

JUNE 14, 2016

## WHAT I WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT SURVIVING FOSTER CARE

I recently read a submission to "What I want you to know..." about growing up in foster care and I wanted to share my story of my own foster care experience.

As a young child, I used to daydream that my parents were not my parents and that someday a new set of parents would come take me away and give me the kind of family that I wanted but never knew. I spent many afternoons that I should have been napping making elaborate plans of running away, and even tried to enlist my younger sisters in the planning efforts.

You see, rather than a feeling of "drowning" or being ripped from my family, I dreamed of flying away. I knew at the core of my being from an early age that my surroundings were not safe and I needed to get out. But my sisters and I were with my parents until I was in high school. We were too frightened to talk to other adults about what was going on because we did not know what would happen if we did. My mother was physically and mentally ill for many years and self-medicated with drugs. My father did the best he could to keep our family clothed, fed, and together. The "together" part did more damage than good with my mother's worsening condition. By the time I was in high school she had become abusive on a daily basis and I was missing school because of having visible bruises. As the oldest I suffered the worst at the beginning, and over time my mother did not discriminate about who she targeted. Out of protection for my younger sisters, I finally talked to some adults and thus began my journey as a ward of the court. **CONTINUE READING**

## ADOPTIVE FAMILY NEEDED FOR RANDY

When Randy's DHS worker asked what he would like people to know about him, Randy replied, "I want a family that will care about me and maybe some crayons."

This artistic, engaging 8-year-old is happiest when surrounded by pencils, art materials, and paper. He has a vivid imagination and loves to draw and create.

The adults in Randy's life describe him as quiet, creative, and respectful of adults. He is a bright child who does well in school and enjoys soccer, baseball, and other outdoor activities and sports. Give him toy trucks and trains, and he'll play happily.

Randy prefers a two-parent household, and he would do well with or without siblings. Families from any state will be considered. Randy has experienced multiple transitions and moves in his young life, so a family that is patient, caring, structured, and nurturing is important. A successful family will continue to help Randy build coping skills for his mild ADHD.

"A family that will care about me." It's a simple, profound wish from a sweet 8-year-old child who is ready for his forever home. **Can you provide that home?**

**"I WANT A FAMILY THAT WILL CARE ABOUT ME."**



# FORGET "STANGER DANGER" ... HOW THE "TRICKY PEOPLE" CONCEPT SAVED MY BOYS

Source: *Time Well Spent Blog*

Quick backstory. Actually, I'm incapable of condensing anything so it can be considered "quick" but I'll try. Three days ago I was in the shower around 8:30am when it felt like I was shot in my left ovary. You didn't see that one coming, did you? In short, it was an unbearable pain that had me doubled over, light-headed, and incredibly nauseous. Well, with the help of some unseen angels, truly, I somehow got enough clothes on my body to be decent, and drove my four kids and myself five minutes to our small town ER. (I realized after this all blew over how foolish it was for me to drive while in intense pain. Be smarter than I was—call an ambulance!)

In a moment of what I deem foggy-thinking "pain brain" I left my two oldest boys—CJ (10) and T-Dawg (8) outside the ER door on a bench to await our kind neighbor who said he was coming to pick them up and take them to school (thanks to my parents who arranged all this while I was driving to the ER). My younger two and I went inside to see if we couldn't figure out what the heck was causing the pain. Spoiler alert: Ruptured ovarian cyst. Really fun stuff.

It wasn't until my boys came home from school at 3:30pm, that I found out they had been waaaay late to school. I had wrongly assumed my neighbor was coming from his house (not somewhere farther away), so my two boys sat out front of the ER for 40 minutes. Not the 5 minutes I had expected. Their story of what had transpired while I had stupidly left them out there alone made me simultaneously sick and grateful.

In that 40 minutes of obedient sitting and waiting, my two boys experienced their first real-world experience with the freaky, perverted strangers

they've been intermittently warned about. While on that bench, they were approached by an adult female and two punk males who asked them if they'd "help them out by going into the bathroom where her boyfriend was hiding from the doctor and see if they could convince him to come out and get treated." Yes, I'm serious that's what they said. Even after CJ replied, "No, thank you" they kept at them.

"Please? You could really save his life if you'd just go in that bathroom and tell him it's safe to come out."

CJ said he returned all three of their pleas for help with a "no, thank you" (each stronger than the last) before they finally let up. Shortly afterward, the neighbor showed up and my boys jumped in his car, but, not before they saw a third adult male come out from the bathroom, jump into the car with these other three hooligans and drive off.

My mouth hung open the entire time they relayed this account.

My anger and shock turned to immense gratitude, however, when I heard CJ spout off a family "stay safe" rule we went over way too long ago that helped him know these creeps were up to no good. Most specifically, a tip for identifying a "tricky person."

CJ: "Mom, I knew they were tricky people because they were asking us for help. Adults don't ask kids for help."

Have you heard of the tricky people concept? Tricky people are the new strangers.

**CONTINUE READING**

## DON'T MISS THESE JUNE 30TH DEADLINES

IFAPA has special money for teens (14 & up) in foster care that can only be requested through 6/30/16. These grants will be available for up to \$300 per youth. [VIEW APPLICATION](#)

Each adopted child who receives a subsidy from Iowa is eligible to receive five days of respite care per fiscal year at \$20 per day. All respite days must be used by 6/30/16 and submitted to IFAPA by 7/6/16. [VIEW ADOPTION RESPITE FORM](#)

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