

Finding a Forever Family

It has been a long journey for 12-year-old Bobby in finding his forever family. He was removed twice from his home while living with his birth mother and adult sister--first when he was eight years old and again when he was nine. After each removal, he lived with a wonderful foster family. However, two years later, Bobby went back to live with his birth mother at age 11.

Something Bobby was very fortunate to have was two loving families involved in his life. However, his birth mother could not provide him with the same resources as the foster family, and his older sister created added stress, given her struggles with heroin abuse and untreated bipolar disorder. The foster family has three other children (one is also adopted), whom Bobby got along with wonderfully. Structure was very important in this family; all of the children had to do homework as soon as they got home from school, and they were involved in various athletics groups and Boy Scouts. Camping and swimming were frequent summer activities. Additionally, Bobby thrived in his new school, which provided him with significant resources to improve his grades and reading skills. The foster family cared for him greatly and wanted to adopt him.



Still, he loved both families equally. After being with the foster family for two years, his birth mother was ready to take care of him again. Therefore, he left the large home with three siblings and went to live with his mother in a one-bedroom apartment.

“Bobby made the best of where he was, and he tried his best, no matter what,” said his CASA volunteer, Terri, who was assigned to his case more than two years ago. She advocated for Bobby in many ways; she attended parent-teacher night to meet his teachers, she advocated in the early stages of Bobby’s placement for a calling and visitation schedule with his mother, and later, that the foster family adopt him. She met with him twice a month and spoke in court about her court reports.

Even when Bobby left the foster family to live with his mother, Terri made sure to visit with them. “I got to see a different side of him and the situation he was coming from,” she said. “His mother loved him very much. She might not have been the greatest at showing it, but she loved him.”

When he left the foster family at this time, Terri said, “The family was pretty crushed. They were truly worried because they didn’t know, safety-wise, how Bobby would be doing.”

When his mother passed away several months later from an illness, Bobby went back to live with the foster family, and this time, it would be for good.

“The foster family always said they loved Bobby,” Terri said. “It has been a long process, but they are very grateful to have him back.”

The adoption process finalized on Adoption Day. That day, Bobby’s parents and three siblings all

squeezed in at the small table before the Judge's desk in the courtroom. Just like many 12-year-old boys, Bobby joked around with his siblings as he waited for the adoption process to start.

"You would guess from looking at him that he's a happy, well-adjusted kid. Every time I have visited him at the house, he has been happy to be where he is," Terri said.

When the time came, the judge asked Bobby to raise his right hand, signifying the finalization of the adoption process. With that, Bobby finally had his forever family--just in time for the holidays, too.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children's mission to speak on behalf of abused and neglected children is central to fulfilling society's most fundamental obligation to protect a child's right to be safe, treated with respect and to help them reach their fullest potential. For more information about CASA, visit AtlanticCapeCASA.org.