Title – It made us Family

Name of person – Hanningan Roberts

I'm a foster parent. I have two awesome kids who were adopted through the foster care system. They came to us almost four years ago; our adoption has been finalized for just under a year. In addition to them, we have fostered one other child and four respite care placements who were with us for short periods of time.

When we first became foster parents, I really wanted to change the face of foster care. No more foster care workers are neglectful, abusive, and just collecting checks. I wanted to inspire legions of young, educated, caring foster families. Now that we've been through the process, I don't feel like I can advocate for others to get involved, unless they're willing to be put through the ringer.

Don't get me wrong. I don’t regret our experience in any way - it made us a family, forever. But in the four years that we've been a part of the "system" I've learned just how messed up that system actually is.

Title – Then she stopped believing in system.

Name of person – Anna Mauve

My mother used to be a foster parent when i was a teenager. We had many kids ranging from babies to 16-year-old. About half of them decided to run away because parents kept getting information from the agency about there whereabouts. The other half were taken away when we made so much progress on getting them in school with clothes and food and many said they had to share their clothes with other foster kids in homes. Some even said they never even had a room to themselves before. But in the end the parents would find a way to take there kids back so they could get paid by the government. Its sick because the last kid we had didn’t even attend school when he was a first grader and we worked with him to catch him up to 2nd grade when his dad wanted him back. They did a drug test on him and actually found drugs in his system and the courts still allowed him to take custody of the child. After this my mom just stopped all together and She stopped believing because of the system constantly giving out information on the kids or the courts giving them back their parents so they can get money from the government to probably buy more drugs.

He still gets nightmares

John Maverick

I interned at a foster home while I lived in another country. It was a home for abandoned and abused children- we only took in the worst cases. The home was excellently run- all the caretakers were very loving and patient. Our kids' ages ranged from infancy to six years old and they acted like normal kids for the most part.

My foster brother is a refugee and he's pretty normal too. He used to only sleep in a sleeping bag on the bed but now he sleeps in the bed. He's very quiet and keeps to himself but he answers all my incessant questions except for the ones asking what his home country is like. He doesn't say anything then. My foster brother frustrates my mom because he does poorly in school. In his defense, he never went to school before.

My family is getting another foster child this week and he'll be with us for about a month until he finds a more permanent home. He's a refugee too. He gets nightmares.

Kelvin Brown

my family (7 kids) has fostered a few different children. The first kids we fostered were subject to multiple accounts of abuse. The second set were all crack babies, we ended up adopting them. But as far as the system goes, it was awful. My parents had to take multiple parenting courses, go through tons of paperwork, and there were many other things that just made life hard while fostering. I wasn't too in the loop, but I know it was hard on my parents. If given the chance to do it all over again I know they would because when it comes down to it, we saved their lives.