

YOU CAN TRANSFORM A LIFE TODAY!



In Our Home & Our Hearts

Photo (from left to right): **Front Row** - Cody, Tyler, Sally • **Back Row** - Jason, Rick, Chuck, Charlene, Meridian, Carla, Jennie, and Katherine.

Since childhood, I knew I would someday adopt. Talking my husband into adoption was the challenge. He finally agreed to one child, a boy, since we already had a daughter.

Jason, age 13, was our first adoption and our hardest! We decided to take a chance on Jason as an emergency foster care placement, because he was a very cute, friendly little boy who appeared to be nothing like what was in his paper work. Wow! Let's just say Jason really broke us in. In and out of different bio-family homes, residential treatments, and 8 foster homes from the age of 5, he had very severe emotional, behavioral, and mental health issues. When Jason first came to us, he made every single kid out there seem like a cake walk in comparison. Over time, we helped him work through a lot of his issues with love, support, counseling. Jason just graduated from high school and is going to school for computers.

The funny thing is that Jason made us very, very strong parents to the point that we were able to foster and adopt 7 more children after him.

We then adopted Rick and Katherine. Both were in foster care for two years before coming to live with us. Rick, at 12 yrs old, was tall, thin and a little reserved. Katherine, at 9 yrs old, was tall, thin and very talkative. Rick had some behavior issues with ADHD. Katherine had alcohol effect, which caused her to have a learning disability and post traumatic stress disorder. They have both adjusted very well. Rick, now 18, recently graduated from high school. He is working and planning on going to college for nursing or pastoral school. Katherine, now 16, is doing very well in school. She is like my sidekick who helps a lot around the house.

Jennie, an 8 year-old with beautiful red hair and freckles, came to us as a foster placement. She had some behavior issues like hitting, stealing, and lying. She was placed with us because we became known as the family that could take on really hard kids. We worked through a lot of her issues together and adopted her two and half years later. Now 14, Jennie loves to take care of younger kids and hang out with her friends.

After Jennie came Carla, a beautiful Native American girl, age 12. Her behavioral issues stemmed from wanting to live with her biological

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sisters. Counseling helped. Now 16, Carla is now doing very well academically and loves to help out with her younger brothers and sister.

Our last adoption was a sibling group of three - Sally, Cody, and Tyler. Sally, at age 7, was the caretaker of the bunch. She was a tiny, quiet, little

girl with a great big smile. Cody, at age 4, had the same behavioral issues as Jason, so we were able to get right on top of those issues a lot sooner and at a younger age. With the right medication, he has improved greatly and is now the sweet boy we always knew he was. Tyler, at age 2, wasn't talking before he came to live with us. After the first day, he was saying words. Now, he can talk your ear off, if you let him, and will play with anyone.

Meridian, our birth child, was 6 when we started expanding our family through adoption. It takes a really special child to share her mom and dad with other children and she has this down to a T! Now 14, Meridian is very laid back and can get along with anyone. She has been there to help all her adopted brothers and sisters feel loved.

Adopting 8 children has turned our lives upside down and backwards, but I can't imagine my life any other way. Every one of my children was placed in our home and our hearts by God. I can't explain it any other way. This was the reason my husband and I were put together and why we were put on this earth.

"I can't say enough about AAN. They have made it possible to pursue the one thing I believe my husband and I were put on this earth to do. Since day one, over 8 years ago, they made it easy for us to get our home study done, do the classes, offered support, and placed us with all of our children. I will, and already have, recommended AAN. Adopt America is the first thing that comes to mind when I think of someone wanting to adopt. AAN has placed children in homes across this United States. Without them, there would be so many children still waiting for a home to call their own." — Charlene

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.

**Adopt
America
Network**
Special Children Deserve Special Families



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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.