someone to stick with her this time", she said.



The butterflies in my stomach, thinking: *Can I really do this? What if she doesn't bond with me? I don't want to disappoint her.* And then I took a deep breath, gathered my strength and said, "Yes, what time will she be here?"

It's not been an easy journey. It took Elisa a while to warm up to me, to trust that I wasn't going to leave, but she's thriving now and she's been with me almost two years. You see, Elisa entered this world the baby of a former foster child, just 20 years old herself, trying to find forever love by having a baby. Bio Mom was trying so hard to keep her baby but lacked the true understanding of what parenting looked like because she spent her teenage years in different group homes and that was after her own birth mom failed to take care of her.

What I learned along the way is no one is perfect, not the child, not the bio mom, and certainly not me. Foster Care is messy! There is no cookie cutter situation. But there is love, ever abounding love, when you have patience and persistence. I came to realize that what was best for Elisa was to help her mom learn to parent her properly. It took time but by opening my heart and my home to a little girl, I now have a forever connection with her and her Bio Mom with whom she was just reunified.

I hope my story inspires you to consider fostering. I am now readying my home for another foster adventure, maybe siblings this time.

#Foster Palm Beach



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