

Roberta DiMezza

From: Lynne Fraser <lynnefraser73@gmail.com>
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To whom it may concern:

My name is Lynne Fraser, and I am an adoptive parent of one of my five grandchildren. Previously, I was her Kinship Foster parent.

As I'm sure you understand, many children come into care because of family trauma. In our case, their Bio Mom was not able to overcome her addictions enough to care for them. My five grandchildren are in four different placements, all with loving family members. We all make an effort to get them together and keep the sibling bonds strong.

We are doing this because it's the right thing to do, but these connections were not spelled out in any of our placement or adoption agreements. We are simply doing what we believe is right for these kids. It's a bit easier because we are all family and the kids often initiate the contact, even if it's just phone calls or FaceTime.

In cases where kids are placed with different, non-kinship, families there may not be as great an understanding of the need to do this. And it may be a little awkward at first if the adoptive, foster or guardianship families have not had previous contact.

But I strongly urge you to make arrangements for sibling contact a standard part of all adoption, foster and guardianship agreements, unless there is a compelling safety reason not to. Many times, these kids have been through very tough times together and no one else really understands what they experienced. I know my two older grandkids, who took on parental roles as elementary school kids, provide critical support and understanding for each other.

I'm so grateful that the legislature is looking at this issue. Thank you in advance for your advocacy and support for some of our neediest kids.

Sincerely,

Lynne Fraser
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