



Seven years ago, my nephew met a friend who we learned had been in foster care, his father was in state prison and his mother was struggling with drug use, instability and homelessness. He was the sweetest boy and began to almost live at our house. He also had four other siblings who were living in various homes as their mother was unable to raise them all together. I got to know these sweet children and showed them kindness. When the mother became homeless and had all the children living with her in a car, she pleaded with me to step in and become their guardian and prevent them from going into separate foster homes. This was five (5) years ago. As a single woman working as a home health nurse, I did not have a lot of money and had to virtually quit working to care for them all. They all suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress, Reactive Attachment Disorder, needed immediate counseling services, were not physically or medically healthy and needed extensive dental care, as well as learn manners, how to treat one another and how to just be happy!

Soon after the guardianship was granted the parents and other relatives started taking me back to court, requiring further counseling for the children and legal intervention to protect them. I did not have the money and quickly became indebted to a lawyer who then stopped representing me because I could not pay. I was at a dead end with a big debt and no hope in sight.

When I came to Familybuilding I could not really pay but I wanted to adopt the children so they could never be threatened to be removed from the only stable home they have ever had altogether as siblings. Familybuilding said they would take the case because there was no other law office that had the experience needed for the case and there was no other law office that would take the case financially on faith. Honestly, I could not believe they would represent me.

We were thrust into litigation that has lasted for the past two years and they have spent countless hours and tens of thousands of dollars fighting for me and the children. After a several day trial the children were freed from their parents' custody and control and I am now able to adopt them!!! We are so happy as a family now and don't have to live under the stress of not knowing where the children's forever home will be.

I work 10 to 15 hours a week after I take the kids to school. With all their counseling appointments and other extracurricular activities, that is all the time I can squeeze in to work each week. With what I make, the children have what they need, but just barely. However, I don't know how I would ever pay all of the bills on this case based on what I earn. I pay what little I can, but it is always a sacrifice. Ted has told me of a dream he has had for years of a Foundation.

I was so excited to hear the Familybuilding Foundation has started and could help in cases like mine, as well as other families across the nation so kids could have a future and a hope. I am so humbled to hear I could apply for and hopefully receive an Adoption Grant. I have been praying for any kind of help and it would mean the world to us and our family for your generosity. It is very hard to ask for help as I have never received financial help in my life, and never asked for it, but this debt is too big!

Thank you for your kindness and generosity!

Love, Aida

