

“When my daughter was placed with me, it was made well known to me the trauma that she had come from, which was pretty severe physical and emotional and sexual abuse and that can be hard stuff to deal with every day. But I went for it. Any pre-teen is going to be hard. Whether they're your biological child or not. It is my understanding that, when children reach that pre-teen age, their brain goes through some changes growing and maturing. Unfortunately, that brought out some of the trauma that she lived through.

“I was the target of her trauma because she couldn't make sense of it. She would have screaming meltdowns. She would throw things around the house, start to get a little too physical with her little sisters. She would threaten to kill herself. I was really at my wit's end trying to figure out how to help her. It was really difficult for a child that I had grown to love so much and had done so much for to be the target of her hatred. Foster children will ask for love in awful ways; kicking and screaming and yelling because they don't know any other way to ask for it. There were many days that she said to me, ‘Why do you love me? I'm so awful to you. And every day all I do is hurt you. And you just still love me. And I don't know why you do.’ I could just hear the voice in my head of one of my best foster friends saying, ‘just love her through it.’

“And that was all that I did, you know. And, and she saw it. And it was really validating. Now she's thriving and she is happy and she's really made sense of her story, has owned it. I think it really empowered her. It solidified our relationship. And I really think we're gonna be able to really grow from here. Despite the days that I questioned myself or my parenting, I've never regretted the decision to be her mom. I can't imagine my life any other way.”