

YOU CAN TRANSFORM A LIFE TODAY!



“Life may have started out rough, but she is a true success story.”

South Missourian News

“Teen uses her experiences to help others” is the title of an article about Tamra (Tammy) in the South Missourian News. As a seventh grader, Tammy worked this spring with a class of students at Missouri State University to collect non-perishable food and toiletries for Samaritan Out Reach Center and Christos House.

For most of her first ten years of life in Ohio, Tammy was in and out of foster care. She knows from personal experience exactly how it feels to be hungry and homeless. She says, “I was able to tell [the college] students my experience as a child living in tents, cars, and even hotels.” Since substance abuse played a major role in the neglect and abuse she experienced, Tammy cautioned the students to stay drug-free.

About 10 years old when she was eligible for adoption, Tammy spent two years waiting for a home in the country with two-parents who attend church and whom she could call Mom and Dad. She was matched in 2005 with Fred, Dionne and their son, Nicholas who is 20 months older than Tammy. Fred and Dionne wanted to adopt because they knew that “there was room in our hearts and home for another child.” Nicholas was very open to the idea of adoption and played a major role in all the decisions.

Initially Tammy had several challenges – physical acting out, emotional eating, fabricating stories and personal hygiene issues. According to Dionne, “Tammy was also a very loving child looking

for someone to love her back...a sweet soft spoken child who was very withdrawn and had no thoughts of her own.... very bitter about her past...very reserved and would not speak up for herself in most cases nor did she want to talk in public...”

Now after two years with her family, Tammy “is very helpful when needed, wants to learn, experience new things, and willing to work at her faults to make life better for herself. She has her own ideas, thoughts and dreams now....Tammy has become a polite young lady with a lot of self-worth.” The change is very apparent when one looks at the activities in which Tammy is now engaged - Jr. High Volleyball, Marching Band, Book Club, Drama Club – leading role in school/community play, public speaking to the college class.

Dionne and Fred say that “as a family, we have become closer during the adoption and transition time. Our home is always full of laughter and energy. This is one of the best things we have ever done and there is not one day that we have ever questioned if we have done the right thing or not. There are trying times as with any path you take in life, but they are short-lived. There are many more children who need families just like Tammy did and we wish we could find loving homes for all of them.”

Sounds like this whole family – Dionne, Fred, Tammy and Nicholas – are a success story!

How You Can Help

Adopt America Network has helped place over 3,500 children with loving families in the last 25 years – 909 in the last 4 years without charging fees to families. You can help in two ways:

- Share your love, talents and time by adopting a child and giving them a family of their own to whom they belong.
- Donate to Adopt America Network so that we may help more waiting children find their forever family that they deserve.

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Please visit www.adoptamericanetwork.org to learn more about the 129,000 children who through no fault of their own have been abused, abandoned or neglected. They wait on average over 3 years in the U.S. foster care system for someone to pick them out and cherish them.